



WOLFGRAM

Seawolf (HAL-3) Assoc.

Volume 5

Summer 1990

Number 2

I must apologize for this letter being so tardy, but I seem to have my old job back again. Dan Calvert's business is growing and demanding more of his time. Of course, Dan has bribed me well for my efforts. The good news is that the Association is growing and doing well.

Dan Smiley has placed Reunion advertisements in a ever growing list of magazines. And at this point I must comment on Dan's work. It largely goes unnoticed, a small detail in the Reunion planning process. But let me share this fact with you. Dan's work result in locating more new Wolves than any other single effort. Dan deserves a solid, **Well Done**.

While I'm on this topic, "Finding Lost Wolves" is a job that all of us can do. You may have a lost Seawolf brother living in your neighborhood. No you say. Well I've seen it happen. In fact, one Wolf wore his Seawolf hat to work only to discover that one of the guys he had been working with was a Wolf. Imagine working with a guy for ten years and never knowing that you were brother Wolves! You can help by placing a small, free -Public Service Announcement in a local newspaper. Announce the San Diego reunion and list your name as a local contact.

REUNION FACTS

Dates June 14th, 15th and 16th. 1991

Where in San Diego at the Holiday Inn on Hotel Circle. Reservation and deposit information will be forthcoming.

Transportation As with the Pensacola Reunion I will arrange for group airline discounts. Information forthcoming.

Events We are still in the planning stage in this area. This is what we are working on.

Guest Speaker Mystery

The Moving Wall. A portable replica of the Vietnam War Memorial.

Game Warden Wreath Ceremony at NTC on Saturday June 15th, 1991. We are invited to share in this event.

Seawolf Helicopter. The dedication of a Seawolf Helicopter at the San Diego Air Museum.

TOM OLBY ---- Vice President

It really seems that the time has been going by too fast. Once again we will be having a "Seawolf Reunion" in less than a years time. From Kansas City to Pensacola and now San Diego. Not a bad deal.

It seems like just yesterday that Don Thompson and I were at his Florida residence formulating plans for the 1st Seawolf Reunion in Kansas City. I guess now is the time we all have to gear up for San Diego and start spreading the word. We need to try and locate as many Seawolves and families of those Seawolves killed in action. It seems as though each Seawolf Reunion gets bigger and better. If we all pitch in, the next will be the best yet.

I propose to the membership that we have a "Seawolf Challenge Coin" made for our unit and its members. Many of the elite fighting forces in the U.S. military have challenge coins. We were an elite unit. I have a design in mind that is an eye-catcher. On the back of the challenge coin will be space for your name, ect. The coin would be made out of brass and come with a chain. The coin would be expensive and might appreciate. Input for the membership - you - would be appreciated. If anyone has any "hooks" on where we can have these challenge coins made, I'm open for suggestions. If enough members express an interest I'll let the membership know in the next newsletter.

If there is anything that your elected members of the "Seawolf Association" can do for you, please let us know. We need your input to keep this association a success. Let us know what we are doing right and what areas we can improve upon.

Tom Olby's address and telephone number;

GAMEMASTER REUNIONS

November 9th and 10th North West Chapter
contact Dave Wright

TREASURES REPORT

The Seawolf Financial outlook is very good. After our last reunion bills were all paid and we still are able to keep our feet dry.

As of July 10th we have a cash balance of \$8,411. It looks great now but experience tells us that as the reunion draws closer our bank balance will diminish.

Hopefully we won't have the snafu we over dues that we had after the last reunion.

I finally finished working with the IRS on our tax exempt status. We should have an answer around October 3, 1990. I don't expect any problems here.

I dropped a short letter off to Admiral "Z" in regards to us receiving combat aircrew wings. He told me in Florida that he would look into this issue for us.

See you in June 91. Howard.

DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES

Our calendar year has ended, accordingly 1990 Dues are now payable. Look at this letters address label, if the word dues appears, your are due. Please remit \$20 to Howard Jacobs, . Please make checks payable to Seawolf Association.

Born Free
(or The Great Chicken Chase)

Operation BORN FREE started out with a bang, --- but ended with a whimper. Not everything worked successfully in Vietnam (as Pres. Johnson and several others will attest). The fiasco eventually became known as the Great Chicken Chase.

The Binh Thuy wolves must have thought the Skipper had visited Ben Sa Moi once too often when he directed the Dets to practice chasing birds. That's right, he directed that our guys practice chasing birds! Any birds. Anytime. Just get used to it. Why? No reason given at that time.

Meanwhile, there was a pigeon living the good life on the roof of the COMNAVFORV Headquarters building in Saigon. A sailor with pigeon care experience had been ordered in for that purpose. A veterinarian was employed. The food was great. All-in-all, the pigeon must have thought it had died and woke up in pigeon heaven!

By now you're wondering what this is all about. So read on. It turns out that the North Vietnamese sea supply system supporting the VC used homing pigeons for communications. A ship off the coast with supplies would release the pigeon thereby alerting the VC ashore that they were ready to rendezvous. Our Market Time forces intercepted and sank one of these small ships in shallow water roughly off the mouth of the Mekong. Subsequent capture of survivors revealed the presence of a homing pigeon. Somebody decided it would be great if we could release the bird, follow it, and make a SEAL insert on the VC position.

The bird was somewhat the worse for its recent experience. In addition, other preparations had to be made. This would take time. Thus it was that the pigeon got VIP treatment in Saigon while the Seawolves were terrorizing all the other birds in the Delta. The plan was to return the bird to the place where it was captured off the coast and release it. A double gunship fire team, two Sealords with SEALs aboard, and a Black Pony flight all under command/control of an Air Force C-121 Constellation "Spy-in-the-Sky" would then follow the pigeon to its destination.

We learned that visually following a bird was somewhat chancy so the NARDUV command (super technical people) designed a tiny radio transmitter to be strapped to the bird with the antenna affixed to its posterior (details unknown). The gunships had a rudimentary tracking capability using the ILS needle and would at least know when the transmitter was directly ahead.

The great day came and the forces assembled. The pigeon was taken to the half exposed sunken ship where it was originally captured. The Seawolf gunships, Sealords with SEALs, Black Ponies, and C-121 were in a holding pattern to seaward waiting for a signal. The agreed upon signal for start was the term "Born Free" to be announced over the radio when the bird was released.

At the proper instant, when all the aircraft were strung out in a sort of circus parade proceeding inbound toward the pigeon control party, the command and control group aboard the Air Force Connie announced "Born Free." The pigeon was released and the show was on.

The pigeon apparently took one look at the flock of iron birds heading his way and decided to abort the whole thing. It shit the antenna and diti mau'd out of there. As a result, the gunships lost both visual and radio contact with the bird leaving all concerned unemployed --- and very frustrated. There was nothing left to do but to return to base.

That's the end of the story. A long shot the didn't pay off.

Capt. Marty Twite,
USNK RET) C.O. 4/70 - 4/71

P.S. The pigeon showed up back at the COMNAVFORV HQ demanding chow!

Editors note. Will anyone authenticate this tale?

Officers Addresses

President Tom Thalmann (new address)

Vice President Tom Olby

Treasurer Howard Jacobs

San Diego Reunion Rich Hargis

Marty Twite