



# VP ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

AN ASSOCIATION OF VETERANS WHO SERVED WITH THE NAVAL AIR RESERVE PATROL SQUADRONS BASED AT NAS SQUANTUM MA, NAS SOUTH WEYMOUTH MA, AND NAS BRUNSWICK ME.

NOTE, CURRENT AND FORMER MEMBERS OF ANY U.S. NAVY PATROL SQUADRON ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!

**ISSUE 70**

**[HTTP://WWW.VPASSOCIATION.ORG](http://www.vpassociation.org)**

**DEC 2017**

Welcome to another edition of the VP Association newsletter. Until further notice please direct all VP Association-related inquiries or correspondence to Marc Frattasio, PO Box 30, Pembroke MA 02339, 781-294-4491, [marc\\_frattasio@yahoo.com](mailto:marc_frattasio@yahoo.com).

**RECCO:**



**ABOVE:** VP-92 P-3Cs at NAS South Weymouth in 1995 or 1996. This photo was taken from the squadron's duty office in Hangar One. Got something similar to share? Contact Marc Frattasio at [marc\\_frattasio@yahoo.com](mailto:marc_frattasio@yahoo.com).

## **FINAL FLIGHTS:**

We lost Gerald Brown and Robert Neville in September. "Brownie" was an Aviation Storekeeper with VP-92 at NAS South Weymouth. Robert was a pilot who served as VP-92's first commanding officer between 1970 and 1972. We also lost Nick Harvey and Alfred "Rick" Montrose in October. Nick was in VP-92 at NAS Brunswick. Rick was a VP-92 flight engineer at South Weymouth.

## **THE ADMIN FUND:**

The VP Association has no dues but contributions are welcome to help defray the cost of web site hosting, postage, and other expenses.

## **SPEAKING OF THE COST OF PRINTING AND MAILING NEWSLETTERS...**

If you have an e-mail address and get your newsletter in the mail please contact George Driscoll at [gnddriscoll@gmail.com](mailto:gnddriscoll@gmail.com) ASAP so we can send it to you via e-mail. Remember, we do not charge dues and operate on a shoestring thanks to volunteer labor, memorabilia sales, and donations. If you have an e-mail address and get a paper newsletter it would be better for us to send it via e-mail.

## **LOST CONTACT:**

Please inform George Driscoll at [gnddriscoll@gmail.com](mailto:gnddriscoll@gmail.com) when your home or e-mail address changes so we can update our database.

## **NEW MEMBERS:**

Steve "McGoo" Mcdevitt  
VP-92  
[mcstevie.1956@yahoo.com](mailto:mcstevie.1956@yahoo.com)

## **NAS SOUTH WEYMOUTH 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY REUNION**



Among the many VP Association members who came to the reunion event to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the closing of old NAS South Weymouth in Randolph, MA on September 30<sup>th</sup> was George Driscoll. As you can see here, George really likes his NAS South Weymouth t-shirt, which features a design patterned on the sign that was at the original main gate on White Street. More than 200 people came to this event, which raised almost \$4,200 for the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum. The museum is presently closed due to construction activity but it will open again once this work has been completed.

## **A NOTE AND PHOTO FROM BOB MORRISSEY:**

I thought you might like this aircrew photo for the newsletter. This was my first cruise with VP-63Z1 (I had just been released from Willow Grove RESASWATAC East a month earlier) and our squadron name changed a few times (VP-911 and VP-63Z1) until we became V-92. I was in the squadron from 1968 until 1973.

This was a new crew being assembled on the Willow Grove Cruise of 1968 and the two unidentified Officers posed with us because there were so few of us. Later CPO William "Bill" Hannigan came onboard as the ordinance chief, petty officer James "Jimmy" Hall became the radio man, and PO3 Paul Lafrata was the electrician.

