

**May 2008 Edition of the FIGHTIN' 311 TOMCATS
Newsletter**

PHILADELPHIA- REUNION 2008

AH, YES, THINGS ARE MOVING ALONG NICELY. WE MAILED OUT ABOUT 60 REUNION PACKETS THUS FAR AND SOME HAVE BEEN SENT BACK TO ME ALREADY. IF EARLY RETURNS ARE ANY INDICATION, IT LOOKS LIKE WE WILL HAVE ANOTHER GOOD TURNOUT- GAS PRICES NOT WITHSTANDING! THAT MIGHT BE AN UGLY REALITY COME REUNION TIME. RUMOR MILL PUTS THE GAS OVER \$4 BY MEMORIAL DAY AND UP TO \$10 IN THE FUTURE. \$10 A GALLON FOR GAS- ARE YOU KIDDING ME??? ANYWAY, I HOPE THAT THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE MAKING THE DRIVE DON'T GET HIT IT THE WALLET TOO BAD.

BETTER MENTION THIS BEFORE I FORGET. PRE-REUNION SIDE TOUR, WED SEPT 10TH FROM THE HOTEL. GEORGE AND ERICKA FLORES ARE PUTTING TOGETHER AN ALL DAY BUS TRIP TO THE WASHINGTON-ARLINGTON AREA. THEY HAVE TAKEN ON THE TASK OF GETTING THE BUS AND ARE NEGOTIATING WITH THE HOTEL FOR SOME BOX LUNCHES. IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE IN THE AREA PRIOR TO THE REUNION AND ARE INTERESTED IN MAKING THAT TRIP EARLY WEDNESDAY MORNING GET IN TOUCH WITH GEORGE AT 714-533-4309 OR EMAIL AT geflo@msn.com AND HE WILL GIVE YOU ALL THE INFORMATION. I THINK THAT GEORGE INTENDED TO MAKE A BUS TRIP TO THE MARINE MUSEUM IN QUANTICO BUT OPTED OUT OF IT BECAUSE OF THE DISTANCE. MUCH THE SAME REASON WE DIDN'T LAY THAT ON AS A REUNION TOUR.

THOUGHT JUST CROSSED MY MIND. WHEN YOU SEND YOUR PACKET INDICATE WHETHER YOU ARE GOING TO THE HELICOPTER MUSEUM OF QVC STUDIO. JUST IN CASE THEY WOULD NEED A COUNT FOR THE AMOUNT OF TICKETS THEY HAVE TO PURCHASE FOR OUR GROUP. IF YOU FORGET WE CAN JUST GET IT FROM YOU WHEN YOU CHECK IN AT THE HOTEL.

SPEAKING OF THAT, WE WILL HAVE A TABLE SET UP JUST PAST THE HOTEL REGISTRATION DESK IN THE LOBBY. CHECK IN WITH US, GET YOUR REUNION WELCOME PACKETS AND OTHER THINGS YOU WILL NEED FOR THE REUNION. I HAVEN'T FIRMED THIS UP YET BUT, SUE, BONITA AND JACKIE, OUR LOVELY WIVES, WILL PROBABLY BE AT THE TABLE CHECKING YOU IN. US MEN WILL BE ROAMING AROUND DOING PR WORK (?)!

WE ARE STILL INVITING DONATIONS FOR OUR GREAT AUCTION. THE MARLBORO MILES SITUATION NO LONGER EXISTS AND PHANDER SAYS THE BEER COMPANYS HAVE GOTTEN TIGHTER THAN A GNAT'S BEHIND STREATCHED ACROSS A RAIN BARREL. WE HAD A BUNCH OF AUCTION ITEMS FROM THOSE TWO SOURCES IN SAN DIEGO. WE HAVE ROUNDED UP SOME THINGS AND PURCHASED OTHERS. JUST TO MENTION A FEW AUCTION ITEMS- STARS AND STRIPES TOKENS WILL DONATE ANOTHER TOMCAT POKER CHIP SET, THE SALMON ARE SWIMMING THIER WAY DOWNSTREAM FROM SEATTLE AND CALIFORNIA GRAPES ARE BEING

SMASHED INTO SOME BOTTLES. PRETTY GOOD STUFF!! THIS AUCTION WAS A LOT OF FUN AND WE RAISED A GOOD DEAL OF MONEY TO KEEP THE COFFERS IN THE GREEN. DONATIONS DO NOT HAVE TO BE MILITARY RELATED. AUCTIONEER REED SAYS HE CAN SELL SAND TO THE ARABS.

SOME EARLY CALLERS TO THE HOTEL SAID THAT THE RECIEVED A "DEER IN THE HEADLIGHT RESPONSE" WHEN TRYING TO BOOK ROOMS. EARLY ON I THINK THAT'S USUALLY THE CASE UNTIL THE DESK PEOPLE GET THE WORD AND START DEALING WITH THE REUNION GROUP. IF YOU ARE STILL HAVING PROBLEMS, LET US KNOW. THE PHANDERS ARE IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE HOTEL AND CAN STRAIGHTEN OUT ANY PROBLEMS IN SHORT ORDER. THERE WAS SOME CONSTRUCTION GOING ON NAMELY A NEW LOBBY AND ROOM RENOVATIONS BUT, I BELIEVE, ISN'T GOING TO BE A FACTOR.

