

Robert G. "Bob" Hughes
(Goodlivin' Three-Four)
VF-781
1950-1951



(photograph from Burr Williams)

LT Robert G. "Bob" Hughes
"Prison break imminent."

Yokosuka Naval Hospital, Japan
(after being shot down in North Korea)
1951

November 29, 1951
(unnamed) newspaper article

Most harrowing experience was that of LT. Bob Hughes of VF-781, who was forced to ditch his plane and float on a raft for some six hours in heavy seas before he was sighted and picked up by a destroyer. In an exclusive interview, LT. Hughes told Tex Young: "After becoming separated from my wingman on a routine photo hop, I discovered that my radio was out and that my hydraulic lines had been shot away. I started back to the ship, but found that I didn't have enough fuel so changed my course and headed for Wonsan. I saw that I wasn't going to make it and decided to ditch while about 20 miles from the beach.

The nose of the plane was torn away on the initial impact and when I tried to crawl from the cockpit, I discovered that my leg was broken.

After finally getting into my raft, I drifted into area of kelp, where I found two apples and three green peppers and a melon.

At about 1945, I was picked up by the destroyer *Hopewell*, which attempted to sink my still floating plane with her 5' guns. The operation was finally given up and at last reports, the jet was still afloat.

I was transferred to the *BHR* around 0300 and my worst scare was the ride over in the dark. Needless to say I am happy to be aboard and I'm really grateful to the men concerned with my rescue."

Letter to the Troops:

7/30/97

To the VF-781 WORLD FAMOUS PACEMAKERS

Dear Shipmates and Shipbroads:

Well it's about time your old scribe got off his fat behind and brought you up to date. I got married to a lovely girl named EVE in Sedona, Arizona in January. Unfortunately you won't get to meet her this time because her youngest son will be married on Oct. 4 and she has the usual pre-nuptial duties in the prior few days. I will show up for the first nite but then will scoot home.

IT'S PARTY TIME - Our next rendezvous is on October 1, 2 & 3 [1997], Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at the great Embassy Suites Hotel, 74-700 Highway 111, Palm Desert, Calif. The rate is \$79.00 plus tax per nite, single or double occupancy. Each 2 room suite includes 2 phones, 2 color TV's, wet bar, fridge, coffee maker, separate vanity area in bedroom with either one king or two

double beds and a queen sofa in the parlor. Call 619 340 6600 and make your reservations now and be sure to tell them you are with THE WORLD FAMOUS VF 781 guys, Don't mention the not so famous VF 783 or they will drop-kick your old ass down Palm Canyon Drive.

This includes a full cooked to order breakfast and a hosted two hour beverage reception daily. PLUS!!!, GUESS WHAT? THAT CRAZY OLD SUMBITCH [Collin Oveland] HAS DONE IT AGAIN!!! HE VOLUNTEERED US 100% FOR THE PALM SPRINGS AIR FORCE!! Just look at the enclosed brochure where we have to go to sign up. Jeez! what next? MARS??? A guy could get a hernia picking up those damned rocks. Can you just imagine the kind of crazy crap he will dream up when he really starts to lose it ????????????

The stay is for two nights, Wed & Thurs then check out on Friday. The price is right and the fun is indescribable! See you there. Call now, please.

Remember Ole Cran trying to tell us what a wonderful thing the new ejection seat was in the F9? All you gotta do, sez he, is jettison the canopy, reach up over your head and grab the two rope loops, pull the face screen down hard, then a 37mm shell will blast your old ass into orbit. THEN, all you have to do, sez he, is wait for the drogue chute to stabilize the seat, unbuckle your harness, kick out of the chair, pull the rip cord and wait for the chute to stream and blossom. Now don't that seem like a piece of cake?, sez he. Oh, by the way, sez he, you kinda oughta have 500 feet or so [if one is quick – Lou Ives].

Well I found out that the guys in the parachute loft, egged on by John Windle, got a lot of laughs making funny SIGNS to be sewn on the inside of the face screens, so just when you were calmly (?) waiting to get blasted off, and your gonads were shrunk up to BB size, you might see these kinds of personalized witty messages:

Art Guy	Hey Art! I bet you thought this was an ERECTION seat, huh ?
Wamp	Get MET! It Pays!!
Henderson	BUZZ OFF !!
Collie	I wonder if those dumb bastards would really go to MARS ??
Mac	Hook your toes under the pedals and you can be Michael Jordan!!
Broadhag	With your luck, the canopy didn't jettison
Jimbo Phillips	Sayonara, Mamasan
Herby	I'll sue if this misfires!!
Brack	Not that Lee won't LET me go, I just don't WANT to go.
Monty	Bah, Y'all

Blivet Hope my ass fits thru the hatch.
Hughes Why not take the stairs, Bob??
Rick Bye Mutha!
Old Cran Wait I have to take a nervous pee
Stamper This doesn't behoove me!!
Whiskey Ed There's gotta be booze in heaven
Dewenter Hey Jack, tie your Giblipee to the stick and stretch it.
Gene Kyle Wonder if it's guaranteed!

Well, John will probably deny all this, but I know it's true.

Sorry I arrived a little late at El Toro and most of you had fainted and gone home. Got lost, you know. Hope to see you in Palm Desert. Please tell Norma to bring the flowers, John, and I will bring a salmon for you.

Noodles sends regards ... I had his "tonsils" removed but nothing has changed. He still goes thru the motions. But then, so do I.

Love you all.

/s/ Bob

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