**RIGHT:** VP-63Z1 crew at Willow Grove, PA in 1968. Top row left to right: unknown officer, LT CMDR Roy Raja, co-pilot; LT CMDR Dale Petty, pilot; CPO Robert "Bob" MacDonald; unknown officer. Bottom row left to right: PO2 John Glavin, Robert Morrissey, airman (eventually ATN, PO3, MAD and Trail operator).



## **A NOTE AND PHOTO FROM PAUL LAPINSKI:**



Here is a picture taken just prior to decommissioning, by Neptune Aviation of two of the last seven P-2 Neptune (five P2V-5's and two P2V-7's) fire bombers near Missoula Montana on September 30, 2017. This was the same day as our NAS SOWEY 20th Anniversary Reunion! These aircraft are now at the White Sands Municipal Airport in Alamogordo, NM awaiting disposition. Five will be going to museums and two will be retained for the air show circuit.

I have been visiting the maintenance facility at White Sands for the last 20 years, the latest visit being on October 23, 2017. I have made several friends with the P2V maintainers over the years. They

take very good care of their airplanes and are presently transitioning to a four engine BAE-146, which was used as a short haul airliner in Europe for many years. I flew on them several times and they remind me of a small C-5.

Tanker 45, Bu# 140433, (not shown in picture) was assigned to VP-92 during 1972-73. I logged 7.2 hours on 07/10/1972 and 4.8 hours on 03/10/1973 in that aircraft. It was sent to the Military Aircraft Storage and Disposition Center (MASDC) Boneyard, (Davis Monthan?) on 05/09/1973. At a later date the aircraft was sold to Fire Bomber company and subsequently acquired by Neptune Aviation had been utilized until decommissioning.

You may find the Neptune Aviation website at <http://neptuneaviation.com> interesting.

#### **THE VP ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION:**

As you should know, we normally have a reunion banquet in the Boston area during the latter half of September. We did not have a reunion this year so we could support the VP-92 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary event that was held in Brunswick, ME in August. We are considering getting back on schedule and having a VP Association reunion banquet in September 2018, but this is not a certainty at this time. We'll probably have more to report about this in the next newsletter. You should know that there have been some significant changes in recent months that will complicate the reunion planning process going forward. For one thing, the caterer that we have used in the past has gone out of business. This is a huge problem because 1) he gave us a very good deal and 2) he was very flexible in terms of the minimum number of meals required. In addition to this our preferred venue, the Weymouth Elks Hall, has changed how they handle events. Specifically, they have outsourced their events business to a third party. We can no longer rent the Weymouth Elks Hall and bring in the caterer who provides us with the best price, as we have done in the past. We now have to order a package deal from these people. At first glance, this appears to be more expensive than what we've been accustomed to. We are presently exploring what this new arrangement will cost us and are exploring other options too. We may have to change venues and charge more for the reunion banquet going forward. An important factor to consider is that attendance has been falling in recent years. Ten years ago we had 150 or more attendees at the annual reunions. However, we only had about 50 people at our most recent reunion in 2016. This is not a sustainable trend if it continues and we are trying to figure out how to deal with it. We may try holding our reunions every other year instead of on an annual basis and see how that goes. The bottom line is that the next reunion, if we have one, will be at a critical milestone. If we do not get enough people to come, then we'll either stop having them every year or may stop having them at all. If you are interested in seeing the VP Association annual reunions continue, be sure to come to the next one, if we do end up having one.

#### **NAS BRUNSWICK MUSEUM 'WHEELS UP' FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN:**

The Brunswick Naval Museum and Memorial Gardens is trying to raise \$770,000 to pay off the mortgage on the old NAS Brunswick base chapel, make improvements to the building, and set up exhibits. These folks helped host the recent VP-92 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary squadron reunion. If you are looking for an end-of-year charitable donation write-off please consider this worthy organization. They are a 501c3 non-profit educational corporation. For more information go to [www.brunswicknavalmuseum.org](http://www.brunswicknavalmuseum.org). For the record, your newsletter editor sent them a few bucks. How about you?

