

Pelican Poop Sheet

Volume 38

March 24, 2017



New on the roster: Bob Vehorn (1986-1990); Garry Cabe (LT 1982-1985); Wade Starks (PH2 1967-1970); LCDR Richard "Rocky" Hudson, USN(ret) (AW2 1971-1973); Keith Balfanz (PO2 1980-1982); Durand Willard (AMH2 1982-1986)

Lost contact: ADC Ralph Umphres, USN (ret) (ADJ2 1967-1970); LCDR Jim Quade, USN (ret), (ATC 1983-1986); Dr. Wilcox (VPB-44 Black Cats 1943-1945); Captain Rick Magalis, USN(ret) (LT 1978-1980)

Taps: AW1 Mike Gallo; David Morenus (MA2 1972-1978); William McIntyre (AT2 1958-1960); Earl Olson (LT 1972-1976); Captain John Siembieda, USN(ret) (CO VP-44 1976) (CO VP-31 1978); ADC Thomas Klosterman, USN(ret) (ADJ3 1962-1964); Captain Buddy Futch, USN(ret) (LT 1962-1964)

Memories from the past

The following was a heartfelt reply to a request from Captain Andy Serrell's (CO 1962-1963) daughter, she was looking for Shipmates to send her something she could read to her bed ridden father who's eye sight is failing and suffering from dementia.

Hello Skipper,

By now you have heard the news that Astronaut John Glenn has passed away. Glenn's name brought back memories of a highlight of my time in VP-44. In 1961 you were the executive officer and Bob Pierce was the CO. The previous year we had transferred from P5-M aircraft to the P2-V Neptune. I was a crewmember on LM 4 with Bob "Saint" Stephan as our PPC, Bob "Bobo" Minnerly as our co-Pilot, Ron Schug was our 3rd pilot and Gary Lloyd our Tacco. I was the 1st Mech under Gary Lake, (a lowly station on such a historic flight). Before we left Norfolk on a deployment to Sigonella, Sicily we installed some funny looking antennae on our aircraft titled "SARA gear". During our deployment to Sigonella a few aircraft were sent to Ben Guerir (Gurr-er) AFB north of Marrakesh Morocco. It was in preparation for John Glenn's Friendship 7 flight in the Mercury Space capsule. We made two trips to Morocco because his launch was delayed due to weather. On our second journey we finally got to go on a historic flight. It was February 20, 1962 when we were told that the mission was a go. There were earth stations, ships and aircraft all around the globe along his flight path, just in case Glenn's voyage didn't go well.

We were to travel West from the coast of Morocco past the Canary islands and maintain a position over a spot there. That's when we turned on our "SARA gear" it was designed specifically to pick up a signal from the Mercury capsule should it go down near our station. On that February 20th flight, LM 4 was piloted by LCDR Stephan but in the right seat was Bob

Pierce. I knew this was not common, it was special. Later in the flight I was sitting sideways on the fold down "Milk stool" just behind the throttles mixture levers and Fuel panel. My APH-5 flight helmet with its built in headset was tuned to a frequency that emanated from Houston Space Center. We were monitoring voices of flight control and ...John Glenn! We heard Houston at first, then a response, the voice of America's first astronaut! Glenn's voice was loud and clear as he responded to Houston's inquiries. I could hear him describe his condition and that of the spacecraft. It was at that moment that Captain Pierce stated shouting "Did you hear that?" Then, in his excitement, he swung his left elbow into my rib cage. It was only slightly painful, just more of a sudden awakening from the concentration of listening. We had just experienced history in the making and I was not about to complain about bruised ribs.

As I look back on my time in VP-44 I consider it all a blessing. I thank God for you and your leadership style. I thank God for the Dobbs Ferry seaplane base where you learned to fly so well. As a kid I remember trips up the river from Yonkers where I looked from the road, across the railroad tracks to those yellow pontoon planes as they would taxi out onto the river and make a rooster tail as they took off. I thought that was a dream too far for me, obviously you didn't and for that courage I am forever grateful. I consider myself a very fortunate man to have lived during the time I did. I was born as the depression was ending. I was a child during WWII and developed a respect and admiration for the servicemen I knew. Discipline, leadership and an appreciation for all that we have in this great country. My success as a businessman can be attributed to lessons learned in my youth, especially time in VP-44. Think about it in three years we went from P5M flying boats to the P2-V Neptune to the P-3 which is still flying today. The lesson of that must be the ability to adapt to change and progress. I thank you for all the leadership you provided. You are still a great example of the "Gentleman Warrior"

With much respect, Sincerely

Ralph L. Cook

AMS 2 VP-44 1959-1963

ATTENTION ON DECK!!

The NASB Reunion website is up and running!

The 2nd NASB Reunion is scheduled for the weekend of August 10-12, 2018.

More than 250 people attended the 1st Reunion in 2016, and we are looking to build upon that success

Reunion merchandise including hats, polo shirts, patches, and coins is available for purchase on the website

All monies from the sales of merchandise will defray the costs for the 2018 NASB reunion

Schedule and lodging details will follow soon; save the date now and please share with your friends who served or worked at NASB

We hope you'll join our celebration of the heritage of NASB in the beautiful backdrop of summer in Maine!

THE WEBSITE ADDRESS IS: <http://nasbreunion.org/>

If you have any comments or suggestions, please forward them to the Reunion Committee
nasbreunion@gmail.com

“The NASB Reunion Committee is a volunteer, not-for-profit organization pursuing 501(C)3 status.”



MPA Symposium

Once again the MPA has their Symposium schedule for April 26-28 on board NAS Jacksonville, more details can be found at: <http://www.maritimepatrolassociation.org/symposium/index.html>

“I don’t mind being called tough, because in this racket it’s the tough guys who lead the survivors.”

General Curtis LeMay, USAF

"I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory!"

- - General Dwight D. Eisenhower

A truism worthy of note: ... Do not fear the enemy, for they can take only your life. Fear the media, for they will destroy your honor.

~ Author unknown

“The Constitution is not an instrument for the government to restrain the people, it is an instrument for the people to restrain the government - lest it come to dominate our lives and interests.”

Patrick Henry

Mr. Borgnine joined the Navy in 1935 and served on a destroyer during World War II. He weighed 135 pounds when he enlisted. He left the Navy 10 years later, weighing exactly 100 pounds more.

"I wouldn't trade those 10 years for anything," he said in 1956. "The Navy taught me a lot of things. It molded me as a man, and I made a lot of wonderful friends."

“War has seldom brought anything for the people engaged in it. But the people aren’t usually asked. “ Erwin Rommel, September 1944



Pelican Shop

We are still open for business on the web site and the following items have been restocked: a limited number of XXXL and XXL Navy Blue Golf shirts and regular Navy Blue ball caps with A/C wings on the front. The sales help restock missing items and startup money for upcoming reunions, at the present time our funds are pretty low and we could use some help. All our committee members and myself are doing this for the love and respect we have for VP-44, ordered something and help us keep going.

I want to talk our committee and all of you who help me gather input to this newsletter about VP-44 and the Shipmates who served our Navy. I'm always looking for interesting articles to pass on and would like to include the younger generation on Facebook. If you would like to post something on our newsletter, upcoming reunion no matter how small, looking for a Shipmate, etc let me know.

Marines (by Eleanor Roosevelt):

"The Marines I have seen around the world have the cleanest bodies, the filthiest minds, the highest morale, and the lowest morals of any group of animals I have ever seen. Thank God for the United States Marine Corps!