

tailoring the results of their efforts in turning around the loss of our GI Bill benefits.

On 15 August 1990, President Bush signed into law H.R. 1199, Section 207 of which restores Vietnam Era Bill eligibility to '77 and '78 service academy and '78 ROTC grads, all of whom had made their active duty service commitments prior to the 1976 repeal of the Vietnam Era GI Bill. Those now eligible by virtue of this new law will be able to apply for refunds of GI educational benefits they would have been entitled to through 31 December 1989, when the Vietnam Era GI Bill expired for everyone.

Now that the President's signature has transformed H.R. 1199 into Public Law 101-366, the Department of Veterans Affairs is expected to implement the new law by 1 January 1991. Any '77 or '78 service academy or '78 ROTC grads who incurred educational expenses before the 31 December 1989 termination date—who would have been otherwise eligible for Chapter 34 educational benefits—is eligible to be reimbursed up to the limits of the benefits. Veterans must make application to the Department of Veterans Affairs by 1 January 1992. Thanks Pete and Joe!

Having to report to you about the death of a Classmate has always been the toughest part of this job. This month, I have the added misfortune to report the death of two of our finest . . . **Mike Musser** from the 35th Company and **Bob Bender** from the 26th. **Jeff Gorman** wrote the following about Mike. "It is with deep sadness that I report the passing of Mike Musser who embarked on the true final voyage home on 17 August after a valiant and dignified battle with cancer." Jeff goes on to say that Mike, originally from Taylor, Michigan, starred in gymnastics, the Big Brother Association, flying, and scuba and parachute diving. Mike served in USS NASSAU (LHA-4) and on the ComNavSurfLant staff as the FF Type Desk Officer before he and his family headed west to Littleton, Colorado, where he worked as a Senior Program Specialist for Martin Marietta on such programs as Titan 34D, 45K, and 23G. He later became the Program Management Control Center lead for the Peacekeeper, SICBM, Space Systems and Defense Systems as well as for the Titan. With all of this, Mike pursued his naval career and became Commanding Officer, Reserve Cruiser Unit, Cheyenne. Most importantly, though, he was a loving husband and dad. Our most heartfelt sympathy goes to his wife, Beth, and three sons, Michael, 10yrs, David, 9yrs, and Adam 6yrs.

**Bob Bender** passed away on 28 November at his home in Severna Park. Bob was an oceanography major who hailed from Bowmansville, Pennsylvania. An avid outdoorsman, he excelled at athletics and was on the soccer and track teams at the Academy. Following a tour as a seamanship and navigation instructor at USNA, Bob worked as an anti-submarine marketing specialist for Westinghouse before he joined the Aero and Naval Systems section of Martin Marietta in Baltimore. There, Bob was awarded the Jefferson Cup for individual achievement. He was also active with the Naval League in D.C. where he served on the board of directors, and with the Naval Reserve assigned to the CinCIBerLant unit also in D.C. Bob was the proud father of son, David; and daughter, Jamie. Our thoughts and prayers go out to them. Memorial contributions may be made to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation or to the Children's Hospital at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore

and finally this letter from Dempsey:

Dear Bill,

This is the latest in a short list of epistles. I received NO MAIL over the last six months, except those I solicited from the Rat Pack of 36. I'll share a little of that news with everyone although my original intent was to collect the info for a company newsletter.

First, I have changed my address again. In June, I joined the AEDO community and run production

for the Naval Air Pacific Repair Activity in Atsugi. My new address is: Box 35 FPO, Seattle, Wash. 98767-2708.

Jeanne and I happened to be on PCS leave in Monterey, California, when June Week West was held. The two of us along with **Craig Turley** and wife Lori, and **Duke Snyder** and his wife, Curtis, were the only one's representing 77. Craig and I played especially poor on the golf course but had a great time during the big dinner on Saturday night. He is now XO (pretty scary stuff!) of USS FORD, a PERRY-class frigate out of Long Beach. Duke is learning how to speak Chinese at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey. Good thing he is now married to Curtis . . . not too many of us have spouses who speak BOTH Japanese and Chinese to help out.