#### **ARGENTINA'S MISSING SUBMARINE: WHAT WE KNOW (CNN 11/20/2017)**

Efforts to locate an Argentine submarine that has been missing since last week have been ramped up dramatically by a multinational search team of boats and planes, the country's navy says. "We have tripled the search effort, both on the surface and underwater, with 10 airplanes," said Gabriel Galeazzi, a spokesman from the Mar Del Plata Argentine naval base. Ships and aircraft from at least

seven countries are scouring the southern Atlantic for the submarine ARA San Juan, which was last seen Wednesday. "We have 11 ships from the Argentine navy, from municipalities, and from countries that have collaborated with research ships such as Uruguay, Chile, Brazil, Peru, the United States, and (the UK). These ships are following the submarine's planned route, (and are) sweeping the whole area and we also have navy ships sweeping from north to south and from south to north."

### When was it last heard from?

The San Juan was last spotted Wednesday in the San Jorge Gulf, a few hundred kilometers off the coast of southern Argentina's Patagonia region and nearly midway between the bases. On Friday, the navy said they were "conducting operations to resume communications with the ARA 'San Juan' submarine," according to a tweet. The submarine may have tried unsuccessfully to contact naval bases seven times on Saturday. Argentina's Defense Ministry said calls came to different bases between 10:52 a.m. and 3:42 p.m. Saturday, and lasted between four and 36 seconds. Signals received from the area were being analyzed, but are still not determined to be from the crew. If they were sent from the San Juan, they could have originated from a satellite communication device, or from an emergency beacon which could be deployed by the vessel. "We do know they have an emergency satellite communication system," William Craig Reed, a former US Navy diver and submariner, told CNN. "That is a buoy that will pop up to the top. They can send signals from this. They believe that might be the case. Although, unfortunately, it's not panned out. They have not been able to triangulate the signals. There's no way to confirm that they came from the submarine."

### What could have happened?

The vessel could have suffered some sort of "catastrophic failure," Reed says. But, he adds, it "could be something minor that has caused them to either be hung up somewhere or they are on the bottom." As the San Juan is a diesel submarine, not a nuclear-powered one, "it has a limited life underwater," Reed says. Time is ticking for the 44 submariners on board. While submarines of this size and class can stay at sea for around a month, "that doesn't mean they have 30 days underwater. "It's dependent upon the last time they actually recharged their batteries, how long ago they refreshed the air, what's inside the submarine. We just don't know." If it has sunk but is still intact, they will have about a week to 10 days of oxygen, Peter Layton, a visiting fellow at the Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University, in Australia says.

### How often would the crew usually be in contact?

From a crew comfort point of view the sub would very likely travel submerged around 50 meters (165 feet) below the surface, Layton says, only coming near the surface to "snort" -- replenish its oxygen, recharge the batteries by using the diesel engines, and send radio signals -- around once every 24 hours. However, it could depend on whether it was a straightforward transit or if the sub was engaging in other operations en route, Euan Graham, director, international security, of the Lowy Institute for International Policy in Sydney told CNN. "Obviously the Falkland Islands are an intelligence target for Argentina. There is no reason to suggest that it was engaged in this but still a possibility. If so it would need to stay out of detection envelope."

### How hard is it to find a sunken sub?

Finding a vessel that is designed not to be found is more difficult "by an order of magnitude" than a regular shipwreck, Graham says. "In general terms they're designed to be stealthy platforms," he says. "They are difficult to detect underwater... by an order of magnitude." Finding large objects on the seabed is problematic, Layton says. They are usually found by listening passively, hope to hear

the engines, or by active sonar. "If you're sitting at bottom of ocean, you're probably not making a lot of noise," he says. "You can't recharge oxygen, can't run too much equipment." Sonar is only really effective when you're looking for a sub "between the sea floor and the surface, but this one is on the ocean floor. "What you need is something that maps the sea floor," similar to the devices used in the MH370 search, he says.

