

Jan. 29, 1971

Mr. Don C. Thomson

Mr. Tom Olby

Dear Tom,

I thought that I would write you as I didn't get many Christmas cards out this year. First of all it does not look like my Guard unit will get called up. I, along with three other pilots, volunteered to go but our unit would not approve the transfer. Second it looks like both Howard Jacobs and I will be on periods of two weeks active duty during the re-union. I might be able to get off active duty a couple of days early to rush off to the reunion but can't really afford the cost of the trip. It would be my eleventh reunion in three years. I'll probably wait awhile and see how things look in the spring.

The Association seems to be languishing somewhat. Tom has had to take his old publishing function back which is not at all fair. There is nobody working on membership so our roster has been steadily dwindling albeit slowly. It would seem that, with the exception of Dan Smiley, Tom Thalmann and the guys working on the San Diego reunion, that there aren't any workers in our Association. I suspect that there are some workers out there if we can just find out who they are. I would be in favor of electing Dan Smiley to some important position based on his performance during the past three years. I think the association would do well to elect single people or those like Tom T. who don't have children. At reunions everyone gets caught up in the fever and are hot to accept responsibility but over the ensuing two years these good intentions come to naught. I think most people just have to much going on, too many other commitments and too many other higher priorities. If the Assn. could find about ten workers the burden wouldn't be too bad on any of them and things would get done. We really need a membership person or committee desperately. A couple of our sharp retired guys could locate 100 lost Wolves and refinds in a single month for \$100. or \$200. worth of phone calls. Maybe we should also consider retired members strongly for important jobs in the Assn.

The Historian/Curator job is not too time consuming. I estimate about one hour per week. I'm proud of the fact that we have a good historical library that is immaculately organized. Any fool can go to our files and find what they need within seconds. The real effort over the past five years though was planning the K.C. reunion without help, getting the Huie for the museum and the plaque, both for the Pensacola reunion, locating 135 Seawolves and finding an author to write a book on the Seawolves. It is not the Historian's job to do any of those things but if I hadn't done them they would not have happened. It's just like Tom T. If he doesn't take the bull by the horns each time and publish our Wolfgrams, then there won't be any Wolfgrams. So it's obvious that what the Assn. needs is genuine WORKERS who, for a two year period, can get a job done. Those who will make a commitment and honor it like Con did in Pensacola and Marty and the boys are doing in San Diego.

I believe that I have found a top-notch author to do a book on the Seawolves. He was recommended highly, along with others, by the Naval Historical Section. He has written a number of books and articles on Naval Aviation including really top notch articles on both HA(L)-3 and VA(L)-4. He is a respected author and has a real interest in the Seawolves. I have been in contact with him since September 1989. He has had other writing commitments until now. He has promised me a firm answer on the project within the next week. I've told him that he is going to have to go to the San Diego reunion and stand up in front of all those people and commit to them that he is going to tell their story and do it "Right" if they will give him 100% cooperation. I have committed to him that I will break my ass for him as far as getting things and information from our members and our files to him and will pass along all that I have learned about the Wolves. If he decides not to commit to the project I intend to have all the Wolves call him and tell him that they won't take no for an answer. I just know that he is the right person to do this so we just have to find a way to convince him. Enough about the Association.

I always enjoy getting your Christmas letters and hearing about all of Adam's activities. He and my son Colby are, I believe, the very same age. It also sounds like they're into some of the same activities. If you guys ever come down here you can go water skiing with us. I sure hope that all is going well with your job and family this year. If you talk to Chris

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or Mike Dobson or any of the other Solid Anchor Seawolves, be sure to tell them high for me. Those individuals mean an awful lot to me as you know. I haven't had a chance to write any of them as I was on active duty for over six months this year at Ft. Rucker, Alabama and down in the S.E. corner of Missouri. The latter was on "Operation Cash Crop" which involved drug eradication and drug interdiction via helicopter. We carried, on board, U.S. Forrest Service, DEA, Highway Patrol (DDCC), the County Sheriff of the county we are working in as well as Guard personnel. It was really fun. All most as good as the old Vietnam days. I thought that you might be interested in that operation what with your law enforcement background and all. We run that operation from July 1st. to October 15th.

Well it's midnight here so I'd better close this massive letter. Give me a call some time if you get a chance. In the meantime take care of yourself, and , as always, thanks for taking the initiative and being the catalyst that cooked off our Association.

Best Regards,

Don Thomson

P.S. I'm going to forward a copy of this to Tom Thalmann just so he will know what's going on with the Historian/Curator.