

In true fighter pilot form, the "Last Griffin F-16" email rapidly deteriorates and becomes Christmas Party material. ALL of the replies are included.

From beginning to ...

From: [Sikora, Victor S LtCol USAF ANG 144 FW/SE](#)
To: [194 FS Griffins for Life](#)
CC: [Navin, Sean D LtCol USAF ANG 194FS/CC](#); [York, John P Col USAF ANG 144 OG/CC](#); [Drake, Reed C Col USAF ANG 144 FW/CD](#); [Garrison, Clay L Col USAF ANG 144FW/CC](#)
Subject: Last Griffin F-16
Date: Thursday, November 07, 2013 1:21:22 PM

Griffins for Life,

Today was the last day of the F-16 for the 144FW. Lt Col Sean "Jerky" Navin took off at 1045 today to deliver it to the Tucson ANG (162FW).

24 years of F-16s for the 144FW

Be sure to raise a toast with us at the annual 194FS Christmas Party. I believe it's scheduled for January 10th at Fort Washington. You should be receiving invitations soon from Maj Dirk "Diggler" Lough. I'm told there will be plenty of humorous material!

Siko

7 Nov, 13:28 From Jim "B.O.B" McNab

Siko,

Thanks for the note.

24 years in the F-16 was a pretty good run! I am glad I got to be a part of it.

Let's hope the 194th continues in its tradition of outstanding service as a fighter unit in the California Air National Guard.

Jim McNab
aka B.O.B.

7 Nov, 14:00 From Danny "2-Dogs" Cerna

Siko -

Thank you, my friend! I'm headed to the local watering hole, right now, to toast the F-16 & all my pals who shared in that great era!

Two Dogs

8 Nov, 08:19 From Anthony "AB" Bourke

Some great memories! And to think that Gruver made General after all those great years. What happened to the rest of us??????

Thanks for the note Siko.

AB

8 Nov, 08:39 From Sean "Sparky" Bautista

Hey Vic,

Thanks for the note. What a great airplane, doing the best mission with the best guys in the business!
To the Viper!

Sparky

8 Nov, 08:42 From Pat "Stinky" Belanger

Siko and all,

24 years in a great airplane such as the F-16 must be some kind of record. I do see at least one good side to Jerky's flight. It is going to another ANG unit who will take good care of it. I was tasked to fly (dispose of) two F-102's and an F-106 during previous transitions. Those went to the boneyard to become drones to be shot down by newer airplanes. Bitter-sweet memories.

The other positive thing is that our unit (yes it is still my unit too) is still in fighters. A good friend was in the Reno guard flying RF-4's and I just found out that when they transitioned to C-130's, it was the unit leaders that instigated it, not higher ups. That must have really hurt some feelings!

Anyway, "Fighters Forever in Fresno" . Should be a new country song

All the best,

Pat

8 Nov, 08:50 From Pete "Hoe" Moe

AB, I guess you didn't get the memo. I was proficiency-advanced to four star general by Phil Skains, then elected a highly respected Senator, then won the the Nobel War Prize. I did MUCH better than Gruvateous.

Siko, much thanks for keeping us old delusional fucks in the loop.

Hoe

8 Nov, 10:19 From Jack "Lightning" Bolt

Wow that makes a few of us feel old (actually we are). Great times with great buds, sad to see it go. But at least they are getting single seat F4s ops I mean F15s :) Cheers, Lightnin

8 Nov, 13:11 From Paul "Gruve" Gruver

Siko,

Thanks for the note.

I still remember my first drill in the unit, all proud with my new patches and all. I had NO idea.

Ludwig walks right up to me and asks, "who the heck are you, another wannabe?" After I told him I had been a wannabe, upgraded to gonna-be, and finally graduated to "I are one," he was completely unimpressed, shook his head and walked on to his next mission.

I was hoping someone would say something like, "don't worry, he hates everyone." Well, we all know Ludwig was/is a great guy who gets along with everybody, so I just figured I was doomed before I even flew my first sortie.

And then I met a real welcoming guy named The Doctor, who really did hate new guys, especially those with REGAF in their recent past. I started to worry when I heard he was the best shooter in the Air Force. At least he was quite possibly the funniest guy I'd ever been in a room with.

A very large man whose name was Bee-Oh-Bee backed up to the corner, squeezed so hard his face turned red, blew a small thermonuclear device out of his keester, and then laughed so infectiously, you didn't know whether to laugh, cry, or both. Your eyes certainly watered, however.

Guys quacked loudly when some tall bald guy in a flight suit walked in whose name was strangely girlish...Bubbles, or Buffy or something.