#### What sort of shape is the sub in?

The San Juan is an old diesel submarine, built in the mid-1980s, but was refitted with new engines and batteries around five years ago, Graham says.

"The hull dates back to '85," he says. "But it shouldn't lose electric power catastrophically." Because of the expansion and contraction of the hull as it ascends and descends deep below the ocean's surface, they are designed to have a shelf life of usually around 30 years. That shelf life has expired, Layton says. Assuming the hull is still intact, it can withstand ocean depths up to around 500-600 meters. If it's resting on Argentina's continental shelf it is likely in waters shallower than this, but if it sank in the depths of the Atlantic Ocean it likely sank below its "crush depth" -- the depth at which the hull buckles under pressure.

#### Is anything hampering search efforts?

Southern Argentina's Patagonia coast is notorious for strong storms. "Currently a powerful low-pressure system is causing wind gusts in excess of 70 kph (around 45 mph) and churning up the South Atlantic Ocean with swells equivalent to a two-story building. This weather will hamper the search efforts for at least the next 48 hours," CNN meteorologist Derek Van Dam said. Given the submarines range, the search area could comprise "thousands of square kilometers," says Layton. "If satellite signals are from sub this whittles things down, gives (search and rescue) a great chance."

#### Can't they send another submarine to find it?

"What is needed is what is in the area, above all, boats with multi-beam sonar, to be able to do the search properly," Argentine naval captain Hector Alonso said. "Sending a submarine to the area to perform some type of search wouldn't add anything because they don't have the technology or the elements to be able to do an underwater search." However, at least one specialist rescue sub will be required if the San Juan is found with the crew still alive. Given that it was constructed in Germany, the design is NATO-compatible, and the US is sending a rescue submersible to the area to undertake a rescue.

#### Assuming it's found, how will the crew members be rescued?

Even if it can be located it will take more time to get a rescue vessel there, the transit time for which could add another couple of days, Graham says, which is problematic when oxygen supplies are diminishing, especially when surface conditions are so rough. "It's difficult to operate in 8-meter (26 feet) waves," he says. Adding to the difficulties of a rescue, we currently "don't know what depth it is located, (and) how precarious the state of the hull could be." The condition of the sub, assuming its resting on the continental shelf is also of key concern. "The sunk submarine needs to be sitting upright -- or nearly so -- on the sea floor so the rescue hatch(es) can be easily reached and docked with," Layton says. "The sea floor, though, is not flat. If the submarine is lying at an acute angle docking could be hard."

CNN article by Euan McKirdy

## **SEARCH FOR MISSING ARGENTINE SUB RAISES GRIM SCENARIOS (New York Times 11/19):**

As search teams raced against time, and stormy seas, to find a missing Argentine submarine, officials said on Sunday that earlier hopeful reports that the crew might have tried to make satellite calls in recent days appeared to be wrong. The Defense Ministry on Saturday had based optimistic statements on reports that there were seven attempts to communicate by satellite phone from the search area off the Patagonia coast. But on Sunday, the Argentine Navy said that it was still analyzing the calls and that there was no “clear evidence” that the calls had come from the submarine. And the satellite phone company Iridium said in a statement that it had found no evidence that an Iridium phone aboard the vessel had been used since Wednesday morning.

The reports came as an increasingly robust international effort was hampered by stormy weather in the 186-square-mile search area. Waves towered as high as 22 feet, while thunderstorms and powerful gusts of wind hindered the visibility and mobility of Argentine, American, British, Chilean and Brazilian military personnel scouring the area in ships and aircraft. “These are less than favorable conditions that do make things difficult,” said Cmdr. Erik Reynolds, a United States Navy spokesman. “You’re talking about 44 sailors out there. If they’re in trouble, there’s a finite amount of time to get to them, so I think there is a great deal of concern by the international community.”