In the course of my new job I ran into **Marti Sarigul-Klijn**. Marti has been a busy man these past few years: PhD in Aero, married to Nesrin who is an Aero PhD at UC Berkeley, and started a family with son Deniz. Marti works in the Production Department (A-6 programs) at NAD Alameda, California.

I must apologize for the empty column in the November *Shipmate*. There apparently was poor "connectivity" somewhere. The column was appended to the December issue—Happy trails, **Bill**.

From 36th company, I have heard from 11 guys over the past seven months. Here is what they are up to. By now **Chuck August** should be married to the former Kim Wilson. They were planning on setting up home in Laurel, Maryland. Chuck is an engineer with Vitro Corp. **Frank Cerabino** is a reporter with *The Palm Beach Post*. He and wife Jo brought a beautiful daughter, Natalie, into the world in Jan 90. In a related development, big brother Nick is now potty trained.

**Clark Handy** . . . I have not heard from him in ages. He is a civilian working for Hallmark Cards in Kansas City, Missouri. He and wife Joanne have a two-year-old, Courtney. Clark is accumulating those retirement points with the Reserve. **Juno Jamison** and wife Susan are back in SoCal after a stint in Newport. He is a department head in VS-38. Susan rides herd on the three at home, Jayme, Jessy, and CJ.

I got long letters from **Mark Kirk**, **Eric Shewbridge**, and **Steve Paramore**. Mark and Lori have moved further east to Brunswick, Maine, where Mark is now a Department Head with VP-8. During his refresher training in the RAG in Jacksonville, he ran into **Bob Droppa**. Bob is in VP-26. He also saw **Rich O'Sullivan** who is with one of the JAX VP squadrons. No other details. Having served before in the Bay Area, Mark and Lori have enjoyed the experience of Maine winters! **Doc Shewbridge** left the Navy in 82. He now lives in Atlanta when he is not on the road as a consulting engineer for nuclear power plants. He met his wife Susan while on a tour of the Holy Land in 1980. Married in 1981, God has blessed them with three delightful children: Ashley, Brittany, and Daniel. **Steve Paramore** is also out, studying at UT, Austin for a master's in aerospace (a pretty big step for a Bull major). He and wife Janene are blessed with two-year-old Kayla Noel, who is obviously a great source of joy and fatigue for them both. Steve, along with Janene, are active in evangelical work in the local area and hope to pursue that field further upon graduation.

Jan and **Arch McKinlay** remain in the Midwest where he is an engineer with McDonnell Aircraft. They have added a Welsh Corgi dog named John Henry to an already busy household of three kids, Arch VII, Margaret, and Michael. This has been a challenging year for **Mike Trueblood** and his family. He moved Karen and the kids (Jonathan, Matthew, Heather, and Brian) from Virginia Beach to Pittsburgh in late 88 and has been busy building a business in financial planning. Karen also plans to finish four highly successful years as a Naval Reserve Officer Recruiter to return to school in pursuit of an MA in nursing. God bless all six of you! Crazy **Fred Vogt** also wrote me from Norfolk. He and wife Donna have one of each, Emily and Matthew. Fred is a civilian logistics engineer with Newport News Shipbuilding by day and a "seeker of humor," both

day and night. He also reports that after years of "banging my head against the wall," to have attained Samadhi, in the Zen sense. Sounds like nothing has changed since our days in the 8th wing. Finally, **Tom White** checked in from Haverhill, Massachusetts, where he is engaged to Kate Nellis of NY. They plan on tying the knot in mid 91. Tom has started his own company, consulting on environmental preservation strategies (made that one up myself). When not saving the planet for profit, Tom sails off Long Island Sound with **Paul Labossiere** and Pete Craig ('78), has taken up golf (are there enough golf balls on the planet for the two of us), and tries to avoid the police in his 911SC. I guess I'm just lucky to be here in Japan where all those distractions are beyond my budget!

That's it from Japan. Please keep those cards and letters coming, guys. I need 'em to write. I pray you all will have happy holidays and a prosperous New Year. God bless. **Dempsey**

P.S. While making a phone call to the Helo Class desk at AirPac two weeks ago I ended up on the phone with **John McGowan**! Turns out John, like me, is an Aerospace Engineering Duty Officer. He did his first AED tour in New York where Sikorsky makes the H-60 and recently moved to Southern California. He and wife Susan have three kids, Julia, Elizabeth, and Matthew.

