

February 5, 2011

On December 23rd, 2009, I put out a request for help to Cpl Vance Hall, on the 1st ANGLICO website.



The request was as follows:

***** start of initial request for help *****

My name is Warren E. Fuller, I was assigned to the 138th RR Avn Co. , 224th Avn Bn. from February 1972 until February 1973. We were stationed in Phu Bai until October 1972, when we moved to DaNang. I flew a RU21d and performed an airborne direction finding mission in I Corps, my callsign was **Vanguard 969**. Capt. Egan and I were "**sky brothers**", which is to say that we only saw each other while we were flying our missions. When an aircraft entered an AO (**area of operation**), the procedure was to broadcast your call sign and the altitude that you would like to maintain. After which, you would negotiate altitudes to be maintained for air safety.

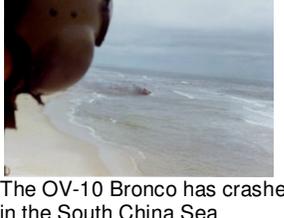
	The first time I " really met " Capt. Frank Egan, was on an early morning mission. I had just checked in to the AO and asked to work at Angels 10 (10,000 feet MSL). He then informed me that he was working at Angels 8.5. We wished each other luck and that was that. About 30 minutes later, as we were working a target, I had this uneasy feeling to look to my left and down the end of the wing.
U-21D, Laffing Eagle Mission 1972	
	To my surprise, there was an OV10 just off of my wing ... a conservative estimate would put his wing about 2 feet from my wing. My heart immediately lodge in my throat and I could hardly breathe. He just looked at me and gave me a thumbs up as he veered off to his left. The ensuing " chatter " we had on the radio would make this report XXX rated, suffice it to say that we became instant friends.
OV-10 Bronco, Forward Air Controller	

Our missions were 4 hours in length, and we were given Air Force in-flight lunches. Frank would always ask me what I was having for lunch. I always tried to get the tuna fish lunch, which also came with a can of peaches...which I hated. Our standing joke was that *I'd slide the peaches out on to the end of left wing for him to pick up at his leisure.*

Before I go any further, there seems to be some confusion about the actual date of the shoot down. All of the Air Force documents that I can find, put the date at **December 19th, 1972**. For this action, I received the **Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)**, and the date used in the citation is **December 22nd, 1972**, which can be viewed at the following URL ...

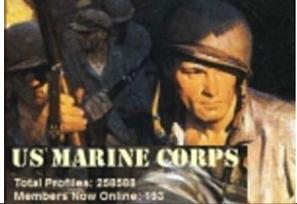
<http://www.wefpages.com/family/DFC%20Award.pdf>

I wish that I had kept better records of this event, but looking at my **DA-759s** (US Army official flight records), I see that I was flying left seat on the 19th and right seat on the 22nd. On both missions, I was the Aircraft Commander, but I remember distinctly being in the right seat when the May Day call came.

	<p>Frank had taken a hit from an SA-7 (heat seeking missile) and was heading to the coast, so that he and his back seat observer (Call sign Wolfman 44) could punch out. I immediately got a visual on his aircraft and started descending towards him, keeping him in view at all times. He told me that he would have to punch out when he got to 800 feet. While following him, I declared myself as the "on scene commander" and established radio contact with everyone that I thought could help.</p>
	<p>I had a US Navy ship head in our direction so as to lend support, a flight of Huey helicopters from DaNang for pickup, a local ground commander who was in the vicinity of the beach and a pair of jet fighters who were in our general area and might have been working with Frank earlier. As they approached the coast, they punched out at 800 feet, but I only saw one parachute deploy.</p>
	<p>Wolfman 44 contacted me when he hit the ground and then told me that Frank's parachute never deployed and that he appeared to be dead. I was later to find out that the failure of a D-ring prevented the parachute from deploying. At this point, my memory fails me in that I think Wolfman 44 and Frank were picked up by a Huey and taken to the US Naval ship, where Frank was pronounced dead.</p>

A day or so later, **Wolfman 44** came over to my unit to meet and thank me for my help, but I was out on another mission. I've searched the Internet on a number of occasions to try and find out who **Wolfman 44** was, but without success.

***** end of initial request for help *****

	<p>Before I knew it, members of Marines TWS and Air Force TWS got involved,... and the search for Wolfman 44 took on a life of its own. It took two weeks to track down Wolfman 44, who turned out to be Capt. Jon Patterson and was very much alive and doing well.</p>
	<p>In September 2010, Janie (my wife) and I hosted Jon and Gail (his wife) to a lunch in Winston-Salem, NC. When Jon and I began to talk about the shoot down, he held up his hand for me to pause. He reached down into a bag that was sitting by his chair and pulled out the ejection seat handle that he used in the shoot down 38 years earlier.</p>
	<p>On February 2nd, 2011, I received an Email from CWO Joe Bowen, who was with F troop, 4th CAV (Callsign Centaur 3) and was the Huey Army Mission Commander that picked up Capt. Egan and Capt. Patterson. They were based out of Tan My and responded immediately to the May Day call. After they were picked up, Capt. Egan and Capt. Patterson were taken to the ARVN 1st Inf Div HQ (as it was the closest medical point) and not the US Navy ship, as I had originally concluded.</p>

Rescue Huey	
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Pictures taken from the Huey that CWO Bowen was flying that day ...



I found this part of the email extremely interesting:

“Wolfman 44 ... Contact! You are one fortunate Marine!
 My interpreter onboard told me the soldiers that helped you and us were NVA...
 He was yelling on the intercom that we **“must turn around!!! about twenty times”** as we approached you. Those dudes that helped you were supposedly deserting NVA Recon guys trying to get to Hue and the PX for a Coke. They were out of the fight but knew not to try and surrender to the Viet Marines. The senior guy supposedly asked for some food and water and our interpreter told the gunner who pushed out two cases of LLRPs. I guess they were on their way to the PX after that with full bellies.

 <p>NVA Soldiers with pith helmets</p>	<p>I thought it was hog wash until two weeks later when he showed me a picture he had taken as we turned around and headed to get you to a medic. There in the scrub were four guys with pith helmets and holding AK’s in a series of five pictures he took when he figured that we were not going to die there on the beach. I tried to get copies but never did and tried to look him up after the Cease Fire.</p>
	<p>I was volunteered (and got two HUEY’s to support) to stay there with the Four Power Military Commission at the MACV Compound until 31 March when we all left.”</p> <p>Regards, Centaur 3 F troop, 4th CAV Joe</p>