The mystery surrounding the fate of the crew aboard the San Juan, a German-made submarine that has been part of Argentina’s fleet since 1985, has transfixed the nation since news of its disappearance broke early Friday. The submarine last made radio contact on Wednesday. Roughly 200 family members of the service members onboard were invited to await news at the Mar del Plata Naval Base in this seaside city, where two psychologists and one psychiatrist were on hand. “This has turned into one big family, and we are all helping each other get through this difficult time,” María Morales, 51, the mother of crew member Luís García, said in an interview. “Sadly we don’t have any news, but at least there is no bad news.”

On Sunday, Argentine Navy officials sought to temper hopes raised the previous day by reports of the satellite phone calls. Iridium officials have repeatedly called the company’s satellite phone onboard the vessel since Friday, but have had no luck getting through, according to an employee familiar with the effort who was not authorized to speak on the record. Argentine officials would not say whether the vessel had other satellite phones onboard.

Officials involved in the search and submarine experts following developments were contemplating a range of possibilities for what might have happened to the submarine. The best-case scenario, according to some experts, was that the submarine’s communications gear malfunctioned — perhaps as a result of a fire or flood — but that it did not lose the ability to navigate. Working against that theory is the fact that the submarine was due to arrive at its homeport here on Sunday. “It’s grim,” said Capt. Richard Bryant, a retired United States Navy submarine commander. “It implies that the ship is either on the surface without the ability to use its propulsion or that the ship is submerged.”

The first of those possibilities is deeply concerning, but not hopeless, according to experts. Given the stormy conditions, the crew is in significant peril if the vessel is being whip-lashed. The grimdest alternative is that the submarine sank as a result of a catastrophic event such as an explosion or fire. If the crew survived such an event, those onboard could conceivably have enough oxygen for several days after it went under, according to an Argentine Navy official who was not authorized to speak on the record. If it is flailing on the surface, and the crew manages to weather the storm, the sailors would have enough fresh water and food to last for about 25 days, the official said.

The growing concern on Sunday was fueled by the fact that the crew had not activated emergency beacons that are standard in commercial and military vessels. “The fact that we haven’t had

communication for so long, that it didn't show up at port as expected, and the fact that at least the initial search effort hasn't found anything yet all point to the fact that the submarine may well unfortunately have been lost," Captain Bryant said.

In Mar del Plata, residents on Sunday affixed Argentine flags and signs outside the military base. "With the soul at a standstill until they return," one read. "Stay strong Argentina; In God we trust; We await your return," said another message, scrawled in large black letters on a flag. Argentine veterans were among the well-wishers who gathered outside the base on Sunday, a bitterly cold and gusty day in this city, a popular summertime destination. "I think it's very important to be here to show support for the crew and their family, show them there is a city rooting for their safe return," said Adolfo Albornoz, 79, a veteran of the Falklands War. Mr. Albornoz said he resented the continued British control of the islands, which Argentina calls the Malvinas, that were the subject of that short war in 1982. "But in this case I'm glad they're helping out. This is a time to set aside our differences."

*New York Times article by Daniel Politi and Ernesto Londono*

**SKINNY DRAGONS HAVE RETURNED TO HAWAII (Houston Chronicle 10/06):**

Two sub-hunting and surveillance Navy jet planes have reached Hawaii with a mission of protecting the isles. The arrival of the P-8A Poseidon jets extends a Navy maritime presence that started on Oahu in the 1920s, The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported Thursday.

The planes brought three crews from Whidbey Island, Washington, for a continuous presence that will see Whidbey crews rotate through Hawaii for two to three months at a time, the Navy stated. The planes are part of a patrol squadron called the "Skinny Dragons," which was based on Oahu for many years before leaving in March 2016.

