

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT
FOR THE
C FLIGHT, 356TH TFS, WEED LOCKER

The Rules of Engagement for the six goblets and bottle of Jeremiah Weed, herein after referred to as Weed, are as follows:

1. Whenever, two or more, flight members gather Weed should be consumed from the Weed bottle, and in the flight member's named goblet. Before the first sip is taken, flight members present will toast to departed flight members and to the next man who dies. No flight member is permitted to drink alone until he is the last flight member who has yet to take his last flight, then he may drink Weed at will, toasting departed flight members and himself, each time he consumes Weed. No one is permitted to drink from a named goblet except the named flight member. Anyone who violates this condition will have a pox put on their house and live with the damned until the end of days.
2. All flight members who have taken their last flight will have their goblets turned up side down, never to be drunk from again. Anyone who violates this condition will have a pox put on their house and live with the damned until the end of days.
3. A new bottle of Weed will be installed in The Weed Locker, from time to time, as necessary. However, when the last flight member, takes his last flight, no one is permitted to consume the Weed that remains in the bottle, and that flight member's goblet will be turned up side down by a member of his family. Anyone who consumes Weed from the Weed bottle in The Weed Locker who is not a flight member will have a pox put on their house and live with the damned until the end of days.
4. In the event that "The Keeper of the Weed" takes his last flight, The Weed Locker will be given to the highest ranking flight member, still alive, to be handed down to the next highest ranking flight member, still alive, until such time as only one flight member remains alive. Once the last remaining flight member, takes his last flight, his family will take possession of The Weed Locker and see that it is donated to the National Museum of the United States Air Force. In the event that the Air Force Museum declines The Weed Locker the family may keep it, or donate it to a non profit organization for display with the caveat that it can never be sold, or traded for anything of value. Those who violate this condition will have a pox put on their house and live with the dammed until the end of days.

DATED: _____

last flight 13 Dec. 2010
ARNIE CLARKE

PAT McADOO

ROCK MASSEY

KEN JOYNER

last flight 27 Aug 2008
DON CORNELL

CHUCK de VLAMING

NOTHING FOLLOWS

I SURE DO MISS MY OLD JOB

I miss getting up in the morning and jumping into my “zoom bag”, one zip of the zipper and I was dressed save for my flying boots that zipped up as well. I miss walking, with a spring in my step, out to that sleek machine on the flight line, that twenty million dollar hunk of screaming fire and steel, and strapping it to my butt. It fit just like a glove and was as much a part of me as my right arm. I miss that supreme confidence of knowing that I could whip any man, in any flying machine, anywhere in the world. I miss the smell of cordite from my Vulcan gun that spit 100 cannon shells a second. It fired so fast that you couldn't distinguish the fire of one round from another, like a big old grizzly bear growling. I miss charging in to the target, the sky black with flack and brilliant the orange balls from the explosion of surface-to-air missiles. I have never seen such brilliant colors, the sky such a rich blue and the clouds the purest of white. I miss the cataclysmic ecstasy of the combat that left my mouth dry, my hands wet, my knees shaking, and all the blood in my veins replaced with adrenalin. I miss dropping my bombs, pulling up, and rolling upside down to see the target vaporized in a ball of fire. The tremendous rush that came when I “crossed the fence” into friendly territory and knew that I had cheated death one more time. I have never been so alive. I miss the intense pride that would come over me when I looked out at both of my wings to see men like me in their fighter aircraft flying my wing, knowing that they were intrusting their lives to me and were willing to do it. I miss the excitement, the adventure, the physical challenge, and the wonderful sense of purpose I had in my old job. I was at the very tip of my country's spear - a single combat warrior.

Most of all I miss the people. Men who shared a commitment to a profession that went beyond self and that fused us together in a bond far stronger than any metal known to man. It was far more than a job, or even a profession, it was a life defining experience and one that I sure do miss.

Waldo

WORDS CANNOT DESCRIBE IT

A few years ago at a dinner party I was asked by a woman what on earth I had ever seen in military life. I couldn't answer her of course. I couldn't summon it all, the distant places, the comradeship, the idealism, the youth. I couldn't tell about flying over the islands long ago, seeing them rise in the blue distance wreathed in legend, the ring of white surf around them. I couldn't possible describe the exhilaration of rising vertically on a column of jet thrust and emerging from a wooded site or thrashing down an artic fjord low an alone, and happening on a pale blue glacier. Or the cities, Bangkok and Tokyo, London and Venice, gunnery camps around the Mediterranean Sea and the empty road, straight as a string, to forgotten colonies of Rome along the shore. I couldn't possibly describe that or what it was like waiting to take off on missions in Vietnam, armed, nervous, singing songs to yourself, or the electric jolt that went through you when the Migs came up. I couldn't tell about Tony Shine being shot down and not a soul seeing him go. Or Carl Dice, or Hagmann who used to jump up on a table in the Officer's Club and recite “Gunga Din” – the drunken pilots thought he was making it up. I couldn't tell her about the days and days of boredom and the moments of pure ecstasy, or walking out to the sleek machines in the early morning or coming in at dusk when the wind had died to make the last landing of the day. The great days of youth when you are mispronouncing foreign words and believing in dreams.

Adaptation of James Salter by Waldo

REMEMBERING COMRADES

I now know why men who have been to war yearn to reunite. Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted at their best, men who suffered and sacrificed, who were stripped of their humanity. I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate and the military. But I know them in a way I know no other men. I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried my reputation, the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we were so willing to die for one another. As long as I have memory, I will think of them all, every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thoughts will be of my family and my comrades...such good men.

Unknown

HURRAH FOR THE NEXT MAN WHO DIES

So, raise your goblets steady,
for we come from a brotherhood that flies.
Here's a toast to the dead already;
and a low fast pass for the next man who dies!

Adaptation of a WW I pilots' drinking song
Official toast of C Flight, 356th TFS
(A toast to those members of C Flight, 356th
TFS who have taken their last flight, and
to the next one who does.)