IF YOU ARE DRIVING INTO EXTON, THE DIRECTIONS ARE IN YOUR REUNION PACKET. IF YOU ARE COMING BY AMTRAK GET OFF AT THE EXTON STATION WHICH IS ABOUT 5 MINUTES AWAY. CALL THE HOTEL AND THEY WILL SEND A SHUTTLE TO GATHER YOU UP. THOSE FLYING INTO PHILLY INTERNATIONAL, WE WILL GIVE YOU THE NAMES OF THE SHUTTLES THAT WILL BRING YOU TO EXTON FOR THE BEST PRICE. AS MENTIONED, WITH GAS PRICES ON THE RISE I'M NOT EVEN GOING TO VENTURE A COST QUOTE.

VMA-311 WILL NOT BE WITH US AGAIN THIS YEAR. THEY ARE OFF IN IRAQ DOING WHAT TOMCATS DO BEST WITH LT COL. JOHN CANE COMMANDING. AFTER EMAILING HIM, HE BEGAN SENDING US UPDATES OF THE SQUADRONS ACTIVITIES WHILE DEPOYED. I WILL POST THESE AS I RECIEVE THEM, PUT THE ON THE WEB AND INTO THE NEWSLETTERS. COPY ALSO TO OUR SCAPEBOOKS IN THE UNOFFICIAL ARCHIVES.

IN LIEU OF A VMA-311 SPEAKER WE WILL TAP OUR OWN INTERNAL SOURCES AND RELY ON SOME OF OUR OWN. OF COURSE THE MIC IS ALWAYS OPEN. WE RUN A VERY DEMOCRATIC REUNION

REUNION WISE THAT IS ABOUT AS UP TO DATE AS IT IS. NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE OUT IN LATE AUGUST WITH ANY LAST MINUTE CHANGES OR INFORMATION. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED PARTICIPATION, NOT ONLY ATTENDING THE REUNIONS BUT HELPING KEEP THE ALUMNI GROUP INTACT BY YOUR DONATIONS AND INTEREST. SEE YOU IN PHILLY!!!

LT COL. JOHN H. CANE
COMMANDING OFFICER
MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON -311

LTCOL JOHN CANE ENLISTED IN THE MARINE CORPS IN 1983 AND

SERVED AS A SCOUT SNIPER WITH THE 3RD BATTALION 8TH MARINES FROM 1983 UNTIL 1986. DURING THIS PERIOD HE PARTICIPATED IN DEPLOYMENTS WITH THE 24TH AND THE 26TH MAU AND PARTICIPATED IN CONTINGENCY OPS IN BEIRUT. WHILE ATTACHED TO 3/8 HE GRADUATED FROM U.S. ARMY RANGERS SCHOOL, MARINE CORPS SCOUT SNIPER SCHOOL AND MARINE CORPS AMPHIBIOUS RECON SCHOOL. IN JUNE 1987 WHILE SERVING AS PLATOON SERGEANT WITH 1/8 HE WAS SELECTED FOR THE MARINE CORPS ENLISTED COMMISSIONING PROGRAM. HE WAS COMMISSIONED A 2ND LIEUTENANT IN 1990 AFTER GRADUATION FROM THE CITADEL WITH A BA IN INTERNAL RELATIONS. HE BEGAN FLIGHT TRAINING IN 1990 AND EARNED HIS WINGS IN 1992.

LTCOL CANE SERVED IN MANY SQUADRONS AND HELD MANY BILLETS BETWEEN 1994 AND 2002. HE SERVED WITH VMA-211, VMAT-203, VMA-542 AND HELD THE BILLET AS MAG -13 EXEC OFFICER.

LTCOL CANE REPORTED TO VMA-311 IN 2002 AND DEPLOYED TO IRAQ WITH THE AMPHIBIOUS TASK FORCE WEST WHILE SERVING AS SQUADRON ASST. OPS OFFICER. IN 2003 HE ASSUMED DUTIES AS 311'S OPS OFFICER AND IN 2004 AS EXEC OFFICER. IN 2004 HE TRANSFERRED TO VMA-513 AS THAT SQUADRONS EXEC OFFICER. IN 2005 HE DEPLOYED TO JAPAN AS VMA-311 DETACHMENT A OIC. IN 2006 HE ASSUMED DUTIES AS MAG-13 EXEC OFFICER UNTIL SEPT. 2007.

LTCOL CANE HAS OVER 2200 TOTAL FLIGHT HOURS INCLUDING 1900 IN THE AV-8B HARRIER. HIS PERSONAL DECORATIONS INCLUDE THE AIR MEDAL WITH COMBAT DISTINGUISHING DEVICE WITH THE NUMERAL 2, THE NAVY MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL, THE ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL, THE NAVY MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL WITH ONE GOLD STAR AND THE COMBAT ACTION RIBBON.