I was surprised to run into John and wanted to add this on to my last letter.

# 78

Membership: 83%

Pres., **Steve Maloney**  
Sec'y, **Vince Balderrama**  
10 De Marchis Drive  
Shelton, Conn. 06484

The new year has begun as briskly as the one we just finished, brimming with news and information. I got a letter from **Bill Timme** along with a computer printout of "who's who" and still in the Navy. As of 12 October, there were 334 of you still on the active rolls. The most interesting footnote was that four of our Classmates were two years deep selected for Commander. Buying the brew in '91 are **Vic Guilory**, **Dan Keuhlen**, **Melvin Williams**, and **Tony Winns**. Congrats to you four and you better start saving up for those wetting-downs. I could also use a little help in finding out the status of our USMC and "other" category Classmates (Coast Guard, Air Force, Army, Postal Service, Boy Scouts or other military or paramilitary service). If anyone has any info on who's still in and in what numbers, drop me line.

As for **Bill Timme**, the best news he had was that he was married last May. Several Classmates were in attendance to provide moral support to Bill, especially his best man, **Ron Lovelace**, and **Jeff Fowler** who was also in the wedding party. During the "week-long Blow-out extravaganza" he managed to fit the ceremony in between the golf tournament, chill feast, southern-style pulled-pig barbecue and night spot tours of Georgetown and D.C. Bill and his stunning bride, Suzette, sailed the British Virgin Isles for their honeymoon on a 51-foot crewed sailboat. Now bitten by the sailing bug, they hope to continue it in San Diego when Bill reports to his XO tour aboard USS CHICAGO this January. According to Bill, Suzette has proven that "married life beats the hell out of being a bachelor!" (Sheesh, newlyweds . . .). By the way, Ron transferred to VP-16 for his department head tour in Jacksonville, Florida and Jeff is now the XO of PCU MONTPELIER. Bill also wanted to pass to **Gary Eisenmann** that he would've been delighted to include a paragraph or two about him in his 31st Company newsletter if only Gary had responded to his queries on something "less than a geological time scale!" I know the feeling . . .

I spoke to **Bill Ferencsik** back in October. He was between jobs at the time. Bill got out of the Navy in



'84 and worked for a while as an Engineer with another UTC division, Hamilton Standard, in Windsor Locks. Living in the East Coast he succumbed to Bob Villas' Disease and spent a few years learning the art of cabinet and furniture making. For a time he worked as a conservator for the New England Center for Antique Conservation. But now that Time Life has released the "How to Collection" and "This Old House" is in major syndication he figured he'd move on. In the meantime, you may catch him up in North Quincy, Massachusetts, playing Irish fiddle or trading cabinetry secrets with Norm in the *Yankee Woodcraft* show.

**Bruce Gearey** got some time out from his Youth Soccer coaching duties to scrawl a few lines about himself and some of his 30th Company Cohorts. He's in his last year at Ships Parts Control Center in Mechanicsburg, as the director of the Propulsion and Electrical Systems Division. He just received his orders to attend in August the Naval War College in Newport which will be followed by the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk. Bruce added that "Liquid" **Lew Wolfrom** is in HSL-36 out of Mayport and reports sighting **Steve Minnis** and **Glen Fogg** in the area. Lew is married and claims to have his golf handicap down to 13 (is that per hole or overall?) **Brad Baylor** is an AEDO at PAX River. He and Debbie have two boys. **Eric Caldwell** is working for Duracell Caribbean and living in Puerto Rico. **Brad Thomann** is flying for United and says we should check out the cockpit if you're ever flying the "friendly skies." **Al Fylak** is married and a new home owner. He's in Michigan working for Northern Telecom.