It's not the first time since their move that the jets have come through Hawaii, but it's their first deployment here, the Navy stated. The planes will be based at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay until work starts in late fall on the base's runway, then will move to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

"As a former Hawaii-based squadron, VP-4 is excited to be back," squadron Executive Officer Cmdr. Christopher Purcell said. "The Skinny Dragons have returned as the first maritime patrol and reconnaissance squadron on the West Coast to fly the P-8 Poseidon aircraft." Purcell said the jets will "support standing U.S. Pacific Command homeland defense requirements around Hawaii and the U.S. West Coast."

The P-8 is a derivative of the Boeing 737-800 for long-range anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions. The jets can carry missiles and torpedoes. It is capable of broad-area maritime and littoral operations and is being paired with the MQ-4C Triton unmanned aerial vehicle to expand coverage across the vast reaches of the Pacific. The jets can fly at a top altitude of 41,000 feet, up to 560 mph, and can range as far as 4,500 miles from base without refueling.

**HURRICANE HUNTER DESCRIBES FLYING THROUGH THE EYE (The Verge 10/05):**

Hurricane hunter Ian Sears often jokes that the most dangerous part of his day is not flying through the eye of a hurricane, it's driving to the runway and climbing a steep ladder to get on board the plane. Sears is a meteorologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). He flies on sturdy planes through some of the planet's strongest storms to gather precious data that will help forecasters determine where a hurricane is heading and how powerful it'll be when it gets there.

If people in Texas had a few days to prepare before Hurricane Harvey came barreling down with unprecedented amounts of rain last month, it's because of the work that Sears does. NOAA has two special airplanes for the job. One is the P-3, which flies at about 10,000 feet or below, directly into the worst of the hurricane and through the eye. The other is the Gulfstream IV, which flies around the hurricane at about 41,000 to 45,000 feet. Think about them as cars, Sears says. "A P-3 is gonna be kind of equivalent to your Humvee or a Jeep that is built for rugged terrain," he tells The Verge. "The Gulfstream IV is probably more like your Lamborghini."

The airplanes are basically flying meteorological stations. The rugged P-3 measures pressure, humidity, temperature, and the speed and direction of a hurricane's winds. It also gathers data on the exact location of the storm, its structure, and its intensity. The Lamborghini-esque Gulfstream IV is key for understanding the environment around the storm, like the low- and high-pressure systems that help steer hurricanes around, determining where exactly they'll make landfall. All this data is transmitted to the National Hurricane Center in real time; it's fed into supercomputers that predict where the hurricane is going. Those forecasts are then used by authorities to call for evacuation orders and help people like me and you brace for the storm.

It's a tiring job — with 12- to 13-hour-days, Sears says — and turbulence that sometimes feels like more like a roller coaster than a commercial flight. But it's also a rewarding one. At the end of the day, it's thanks to the data collected by the hurricane hunters that people can save their lives during monster storms. "You feel very accomplished when you get back on the ground," Sears says. "You feel like you're helping your neighbor. You feel like you're helping your countrymen. And it's a sense of duty that we're very proud of."

In the midst of this very active hurricane season, The Verge spoke with Sears about what it's like to fly through the eye of a hurricane, what dangers he faces, and what makes the job worth it.

### What's it like to fly into a hurricane?

Every hurricane has its own personality. They're all very different. Some of them are very angry at times. Some of them are very docile. The transit out to the hurricane is often beautiful weather. And then the clouds start to just kinda slowly fill in, and the next thing you know, you're at the outermost rain band. You see it on the radar and you know at this point, 'Okay, it's time to get to work and be ready for anything.' So the ride often can be very smooth headed into the eye wall.

It gets progressively worse and worse and worse, until, at some point you, see very clearly on your radar scope that there is a mean, angry eye wall staring at you. And you can't necessarily see it because you're in clouds the whole time. You can only see it on radar, and the radar picture is telling you that the system is wrapping up, it's very turbulent, and you're preparing for this. And then you hear the rain really beating against the fuselage and the windscreen, and it gets louder and louder and louder. And then finally, as you're approaching the eye wall, it's extreme amounts of rain, the cabin is often being jostled around like your worst roller coaster — very strong, turbulent motion both up and down and sometimes even side to side.