NEW ALUMNI

HAAN, HAROLD 21992 S. MCBRIDE AVE., ESCALON, CA 95320
harold.haan@clearwire.net

1960-62, EL TORO, IWAKUNI SHEETMETAL SHOP

KEENAN, JOHN 1216 NASH DRIVE, FORT WASHINGTON, PA;
jkeenan@peoplepc.com

1967-68, CHU LAI, AVIONICS

KNIGHT, WAYNE 105 TRUES BROOK ROAD, WEST LEBANON, NH 03784

1944-45, ROI NAMUR, OKINAWA, CORSAIR PILOT

(SON'S EMAIL) tknight31@comcast.net

PETERSON, DAVID 4928 210TH, CARDOTT, WI 54727 PH: 715-225-4931

helenp547@yahoo.com 1966 CHU LAI, ORDNANCE

ADDRESS CHANGES

HUNTINGTON, LOU 4236 BELGREEN DRIVE, ROCKY MOUNTAIN, NC
27804

PH: 257-443-7565

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EMAIL AND PHONE CHANGES

DELL, DON PH: 479-790-2138

HORAN, ED EHoran2@verizon.net

KIMBALL, EVERETT eandb@eoni.com

TKACHUK, PETE peter.tkachuk@comcast.net

TAPS

CUSHMAN, CLAYTON ROCHESTER, NY VMF-311, ROI NAMUR 1943-44.
ORIGINAL SQUADRON MEMBER

DRURY, FRANK SATELLITE BEACH, FL, 1952-53, K-3 F9F PILOT

(NAMES WILL BE READ AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE IN PHILADELPHIA
THIS SEPT.-jg)

LOST IN THE MAILS

CAVAGNARO, DENNIS LKA OAKLAND, CA

MCCAULEY, MORRIS LKA WINONA, MN

MCCOY, HELEN LKA NEOGA, IL

MCCURLEY, DAVID LKA CHOCTAW, OK

SRADER, BILL LKA BLAIRSVILLE, GA

DONATIONS

DONATIONS TO THE GENERAL FUND SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER:

ANDY ANDERSON, TUCSON, AZ; **RIED DAHART**, NEW BERN, NC; **JOHN STYGLES**, WOBURN, MA; **ISH RODRIQUEZ**, YUMA, AZ; **TOM JOHNSON**, NEW BERLIN, WI; **DON DOUGHERTY**, WHITEHALL, PA; AND **JIM DAWSON**, PONTIAC, MI; **RIED DAHART**, NEW BERN, NC; AND **FRED CATCHING**, RALEIGH, NC; THANKS MARINES!!!

SCOOP FROM THE TROOPS....

JOHN KEENAN, FORT WASHINGTON, PA: I FOUND THE 311 WEB SITE WHILE SURFING THE WEB...I SERVED WITH VMA-311 FROM APRIL 1967 UNTIL JUNE OF 1968. I JOINED THE SQUADRON IN IWAKUNI AND I THINK WE WENT TO CHU LAI IN JUNE OF 1967. I WAS THE AE SERGEANT IN THE AVIONICS SHOP. I AM ORIGINALLY FROM THE BOSTON AREA BUT HAVE LIVED IN THE PHILLY AREA SINCE 1972 AND IN FORT WASHINGTON SINCE 1983. IS THERE A FORMAL 311 ASSOCIATION? I WOULD BE HAPPY TO JOIN. (We went to Chu Lai in mid April according to my diary. You are now in the 311 alumni assn. I don't know if we are formal or not-jg)

RICHARD HOLLISTER: I SERVED WITH THE MARINES FROM 1966-1970. WHILE I WAS IN VIETNAM I WAS ASSIGNED TO VMA-311 1968-69. I WAS A HYDRAULICS MECHANIC ON THE A4-E SKYHAWK. (Anyone in that time frame remember Rich? I can't place him. His email is skipper14150@yahoo.com. He never got back to me and this was his only transmission-jg)

TIMOTHY KNIGHT, POTTSTOWN, PA "I RAN ACROSS YOUR WEB SIGHT WHILE SURFING THE NET. MY DAD WAS A CORSAIR PILOT IN VMF-311 DURING WWII. HE WAS ON ROI NAMUR AND FLEW HIS FIRST MISSION IN NOV. 1944 AND ON OKINAWA IN APRIL 1945...HE IS 84 NOW AND, ALTHOUGH HIS HEALTH IS GREAT, HE IS STILL ACTIVE AS HE CAN BE...WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO SEND YOUR NEWSLETTER TO HIM. HE WOULD ENJOY IT." (Got it covered. Any of you Roi Namur guys want to say hello or if you remember Wayne Knight give him a call or email. Info under "New Alumni"-jg)

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TOMCAT FACT: 2 JULY 1945: The squadron participated in a fighter sweep over Kyushu. The flight consisted of 4 Corsairs from VMF-224 and 4 From VMF-311. While flying over Japan the fighters passed over 40 enemy fighters going in the opposite direction and switched to a defensive mode and managed to down 8 enemy aircraft without a single loss. The two squadrons split the kills with four each. Two more runs to Kyushu failed to catch any more of the enemy in the air."