There was a guy who clearly wasn't from the Western US, who'd had 19 or 20 wives, and whose vocabulary seemed dominated by "heh-heh, heh-heh" and would eventually would go on to marry/divorce the squadron commander's daughter less than half his age. Guys told me that if I ever briefed him, to just keep talking even if I got the RCA Dog look and the "heh-heh" treatment.

And then I had my first briefing as #4 out to W283/5. (P.S. I can't remember who the actual players were, so I'm randomly throwing three guys under the bus.) Some guy name Mikey, or Buddy, or Buddly said "I'm Lead, Grinder, you're two, Two Dogs you're three, and New Guy, you're four, and we're gonna do a low, medium, and a high fly up. Questions?" I asked nothing until the other three started standing to leave the briefing room.

Finally, I couldn't stand it and committed heresy by asking "when's the briefing?" I can't say for sure, but I think the responses included "ignoramus", "just hang on, you'll be fine", "fxxx-ing new guy", and assorted stares and head shaking. Mahhhhhvelous.

And all that was before ground school on Sunday. Animal House in flight suits, but with a few less circus animals. Going home with face- and gut-aches from laughing hard all day, and quite possibly without a single productive thing accomplished.

How do you answer your bride's question, "How was your first drill, honey?!" I think that's when the whiskey started.

Holy cow, what kind of nutcase place did I just join?! Should I have been more suspicious when they chose me to join based on a golf swing? WHO WERE THESE GUYS?

Quite likely the most impressive bunch of aviators I ever had the honor of flying with. Guys who'd known each other for centuries, took care of each other (and, eventually, even new guys, after an appropriate torture period), and who would and did go to any lengths to get better in these wonderful grey fighters. Guys who deployed year after year, sat alert on weekends and holidays, and never complained (more than eight or nine times per day, as fighter pilots are allowed and encouraged to do.) Guys who invited your family, sight unseen, up to the cabin for the weekend, or out to the lake. Guys whose wives welcomed the New Wife with dinner and tennis invitations.

Guys who'd been through the great times, the hard ones, and the brutal ones as well, and reveled in this brotherhood that would withstand the best and worst anyone could throw at them. And still deploy to combat in a theater all the way around the world, bring everyone back, and still sign up for Thanksgiving alert. Guys who throw marshmallows at the annual Christmas party, in January for crying out loud, and who have the brain power to poke every guy in the eye via the Rappin' Raisins Schtick.

Guys who never, EVER missed an active air scramble, but who could tell grotesque stories of biological warfare in their helmet bags returning from Panama.

Why are these guys like this?

Because it's what these guys, these Griffins, do. It really is all about a brotherhood who has fly, fight, win in its DNA, but who is extraordinarily protective of the means by which it glues itself together to keep getting it done every minute of every day. It's like the beer commercial these days that declares, "It's not weird if it works." It does and will, even as we move into the world of Rodan and the twin-tailed tennis court.

I'm so very proud to have been a part of this magnificent unit's F-16 era, and will savor my very small place in its proud history until I breathe my last.

GRIFFINS RULE!

Gruve
Griffin For Life

8 Nov, 13:37 From Anthony "AB" Bourke

Well said General!!!!

8 Nov, 13:57 From Jim "B.O.B" McNab

As one of the '194th graybeards' from the prehistoric past, I would be interested in any photo CD made available

8 Nov, 16:37 From Scott "Road Kill" Keller

...anyone there to witness B.O.B kill the mouse, destroy a portion of the ceiling? I was!

Remember the guarded smile on Howdy's face? LOL!...he didn't know whether to laugh or get serious...LOL!

Howdy, I've provided a link to the Presentationmate demo on youtube.

Remember when I created the first one in your wood shop? It's now patented...took me 6 years, but it all began in your shop!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vaAHog69GQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQY84RTLeVg>

BTW Bee-oh-Bee, prior to my brother literally bleeding to death last Easter week, we spoke often of your flight...remember the one where you took him up...could see Los Angeles and San Francisco at the same time? Hmmmmm...how high of an altitude were you.

Fresno came up often while spending the last few months with my brother John...may he RIP.

Love you all...wished I were young again.

Road Kill

8 Nov, 17:27 From Bill "Buffy" Carveth

Well said Gruves. I am proud that most of my 24 yrs were spent keeping some of the best aviators flying and honing their skills in preparation for what ever the threat of the time. It was a very special honor to ride in the Viper with real fighter pilots; Griffins forever.

William Carveth

8 Nov, 19:34 From Ron "Aileron" Yelton

Gruve, you really hit the nail on the head! There isn't any other unit that can compare to the 194th.