And then it starts to lighten up a little bit as you're starting to get into the eye. And then very, very shortly after that, it's just bright. There is not a cloud near you. All the clouds are below you. You can see the eye wall extending up thousands of feet over you. At that point, you know you're in the eye. And once you get there, you have to go right back through it all again out the other side. And so you see this big wall of clouds that you know that you have to fly through. There's no other way out.

What's the mood when you're approaching the storm? Is it intimidating, or are you used to it by now?

If you ever get used to it, I think you're in the wrong business. You have to have a healthy respect for every hurricane. They all present their own unique challenges. And I say this because we always want to do this safely. And we can do it safely because, one, we have a lot of experience. Two, we have a very solid plan for when we're about to go fly through a hurricane. And three, we respect the power of nature and what it can bring to us. So we're not necessarily scared, but we are prepared for the worst and we're hoping for the best.

What sorts of calculated risks do you take to get the data that you need?

Any time you board an airplane, there are risks that you're taking. So one of the things that we really do is we've tried to learn from mistakes or experiences that people before us have flown. So it's kind of like the campfire talks of thousands of years ago, where you're learning about the dangers of what it is that you're doing. Because flying through hurricanes is a very unnatural thing. Aviation was not designed to fly through hurricanes.

As the meteorologist on board, I'm looking for specific characteristics in the radar returns. And if there's something very specific to a section that we're about to fly through, it's my responsibility to let our pilots know, "Hey, there is this feature here that is potentially unsafe. Let's avoid that particular region of a hurricane." And so it's very much an experience and a knowledge passed down and talking about it. And sometimes you have to experience situations to understand that those are the ones that we need to avoid in the future.

Has flying through hurricanes changed your view of them and the destruction they cause?

It's very, very different being in an airplane. The duration that you're being exposed to the hurricane environment is much, much less than when you're riding one out on the ground. It's not your home that is being ripped up to a degree by the hurricane. You're out there trying to make sure that the information is gonna be received by the people on the ground. And so you get an up-close and personal look at the sheer power of a hurricane. Every time you see it, you're always amazed at the power of Mother Nature and what she can bring.

Most recently, Hurricane Irma went right through my state [Florida], and this time it was a little more personal. It's the first time in my nine hurricane seasons doing this that it's been my state, my family that has been in the crosshairs of a hurricane. And so at that point, you don't change what you do. You don't change the way you go about your daily lives. But it brings you back to the fact that we are doing this for the American people, to show them that there is a hurricane out there, it is this strong, this is where it's going, and make the correct preparations well ahead of time. So it makes the job that we're doing valuable. Because if we can warn people, get information to the people, then any risk that we're taking makes it worth it.

*The Verge article by Alessandra Potenza*

**NORTH KOREAN SUB ACTIVITY AT “UNPRECEDENTED” LEVELS (Daily Mail 09/01):**

The US has reportedly detected a ramp-up in North Korean submarine activity and tests of 'cold launch' submarine missile ejection systems. A US defense official told CNN on Monday that 'highly unusual and unprecedented levels' of North Korean submarine activities had been detected, including three 'cold ejection' tests in July. Cold ejection involves the use of pressurized gas to expel a missile from the launch tube before ignition to reduce the risk of catastrophic damage to the vessel. The latest cold ejection test took place on land at Sinpo Naval Shipyard on Sunday, the defense official said.

North Korea also engaged in 'unusual deployment activity' earlier this month, with a Romeo-class submarine patrolling 100 kilometers out to sea off the coast of Japan, much farther than usual, the official said. North Korea is believed to have about 70 submarines in its fleet, but most are older and unable to fire missiles. The regime's newest and largest submarine, the diesel powered Sinpo-class, is the only one believed to have ballistic missile launch capability. The Sinpo-class is believed to have a range of 2,800 kilometers, less than half the distance from North Korea to Hawaii. There is only one confirmed Sinpo-class sub (also called Gorae, or whale) in the North Korean fleet.