PETE TKACHUK, EXETER, NH: "ON 3 JAN 08 I RETIRED AFTER 38 YEARS OF COMBINED SERVICE WITH THE MARINE CORPS AND DEPT. OF DEFENSE...IT'S BEEN A GOOD RIDE BUT IT'S NOT OVER YET...GOD WILLING. I SET UP AN ENGINEERING CONSULTING BUISNESS AND CONTINUE TO DO CONTRACT WORK FOR THE NAVY...I AM PLANNING TO ATTEND THE REUNION IN PHILLY AND GOT A BUNCH OF SLIDES OF THE CHU LAI-IWAKUNI 65-66 ERA. HOPE TO MAKE THOSE AVAILABLE TO YOU GUYS SOON. SEMPER FI AND GOD BLESS"

ED HORAN, LANGHORNE, PA: "I HOE THIS FINDS YOU ALL WELL. I'M DOING FINE HERE IN BUCKS COUNTY...JIM AND GEORGE, IT WAS GREAT

SEEING YOU AT COOKIE'S IN NOVEMBER...WE SPOKE OF THE REUNION AND I HAD BEEN KEEPING AN EYE OUT FOR THE NEWSLETTER VIA THE EMAIL. I HADN'T RECEIVED ONE, SO I DID A SEARCH THIS EVENING TO SEE IF I COULD FIND ANYTHING ON THE NET...I DID FIND A LETTER STATING THE DATES IN SEPT. AND THE LOCATION...I TOLD HER THAT IT WAS CLOSE ENOUGH FOR US TO CATCH UP WITH ALL YOU MARINES SOMETIME DURING THOSE DAYS...I TRIED CALLING DON SMITH TODAY IN ORDER TO MAKE CONTACT WITH HIM...ANYWAY, JUST TOUCHING BASE AND ALSO UPDATING MY EMAIL ADDRESS JUST IN CASE..TAKE CARE AND SEMPER FIDELIS." (Great time at Cookie's Tavern on November 10th...got some flicks of that day and am trying to figure out how to get them printed off the email that the Phantom sent-jg)

JIM DAWSON, PONTIAC, MI: "BECAUSE OF YOUR JANUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER EDITION, I CONTACTED GLENN KESSLER. I KNEW HIS FATHER, FRANK, WHO SERVED WITH ME IN VMF-155 AND VMF-311...GLENN CAME TO PONTIAC AND WE SPENT SOME TIME TOGETHER. I SHOWED HIM OUR WAR MUSEUM AND A CITY TOUR (ALL OF 15 MINUTES!) ...WE HAD LUNCH AND GLENN FELT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO RETURN ON ANOTHER TRIP...FRANK DIED OF CANCER AT APPROXIMATLY 58 YEARS OLD, PER GLENN. (This is a good example of contacting those family members who are looking for those that served with their fathers. Too often not much is related to families about military service and to some that info is an important bridge. Thanks Jim for that. I'm sure Glenn appreciated the time.-jg)

EVERETT KIMBALL, PENDLETON, OR: "I JOINED THE USMC IN 1946 AND TOOK MY BASIC TRAINING IN SAN DIEGO. OUR DRILL INSTRUCTOR WAS SGT. LIMPUS. I WAS THEN SENT TO EL TORO WITH VMF-513. I WORKED IN ORDNANCE WITH CORSAIRS AND WAS DISCHARGED IN MARCH 1948. JOINED THE RESERVES (NON ACTIVE) AND WAS CALLED BACK WHEN THE KOREAN WAR BROKE OUT. REPORTED BACK TO EL TORO IN 1950 AND WAS ATTACHED TO VMF-311 PANTHER JETS. WE BOARDED THE USS BARROKO AIR CRAFT CARRIER IN SAN DIEGO. WE WENT TO TOKYO BAY AND TIED UP FOR 2 OR 3 DAYS AND THEN TO SASEBO AND UNLOADED PLANES AND GEAR. THEN BY 10PM THAT NIGHT WE BOARDED THE TRANSPORT PLANE TO KEMPO, NORTH KOREA. WE SET UP OPERATIONS ON A SMALL AIRFIELD. IT WAS THE EVACUATION POINT FOR THE CHOSIN RESERVOIR, FROM THERE BACK TO JAPAN AND SPENT TWO OR THREE WEEKS. THEN WE WENT TO PUSSAN AND SPENT QUITE A BIT OF TIME THERE. JETS WERE FLYING ALL THE TIME. I WENT BACK TO JAPAN AND SPENT R & R THERE THEN BOARDED AN LST AND WENT TO K-3 AND SPENT THE REST OF MY TIME THERE. I CAME HOME IN 1951. MY SERVICE NUMBER WAS 625214 THE FIRST TIME AND WHEN I WAS RECALLED THEY ADDED AN R TO IT, 625214R. SOME OF THE GUYS I SERVED WITH WERE ALLEN BAIRD, BALLARD, FREEMAN AND NORRIS. MY MEMORY IS SHOWING...THANKS FOR THE NEWSLETTER...SORRY I HAVEN'T MADE IT TO ANY OF THE REUNIONS BUT I PROBABLY NEVER WILL."