In keeping with this "other side of the world" news theme (mostly being 4th-6th Batt gouge), **Dennis Reilly** filled me on what's new with "22." **Chuck Hefren** has leveraged his MBA from Case Western Reserve into a highly successful business. He is the President and CEO of Container Gardening in Rocky River, Ohio, a suburb of Chicago. Chuck is considering selling the business and retiring to Florida. He keeps in shape by playing volleyball twice a week and booing the Browns (Dodging those milk bones does wonders for agility and cardiovascular endurance!). **Damian Bonvoullor** (Oops, how'd this 16th Co guy sneak in?!) Is following Chuck's lead by enrolling in Case's two-year MBA Program. He's very excited about the opportunity to work with some of Northern Ohio's business leaders, but isn't so "sanguine" about how he'll handle his first northern Winter since leaving Beacon, N.Y. for USNA (By the way I looked up that "s" word and it's legit, can you say . . . optimistic? How about a break for us "inorant" types, Dennis.). **Dave Schuman** is selling retail store fixtures to major accounts in Chicago for Reflector Hardware. He also gets to do a little travelling when he calls on customers in Southern Illinois, Montreal and some Canadian cities. Dave is active in his church and enjoys acting and being a member of the stage crew for both community and professional theater. **Chuck Bouquardez** just joined the US Customs Service as pilot out of NAS Jacksonville. By now Chuck's wife, Brenda, and their daughter Elizabeth Ann should have left Pensacola and joined dad in JAX. Reilly's HOT FLASH was that "The Dos Banditos" are back north of the border!!—**Jorge Ortega** and **Tony Balestrini** made a surprise appearance at Homecoming this year. As it turns out, both are back living in the States. Jorge is Vice President with Citibank's World-wide Personal banking Division in New York. Last November, Jorge and Diane had an exciting first week back from Ecuador when they delivered their second daughter, Nicole, at home, IN A SNOWSTORM! Jorge casually said it was "No problema, señor!" Kim and **Tony Balestrini** moved to Virginia Beach from Peru last January so Tony could participate in an exchange program to

teach shiphandling to anyone from prospective carrier COs to tugmasters. It was supposed to be a two-year tour, but he may be heading back home after just a year because he has been selected by Commander! (Make that FIVE Classmates selected for Cdr!). Dennis played a few holes with **Scott Eckert** and **Drew Mulhare** at Drew's home course, Ford's Colony, in Williamsburg. Drew and Sherry have a gorgeous home on the 13th fairway, complete with golf nets to capture stray balls. Dennis reached **Bill Terry** in Cedar, Michigan. Bill was forced to retire from the Navy in '88 after being struck by a bus. His accident doesn't allow him to run like he used to but that doesn't slow him down a bit as he stays very busy with his volunteer work. Most notably, he is active in the Northern Michigan Right-to-Life Movement and supports local jail ministries.

If you haven't heard by now, on 15 August President Bush signed into Law, Public Law 101-366, of which Section 207 restores Vietnam era GI Bill eligibility to '77 and '78 Service Academy graduates and '78 ROTC graduates, all of whom had made their active service commitments prior to the 1978 repeal of the Vietnam era GI Bill. Any grad who incurred educational expenses before the 31 Dec, 1989 termination date—who otherwise would have been eligible for Chapter 34 educational benefits—is eligible to be reimbursed up to the limits of the GI benefits. To receive educational benefits under this new law, an individual must apply to the Veterans Department before 1 January 1992. This law has been quite a few years in the working and the successful passing of this bit of legislation was due in part to your letters and calls to Congress. But most especially, it was due to the hard work and persistence of Pete Grieve ('77) and our own, **Joe Schmitz**, to whom we all owe a debt of gratitude. For years they led the charge and hounded the halls of Congress and the Veterans Affairs Committees with such veracity that they just finally wore Capitol Hill down. Congress HAD to pass the law just to get them off their backs!! For all your efforts we thank you!!!

I got a letter from **Tom Martinez**, who was just activated by the Marine Corps. He left his comfortable job with Raytheon in Huntsville, Alabama, to report to Camp Pendleton and onward, I'm sure, to SWA (Southwest Asia, aka—Desert Shield). I don't have the space for all his news but look for it in next month's edition. (Sorry, Tom, I went in order of mailings and you got bumped.) I got a letter from our '78 Chaplain, Alan "Blues" Baker. In it's manner it speaks eloquently for all those in Southwest Asia, (for whom we hope, there has now been a peaceful conclusion and safe return.)