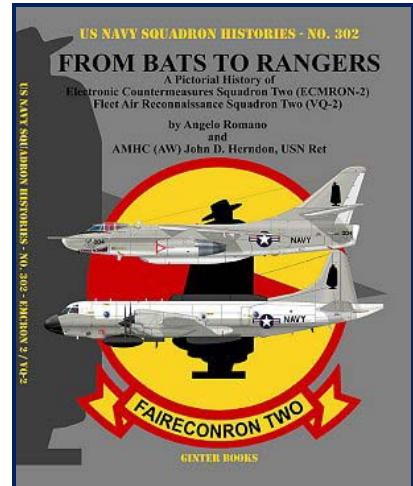
However, the US has monitored regime leader Kim Jong Un's fleet more carefully since an incident in 2010 when a North Korean sub torpedoed a South Korean naval vessel. North Korea has conducted at least one successful submarine-based missile test, firing a Pukkuksong-1 intermediate-range ballistic missile last year. North Korea has successfully tested two land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles this year, with the latest test last week indicating the missile could reach Los Angeles, Denver, or Chicago. It is unclear if the escalation in submarine testing and activity points to a build-up towards a test of a sub-based ICBM.

On Tuesday, US and South Korean experts said Japanese video footage of last week's ICBM test indicates the warhead did not survive re-entry. Footage of the Hwasong-14's re-entry vehicle shortly before it crashed into the sea suggests it failed to survive the extreme heat and pressure after re-entering the Earth's atmosphere following its launch. Analysts say the North will likely conduct more flight tests of the Hwasong-14 missile to obtain a successful re-entry vehicle, which is needed to return a warhead to the atmosphere from space so it can hit its intended target. US President Donald Trump said at a cabinet meeting Monday of North Korea that the situation 'will be handled.' But he didn't elaborate.

*Daily Mail article by Keith Griffith*

### **RECOMMENDED READING:**

Those of you who spent time at NS Rota Spain during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s should remember VQ-2. These folks operated specialized electronic surveillance configured EP-3s from this base for many years, sharing the ramp with "regular" ASW P-3s from the various patrol squadrons that were deployed there. Angelo Romano (who your newsletter editor knows) and John Herndon have put together a new book about this interesting squadron. The book manages to pack more than 600 photographs into 240 pages. This book would make a very nice holiday present for you or somebody you know. You can check it out at [www.ginterbooks.com](http://www.ginterbooks.com).



### **ON THE INTERNET:**

A friendly reminder that there are groups on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com> covering VP-92, NAS South Weymouth, and NAS Brunswick. Go to Facebook and do a keyword search for each group in order to find them. Another good resource on the Internet is Nevin Frankel's VP Navy web site at <http://www.vpnavy.org>. Check them out if you can.

## **MONTHLY MEETING:**

Members who can do so are welcome to join us for lunch on the second Thursday of every month at Warren's Place in South Weymouth, MA (in the Whole Foods Plaza off Route 18) from 11:30 to 13:30. Please note the new date and new location, which is close to old NAS South Weymouth.

## **PARTING SHOT:**



**ABOVE:** VP-92 personnel at NS Lajes in the Azores Islands during the squadron's annual training in 1979. Note the cows grazing in the background. These were a common feature of the airfield that were tough to get used to since they occasionally crossed the taxiways, runways, etc. Got something similar to share with your old shipmates? Contact Marc Frottasio at [marc\\_frottasio@yahoo.com](mailto:marc_frottasio@yahoo.com).



***Until Next Time, Lose Not Thy Speed In Flight Lest The Earth Rise Up And Smite Thee – “Frat”.***