MIKE HILE, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO: "THANKS FOR THE HEADS UP ON THE NEWSLETTER AND CONTINUING TO HEAD THIS EFFORT. I ENJOY

READING EVERY ISSUE. YES, I HAD COL. MIKE YUNCK'S NAME PAINTED ON THE JETS DURING THE KICKOFF OF "OPERATION IRAQUI FREEDOM". IT WAS THE IDEA OF MY XO, ED "JETHRO" SEXTON TO TIE THE CURRENT MARINES WITH THEIR PAST HERITAGE." (As an added note, anyone who is on line and seen the pictures sent to the web page by Col. Cane, the old "bloom County" tomcat has been replaced by the old "Sylvester" logo used in the sixties and seventies. I like that old logo!!!-jg)

COL. CLYDE M. WOLTMAN, COMMANDING OFFICER MAG -13: "ON 29 NOV 2007 LTCOL ROBERT SOFGE PASSED ON HIS COMMAND TO LT COL JOHN CANE. SINCE THEN LT COL CANE HAS BEEN EXTRAORDINARILY BUSY PREPARING THE TOMCATS FOR DEPLOYMENT IN SUPPORT OF COMBAT OPS IN OIF. WITHIN THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS HIS SQUADRON WILL BE SPLIT INTO A MEU AVIATION DETACHMENT AND A SQUADRON (MINUS); BOTH DEPLOYING TO THE MIDDLE EAST BY MIS SPRING...AS YOU CAN SURMISE, THE TOMCATS WILL BE DEPLOYED DURING SEPTEMBER 2008. I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE CAN PROVIDE A GUEST SPEAKER FOR YOU IN PHILLY. I WOULD BE HONORED TO DO SO MYSELF, BUT CAN'T COMMIT AT THIS MOMENT. I WILL DISCUSS OPTIONS WITH LT COL CANE."

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LT COL JOHN CANE, COMMANDING OFFICER, VMA-311: (16 APRIL 2008. INFORMATIONAL UPDATE FROM 311 IN IRAQ)

"ON 3 APRIL 2008 ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY TWO TOMCATS AND TEN JETS ARRIVED AT AL ASAD AIR BASE, IRAQ TO CONDUCT FLIGHT OPS IN SUPPORT OR OPERATION IRAQUI FREEDOM. IT WAS A LONG TRIP, AS WE HAD TO TRAVEL THROUGH BASES OF CHERRY POINT, LAJES PORTUGAL AND SIGONELLA SICILY. THE SQUADRON AND 10 JETS TRAVELED OVER 12,000 MILES IN SIX DIFFERENT GROUPS TO GET TO AL ASAD AIRBASE-AND THOUGH GETTING THE SQUADRON TO IRAQ IN ITSELF WAS NO SIMPLE TASK, THE TOMCATS MADE IT LOOK EASY AND WERE READY TO CONDUCT FLIGHT OPS WITHIN 48 HOURS AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL. THE SQUADRON EXHAUSTED A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF EFFORT PREPARING FOR THIS DEPLOYMENT-ALL THEIR HARD WORK PAID OFF- AND I AM TREMENDOUSLY PROUD OF THE MARINES AND THE MAGNIFICENT JOB THEY ACCOMPLISHED. THOUGH I AM CERTAIN ALL THE MARINES WOULD RATHER BE HOME WITH FAMILY, THE TOMCATS ARE READY TO FIGHT AND PROUD TO BE SERVING THEIR COUNTRY.

WE CONDUCTED A TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY WITH THE VMA-542 ON APRIL 5TH. ONCE THE TIGERS DEPARTED IRAQ IT ONLY TOOK A FEW HOURS FOR THE TOMCATS TO "MARK" THEIR TERRITORY WITH ALL THINGS TOMCAT. ONE OF THE MORE SIGNIFICANT MARKINGS IS A MASSIVE "VMA-311 TOMCATS" SIGN MADE FROM SANDBAGS AND ARRANGED ON TOP OF ONE OF OUR HARDENED CONCRETE HANGERS AT THE APPROACH END OF RUNWAY 27L. IF YOU FLY INTO AL ASAD AIR BASE, THERE IS NO WAY TO MISS THAT THE TOMCATS HAVE RETURNED

TO IRAQ.

A SECOND ELEMENT OF TOMCATS REMAINS IN YUMA AND WILL DEPLOY IN EARLY MAY 2008. THESE NINETY MARINES AND SIX JETS WILL EMBARK ON THE USS TARAWA AS AN AV-8B DETACHMENT ASSIGNED TO THE 15TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT. AS WITH ANY MEU THEIR DEPLOYMENT LOCATIONS CAN VARY, BUT ANY LUCK – WE ARE HOPEFUL FOR A TOMCAT REUNION ON IRAQI SOIL!!

(NOTE: Col. Cane brought up the idea of setting up a VTC to be shown at the reunion. We could see them and they us and we would be talking to them at the air base in Iraq. Have to get together with the computer geniuses about me and the hotel to see if such a feat is possible. This would be great.-jg)

HAROLD HAAN, ESCALON, CA: (EMAIL 21 APRIL 2007) “I SAW YOUR AD IN THE AMERICAN LEGION AND WAS WONDERING IF YOU HAD ANY RESPONSE FROM ANY TOMCATS FROM THE 1960-62 TIME PERIOD. I WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING IF YOU HAVE. (EMAIL 6 MAY 2008 AFTER RESPONDING TO MR. HANNS REQUEST) “GUS PIERCE, TIM DANOS, AND JOEL WILLIAMS WERE OVERSEAS WITH ME IN 1961 AND 1962. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO BEING PUT ON YOUR ROSTER AND ALUMNI MAILING LIST. I AM HOPING THAT I CAN MAKE THE SEPTEMBER REUNION. AT THIS POINT IN TIME I HAVE A CONFLICT THAT I AM TRYING TO RESCHEDULE. SEMPER FI AND REGARDS.”