In closing, I have a bit of sad news to report. 1990 ended with the news of the sounding of taps for two more of our Classmates. After a fight with stomach cancer, **Mickey Lax** finally succumbed on 22 June. He was buried in Roanoke, Virginia and is survived by his parents, Edgar and Gladys Lax of Roanoke, and his brother and sister, Andrew Lax (Charlotte, Virginia) and Susan O'Brien (also of Roanoke). On 14 November, **Chris Wilson**, died in San Diego, California. Memorial services were held the following week at Balboa Naval Hospital. Chris is survived by his parents, Capt and Mrs. L. E. Wilson of Friday Harbor, Washington. Those of us who knew them will remember them for their kind smiles, vitality and humor. Our condolences go out to their families . . . But in thinking on it all, we never really lose our Classmates and friends. They're forever in our memories, frozen in time with whatever last recollection we conjure of them . . . climbing aboard an aircraft, manning the mid-watch, playing ball . . . or standing beside us, youthful, anxious and sweating in crisp and itchy new jumper whites on a hot, humid Maryland July afternoon, hands raised, swearing an oath that bound us forever as shipmates, Classmates and

friends . . . they're not gone, but just a little out of touch—for the time being.

# 79

Membership: 93%

Pres., **Mike Finley**

Corr. Sec'y, Lt. **Kenneth Russell USNR**  
6234 Azalea Dr., Quartz Hill, Calif. 93536

Tonight I've got Bryan duty while Mom makes the big bucks so I'll be chasing the 'Poop Master of the Universe' around the house while I'm writing this. By the way Dads, this just in from Hartz-Mountain, Milk-Bones do contain the four basic food groups, so when you get in trouble for not watching the kids good enough, there's a legit excuse. Besides that public service announcement, folks, we have a ton o' work ahead of us so here we go.

Got the first letter from the big sand box. **Tom Wittenschlaeger** and **Jeff Brown** were activated and sent over with the Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit 105 out of Long Beach. Both Tom and Jeff work(ed) at Hughes Aircraft Company in Los Angeles. They sent a picture that I sure hope gets printed. You'll be able to tell that those guys are having one blast after another. Jeff and Tom are the guys in the middle of the photo. Thanks guys and I hope that by the time you read this, you're already back home.

Received a picture of the Boland's from the Home Office. Joe, you look great and if you're still in Southern Cal, give us a call. It would be good to see you and the family.

**Bill Enslen** pulled chocks on me at Northrop. The secretary left a note on my desk telling me that Bill and family had moved to Florida. Bill will be working for Unisys, I think out of Panama City. Let me know how you're doing and what it's like being around green living things. And yes, I hate your guts for getting out of here before me.

**Pam and Tracy Franks** are living in Scotch Plain, New Jersey, with their two daughters, Abigail, 8, and Melissa, 4. Tracy is a manager with the General Business Systems unit of AT&T. He's been with them since '82 and has been heading up and staffing lots of different departments for AT&T all over the Eastern Seaboard. Tracy said he'd like to hear from Niners in 23rd Company and former beaters and blowers. His address is: 2311 Hill Road, Westfield, N.J. 07090. Thanks Tracy for the update.

**Julie and Ed Francis** are living out here in sunny California. Besides working for Texas Instruments, selling circuit breakers to aircraft companies, Ed is also a Reserve bubba with me in HCS-5. Julie sells office furniture textiles and is expecting their first little one pretty soon. Ed filled me in on the lowdown on some other Niners out here. He also has been helping me out with those nutty Navy designations. Blanket apologies to all those past screwups on squadrons, units, etc. Ed's stuff goes somethin' like this: **J. D. Fish** and **Rocky Kropp** are in HC-11. Margo and **John Green** are in Monterey at NPS. They just had a baby boy named Mason (Ed thinks). **Brian Rogers** and **Dale Jensen** are both with ship's company on USS RANGER. Laurie and **Mike Van Horn** are either in Japan or got married in Japan (again, my fault, I can't even read my own notes). I do know that Laurie is an Air Force doctor. Val and **Fred Gerheiser** are in Hawaii and have two kids. Fred is in the Civil Engineering Corps.

**Jean and Don Quinn** sent greetings from Virginia. Actually Jean sent an update AND a correct spelling of their daughter's name. It's Caitlin. I also got a terrific picture of all the little Quinnettes; Matthew, 8, Kevin, 6, Caitlin, 4, and Brian, 1. Caitlin is a doll. I