After finishing F-4 school down at Homestead AFB with B.O.B., Chris Hill and Willy Benton, instead of heading on home I flew up to Otis AFB looking for another job (they were going to keep the F-106 for a few more years). And other than Snort – who in the hell would ever want to fly the lead sled? :) Anyway, I ended up having two interviews with them and with a good word from Jamie they actually offered me a job there.

In the end I didn't go. Why? Those guys were absolutely miserable. No one ever smiled. Ever! Where else but at the 194th could you laugh your ass off every time you went to work, especially on Sunday Drill. I don't think I ever laughed so hard as at the Christmas Parties of the 80s and 90s. Mork and Lightning doing their skits... OMG! I don't think any other unit flew as well and had so much fun doing it. What a great gang of guys to hang around with!

It was sooooo cool getting to fly the ADF F-16. For the first time the ANG had jets that were more capable than the active duty F-16s. So satisfying to lob an AIM-7 or AMRAAM at a guy that had only Heaters. At least we finally had a fighting chance against the Eagles, and the Navy guys.

The time I spent with all you guys hold some of the best memories of my life. It's definitely bittersweet that the last F-16 has flown at FAT. But in the end it's not the airframe – it's the people, the lifelong friends!

Aileron

8 Nov, 20:44 From Skip "Skip" Fleshman

Here here.. Good stuff

8 Nov, 21:40 From Ryan "Hawaiian" Orian

I also have fond memories of the 194th. What a blast we had!
Hawaiian

9 Nov, 10:22 From Jon "JT" Tagget

(In your best rappin voice...)

Tis-the-end of an era with-the latest change
The-Fresno ramp is lookin really strange
Is-it-really-true that-the-viper is gone?
WTF, o-ver? No-more- darts in-the-lawn?

Things-are-now different at-the-194th
With two tailed, twin engine flying tennis courts
We-respect the Eagle, that much is sure
But-you aint shit without a stick limiter!

Go Vipers...go Falcons...go Lawn Darts...they rule!

(insert tacky dance here...)

Flyin in Fresno will never be-the-same
Cuz flyin in an Eagle is a different game
Those were the days when-you-could-pull 9 G's
And no one doubted pilot masculinity

Of course we know that the Griffins still rule
16's or 15's whatever their tool
The end of an era is now at hand
but-the-194th is-still-the-best in the land!

Go Vipers...go Falcons...go Lawn Darts...they rule!

Alas... It's true... Off into the sunset it goes...

SALUTE!

JT

9 Nov, 11:43 From Skip "Skip" Fleshman

Awesome pictures but still hard to fathom that the 194th is turning gay.

9 Nov, 11:49 From Doug "Cuda" Munday

Nice one JT!

Thanks, Siko for keeping us Old Farts in the loop.

I've really enjoyed all the comments...brings back great memories (mammaries?). The Viper was something else. I feel very fortunate to have flown it and to have served in the 194th! Keep up the traditions!

Cuda

9 Nov, 11:59 From John "Bull" Bullock

Holy Shite! The 144th is now flying Eagles?? That rumor only took 20 years to happen...they'll have to start asking wannabes the question that Dr Mork asked me when I interviewed- "If you were on a bus with a bunch of fags, would you get off?"

Lots of great memories flying, deploying and hanging around the squadron with you guys.

Check 6,

Bull

9 Nov, 12:14 From Scott "Road Kill" Keller

...WHAT'S AN F-15?

9 Nov, 12:18 From Mark "Granny" Crump

It's like a B-1 or F-111 but it has two tails.

9 Nov, 14:47 From John "Bull" Bullock

It's old, like us.

Still don't believe this actually happened. Anybody have a photo of a 144th Eagle?

9 Nov, 15:54 From Mike "McSnapper" McNiff

image.jpeg

image.jpeg

image.jpeg

Sent from my iPhone

Wingless Griffin for life

9 Nov, 15:50 From Mark "Dr. Mork" Taylor

Kinda cool they kept Black Betty to the end, Mongo's old jet.....

The Dr.

9 Nov, 16:36 From John "Bull" Bullock

Thanks Mike.

10 Nov, 12:36 From John "Bull" Bullock

Not to worry Skip, this could actually help the Griffins in Obummer's "Gay is Okay" military.

Replace the threatening Bird of Prey on the tails with a rainbow motif, and load up the chaff and flare dispensers with food stamp debit cards, condoms, and abortion pills. Fly over Nancy Pelosi's SF district and hit the paddle switch. Boom! Instant Presidential Unit Citation and guaranteed F-35 conversion.

10 Nov, 13:15 From Doug "Cuda" Munday

Well said Bull. Isn't that a sad commentary...