ISH RODRIQUEZ, YUMA, AZ: “FOR A WHILE IT LOOKED AS IF I WOULD HAVE TO HANG IT UP AND SQUARE AWAY EVERYTHING. I HAD A STROKE AND IT HAS TAKEN A LOT OF WORK TO GET BACK TO ALMOST NORMAL AGAIN TO WHERE YOU DON’T SHOW ANY SIGNS OF ANYTHING HAVING BEEN WRONG. WELL AT LEAST NOW I CAN COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS. SUMIKO AND I WILL PLAN TO BE AT THE REUNION, THE GOOD LORD WILLING.”

GARY L. COON, SPRINGFIELD, MO: “I AM TRYING TO LOCATE GYSGT GARY WILLIAMS (I SAY GUNNY BUT HE MAY HAVE RETIRED A MSGT). HE WAS WITH 311 IN THE 80s AND WORKED IN MAINTTENANCE ADMINISTRATION- MAINTENANCE CONTROL...I SERVED WITH HIM AT MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI BACK IN THE SEVENTIES WHERE WE WERE INSTRUCTORS IN THE NAVY AZ SCHOOL...IF YOU HAVE HIS NAME WOULD YOU PLEASE PASS ON TO HIM THAT I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH HIM. LAST I HEARD HE WAS SOME PLACE EITHER IN WASHINGTON OR OREGON...THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.”
(Contact Gary Coon at 417-889-0023 or email at M762CAL45@aol.com-jg)

BUD COCHRAN, WEBSTER SPRING, WV: “I SERVED WITH VMF-311, MAG - 33, AT K-3 IN 1954-55 AND SERVED AS AN ADMINISTRATION CLERK. I NEED SOME HELP. I HAD A BACK OPERATION WHILE I WAS IN KOREA WHILE WITH 311 FROM A FALL THAT HAPPENED IN 1954. I HAVE BEEN HAVING A LOT OF COMPLICATIONS AND HAD CONTACTED THE VA TO FILE A DISABILITY CLAIM BUT THEY SAID MY RECORDS WERE DESTROYED IN THE FIRE IN ST. LOUIS AND I NEEDED SOMEONE TO SUBSTANTIATE MY CLAIM. IF YOU HAVE ANYONE ON THE ROSTER FROM THAT TIME PERIOD OR WHO REMEMBERS ME AND THAT I HAD AN OPERATION PLEASE HAVE THEM CONTACT ME BY PHONE OR

LETTER. THANKS VERY MUCH.” (We have a lot of Korean era veterans and quite a number of K-3 veterans on our alumni roster. Any of you can help Bud out please call him at 304-847-2046 or mail at P.O. Box 263, Webster Springs, WV 26288. I am going to send him a list of the alumni that I have from that time period. Thanks Marines.-jg)

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TOMCAT FACT: DURING THE EARLY 1950S THE VMF-311 SQUADRON INSIGNIA BEGAN APPEARING ON ITS AIRCRAFT. JUST AS THE SQUADRON INSIGNIA BECAME A NOTICABLE IDENTIFICATION FOR THE AIRCRAFT, THE PILOTS BECAME NOTICABLE BY THE SCARVES THEY PURCHASED TO GO ALONG WITH THE INSIGNIA. THESE WERE SOFT BABY BLUE OVERPRINTED WITH PINK HEARTS AND THE SQUADRON NAME. NEEDLESS TO SAY THESE BECAME HIGHLY PRIZED ITEMS PARTICULARLY IN INFANTRY CIRCLES DURING THE WAR. (ONE OF THE SCARVES HAS SURVIVED THE RAVAGES OF TIME AND CAN BE SEEN AT THE MARINE CORPS AVIATION MUSEUM IN QUANTICO, VIRGINIA.)

ARTICLES OF INTEREST....

THERE WAS SOME QUESTION BY ONE OF OUR ALUMNI ABOUT WHEN 311 WAS AWARDED THE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION (PUC) AND THE NAVY UNIT CITATIONS (NUC) IN THE 1960S AND AFTER. HERE IS THE LIST:

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATIONS:

1 JUNE-15 DEC 1965 SU FIRST MAW (ONLY 1 AWARD)
15 FEB 66- 15 SEPT 67
21 MAR 03- 24 APR 03 SU I MEF

NAVY UNIT CITATIONS:

7 MAY 65-15 APR 66 SU MAG-12
18-23 AUG 65 SU 7TH RTL
15 SEP 67- 31 MAR 68 SU MAG-12
1 APR 68- 31 MAR 69 SU MAG-12
12 FEB- 1 JUN 70 SU MAG-13
1 NOV 70- 7 MAY 71 SU MAG-11
17 MAY – 31 DEC 72 SU MAG-12 (FORWARD)
14 AUG 90- 16 APR 91 SU I MEF
1 APR 96- 24 AUG 99 SU MAG-13
2 AUG 04- 1 FEB 05 SU I MEF (RIEN)
1 JUL 99—30 JUN 00 SU MAG-13
11 SEP 01- 20 JUN 02 SU III MEF & MCB JAPAN

IF YOU WERE ATTACHED TO THE SQUADRON DURING ANY OF THE ABOVE AWARD DATES YOU ARE ENTITLED TO WEAR THOSE RIBBONS. AS PER GEORGE PHANDER- IF YOU HAVE COMPUTER ACCESS- CLICK ON VMA-311 OFFICIAL WEB SITE IN YUMA, LOOK ON LEFT HAND SIDE OF PAGE, CLICK ON VMA-311 STREAMERS. ALSO INCLUDES VIETNAMESE CROSS OF GALLANTRY RECENTLY ISSUED. YOU CAN ADD THESE TO YOUR "I LOVE ME COLLECTIONS."

GENEOLOGISTS CAN NOW GET MILITARY FILES PRIOR TO 1946

(I FOUND THIS IN THE FARM AND DAIRY NEWSPAPER OF ALL PLACES) THE NPRC WILL OPEN FOR THE FIRST TIME ALL OF THE INDIVIDUAL OFFICIAL MILITARY PERSONNEL FILES OF ARMY, AIR FORCE, ARMY AIR FORCE, NAVY, MARINES AND COAST GUARD MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO SERVED AND WERE DISCHARGED, RETIRED OR DIED WHILE IN SERVICE PRIOR TO 1946.

CONTAINED IN TYPICAL MILITARY PERSONNEL FILES ARE DOCUMENTS OUTLINING ALL ELEMENTS OF MILITARY SERVICE, INCLUDING ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATIONS, AWARDS AND DECORATIONS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, DEMOGRAPHIC INFO, SOME MEDICAL INFO, AND DOCUMENTED DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS. SOME ALSO CONTAIN PHOTOS OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING MILITARY SERVICE.

TO OBTAIN COPIES OF RECORDS, CUSTOMERS MAY WRITE TO : NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER, 9700 PAGE AVE, ST. LOUIS, MO 63132 OR FAX REQUEST TO : 314-801-9195 OR SUBMIT A REQUEST THROUGH <http://vetrecs.archives.gov> OR ON A STANDARD FORM 180. ALSO IT IS POSTED ON THE NPRC WEB SITE AT www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/index.html

THIS IS A GOOD CHANCE FOR YOU WWII GUYS TO TRACK DOWN SOME OF THE MILITARY THINGS YOU MAY HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR.

TOMCAT FACT: 5-8 MAY 1968: VMA-311 GAVE THE ENEMY THROUGHOUT I CORPS A CLOSE LOOK AT THE SKYHAWKS AS THE SQUADRON FLEW A RECORD 240 ALERT SORTIES DURING A FOUR DAY PERIOD. DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS THE PILOTS CONCENTRATED ON VISUAL BOMBING ATTACKS AND AT NIGHT CONTINUALLY HARRASSED THE ENEMY WITH BOMBING ATTACKS CONTROLLED BY EITHER THE TPQ-10 RADAR OR VISUALLY BY PILOTS UNDER AN UMBRELLA OF AIRCRAFT-DISPENSED FLARES. BY THE END OF MAY THE SQUADRON LED ALL JET SQUADRONS WITH 20,000 SORTIES AND CAPT. PETER KRUEGER INDIVIDUALLY WITH HIS 500TH COMBAT MISSION.

I DO NOT CONSIDER MYSELF AN EXPERT AT JUDGING BOOKS. IF IT IS GOOD AND IT KEPT MY INTEREST IT IS A GOOD BOOK AND I DON'T CARE WHAT OPRAH SAYS. I HAVE TAKEN UP READING AGAIN RATHER THAN WATCHING TV UNLESS IT IS BASEBALL OR A GOOD MOVIE. THESE FEW I THINK STOOD SOME MENTIONING ESPECIALLY IF YOU ARE A BASEBALL FAN AND AN AVIATION LOVER.

PETE ROSE, MY PRISON WITHOUT BARS. I READ THIS BOOK IN SHORT TIME. I AM NOT A GREAT PETE ROSE FAN BUT WAS ALWAYS WATCHING HIS CHASE FOR THE HALL OF FAME. HE HOLDS MORE INDIVIDUAL RECORDS THAN ANYONE IN BASEBALL. THE BOOK GIVES YOU ALL THE DETAILS ON HIS GAMBLING PROBLEMS AND HIS FANATICAL WAY HE APPROACHED THE GAME OF BASEBALL. I THOUGHT THIS WAS A REALLY GOOD BOOK. ALTHOUGH PETE PROCLAIMED FROM EARLY ON THAT HE NEVER BET ON BASEBALL YOU ALWAYS WONDERED IF HE DID. THIS BOOK BRINGS OUT THE FACT THAT HE DID INDEED BET ON BASEBALL WHILE HE WAS A MANAGER BUT SAYS HE NEVER BET ON HIS TEAM TO LOSE. DID HE OR NOT. HE SAYS NO. AT THE END OF THE BOOK YOU EITHER BELIEVE HIM OR NOT. A GOOD BOOK ABOUT BASEBALL AND THE SOMETIMES SORRID LIFE OF A HEAVY GAMBLER.