10 Nov, 14:23 From Chris "Warf" Seher

Oh that's funny shit

10 Nov, 14:45 From Scott "Road Kill" Keller

...just another example of what happens when the effeminate takes over a society.

10 Nov, 16:36 From Steve "Goober" Jennings

Ya know...someone needs to make a Christmas party skit out of all of this entertainment. This year's party should be very, very entertaining. - Goobs

10 Nov, 16:49 From Al "Howdy" Heers

Great hear from all you guys crawling out of the woodwork with your funny and timely verse (JT) and witticisms! Howdy

11 Nov, 09:25 From Dave "Moto" Cobb

Howdy Howdy,

Here is to you and to all the others that have had the privilege to serve our Great Country and the Flag!

Are you an Opa yet? Talked to Jad this morning.

Carole and I send our best to you and your gang!

Yer ol pal,

Moto

I look forward to seeing "tennis courts" over the ranch in December.

11 Nov, 13:17 From Chris "Warf" Seher

Buffy you rock, this chain shows me that Fighter Pilots can not be PC correct or nor should they be. The way the pc correct world is going the world is losing the true fighter pilot. Flying is longer the priority, dotting the l's and having ur zipper all the way up and not having men's fitness or nose art from ww2 in ur office, is most important. Not to mention camradrie, not allowed with out sneaking? I however love this email chain is great, Bull is killing me, and comments from Gen Gruv were outstanding!! Also, love Howdy piping in!!! He always says it right in a way u know what he is saying but does not actually say it. Howdy is by far the the best leader I have ever worked for... Hear hear to the Griffins!!! And to know Fighter pilots never change!!!

Warf

11 Nov, 15:26 From Kirk "Magnum" Toomey

Spot on brother!! Unfortunately the future of the fighter pilot as we know it is rapidly fading into the history books. Like they say, timing is EVERYTHING!...we should all be glad that most of us were able to take part in some of the greatest fighter pilot experiences of our life time and the camaraderie we shared will never be equaled under the duress of today's PC environment.

Peace out!

Magnum
aka Toominator
aka Sockit
aka WTF

11 Nov, 13:36 From Jim "B.O.B" McNab

All past and present Griffins,

All of you guys coming out of the woodwork with your timely and humorous comments solidifies the feeling I have felt all along about the 194th. We Griffins have always been something special at Fresno and the tradition continues on. Aileron said it best that, it isn't the iron we flew, it is the OUTSTANDING people flying and maintaining that iron -- whatever jet is sitting on the ramp -- that makes Fresno special. Hearing all your great comments (JT, Aileron, Bull, Howdy, et al) really nails it. All of you guys are the best and I am damned proud to say that I am a GRIFFIN.

To you guys now flying the Eagle/Rodan/Tennis Court with the Griffin on the tail(s), keep the ball rolling by passing that fine tradition on to the next generation of Griffins.

Jim McNab aka B.O.B.

11 Nov, 16:24 From Bill "Guido" Lucido

Buffy,

Keep your hands off of me!!!

Guido

11 Nov, 16:39 From Scott "Road Kill" Keller

...and don't let the PC (Marxist) magesterium get ya down!

Buffy...got my first colonoscopy in 2012...want to describe it?!...ohhhh the good ol days.

I didn't forget you either Sniffy.

12 Nov, 19:16 From Tom "Pee Wee" Westbrook

All

When I enlisted in January 1977 (it makes me feel REALLY old to put that in writing) "Sauce" the recruiter was telling all of us eager kids that "the papers are signed, the ink is dry, we are going to have F-15s on the ramp by 1980." 33 years later his prediction finally comes true.

What a great 33 years it was. Great to hear from all who have chimed in - Paul hit it out of the park. From being a Boy Scout at Camp Mirimichi watching the world stop as the 102s came roaring up Huntington Lake with burners blazing, to working in the radar docs fixing 106s and dreaming of flying, to chasing my IP's contrail into the Florida sunset doing 1.3 mach on a straight ahead rejoin and all the magic that followed.....it was one amazing journey.

We lost some great friends along the way, Mike Mendez, Tom Fishburn, Wes Dean and JJ Jordan. I am grateful that in 24 years of Viper flying, we lost a couple jets, but everyone came home, That is an amazing testament to your professionalism, the hard work and dedication of hundreds of maintainers, and the grace of God.

Thanks to all of you for the being the very best of what this nation can produce. Your willingness to risk your lives in the defense of this nation is no small thing. I am proud to know you all, and humbled to be able to call you "brothers".

Congrats to all who get to put yet another fighter into their logbooks - and a sincere welcome to all the new Griffins. May this proud tradition continue forever.

peewee