TED WILLIAMS AT WAR. THIS IS GOOD BOOK BECAUSE THERE IS A LOT OF TOMCATS IN IT. TED'S PICTURE ON THE COVER WEARING A FLIGHT JACKET WITH A TOMCAT PATCH OF VMF-311. THE BOOK IS INTERLACED WITH BASEBALL AND MARINE CORPS HISTORY. FROM ALL THE INTERVIEWS, THE OLD SLUGGER WAS EITHER A GOOD GUY OR A SNOB. I GUESS THAT WOULD DEPEND ON HOW YOU PERSONALLY HAD TO DEAL WITH HIM. I FOUND MYSELF SKIMMING THROUGH DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BOOK ON OCCASION BUT IT GAVE A GOOD ACCOUNTING OF HIS TIME IN TWO WARS AND HELD MY INTEREST THROUGHOUT NOT ONLY AS A TOMCAT BUT AS A BASEBALL FAN. ONE THING ABOUT TED, HE ALWAYS WORE HIS MARINE CORPS SERVICE ON HIS SLEEVE AND ON CERTAIN INSTANCES SHOWED UP AT INTERVIEWS WEARING A 311 HAT. IN THE LATE 90S I EVEN RECEIVED A COUPLE OF LETTERS FROM HIS SECRETARY THANKING ME FOR THE NEWSLETTER. WHEREAS JOHN GLENN, WHO WAS ON OUR ROSTER EARLY ON, NEVER SEEMED TO AKNOWLEDGE EITHER.

MASTERS OF THE AIR. MY FATHER SERVED WITH THE 467 BOMB GROUP (H) WHICH FLEW OUT OF RACKHEATH, ENGLAND. SAYING THAT, I'VE ALWAYS HAD A GREAT INTEREST IN THE "MIGHTY 8TH". THIS BOOK IS WITHOUT A DOUBT ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS THAT I HAVE EVER READ ON THE 8TH AIR FORCE AND THE BOMBER WAR IN EUROPE. THE BOOK TAKES YOU FROM THE INCEPTION OF THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE AND MANY PERSONAL ACCOUNTS OF THE AIR BATTLES OVER THE ETO. IN 1942-43 THE CHANCES OF SURVIVAL WERE ONE IN FOUR AND THE GERMAN AIR FORCE REIGNED SUPREME. THE BOOK COVERS THE ENTIRE WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH WITH A LOOK INTO THE GERMAN SIDE AS WELL AS ENGLISH AND AMERICAN. ANOTHER POINT, I ALWAYS THOUGHT SWITZERLAND WAS A NICE LITTLE NEUTRAL CONTRY THAT HARBORED AIR CREWS FROM BOTH SIDES AND TREATED THEM WELL. WRONG ANSWER!!! OVER 270,000 AIRMEN WERE SHOT FROM THE SKYS

OVER EUROPE, KILLED OR IMPRISONED. THIS IS THEIR STORY AND A GREAT BOOK ON THE 8TH AIR FORCE.

IT'S A WRAP

ONE MORE NEWSLETTER WILL BE OUT IN AUGUST GIVING ANY LAST MINUTE CHANGES OR UP TO DATE STUFF. WE CONTEMPLATE A GOOD TURN OUT AS ALWAYS. IF YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN TO OUR GET TOGETHERS DON'T HESITATE TO JOIN US BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW ANYONE. IN ONE DAY YOU'LL KNOW EVERYONE THERE. WE HAVE A GREAT GROUP AND AFTER ALL- WE ARE MARINES AND TOMCATS. THAT ALONE IS BOND ENOUGH AND AS JERRY HOLLERAN ONCE SAID "NO MATTER HOW MANY SHOW UP WE'LL STILL HAVE A GOOD TIME!!" THAT ABOUT SAYS IT ALL.

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OH, ALMOST FORGOT. EVERYONE WHO HAS BEEN COMING TO THE REUNIONS FOR THE PAST 12 YEARS REMEMBERS **COL. DORSIE PAGE**. HE WAS THE SQUADRON COMMANDER IN 1974-75 TIME FRAME WHEN THEY MOVED TO YUMA FROM BEAUFORT AND HE WAS A PILOT IN RVN IN 65-66. HE'S THE ONLY SQUADRON COMMANDER THAT CAME TO ALL OUR REUNIONS AND HE WAS A STORY TELLER BEYOND WORDS. I RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM HIS WIFE'S CARETAKER ABOUT A MONTH AGO. SHE SAID DORSIE COULD NIETHER RESPOND OR ATTEND ANY FUTURE REUNIONS. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS BUT IT DOESN'T SOUND GOOD. HIS WIFE, GLENNA, WAS HAVING HER SHARE OF HEALTH PROBLEMS ALSO. IF YOU WANT TO DROP THEM A LINE THE ADDRESS IS 821 EMPRESS COURT, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22308. I'M SURE THAT THEY WOULD APPRICIATE THAT.

AT NIGHT WHEN YOU HIT YOU KNEES REMEMBER OUR ARMED FORCES WHO ARE ON DUTY AND ESPECIALLY THOSE IN HARMS WAY THAT THEY MAY REMAIN STEADFAST IN THEIR RESOLVE AND RETURN HOME SAFELY TO THEIR FAMILYS. SEMPER FIDELIS.

FOR THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

JIM GALCHICK



JIM HAYES SENT THIS PHOTO: OKINAWA 1967 FLIGHT LINE CREW. ACROSS THE FRONT 2ND FROM LEFT SKINNY FIELDS, TED WILLIS, RAY LUNA, WILLY WILSON, JACK BROWN AND PETE GAUPHENBAUGH. IN BACK MIDDLE IS INJUN COLBY ANYONE KNOW THE REST?