

that everything is well for all concerned!

**Phil Wisecup** wrote from Coronado where he and Anne are enjoying the Summer months while most of the kids are off visiting the grandparents. Marie (10) and Madeline (8) are in France with Anne's parents and Sarah (6) is in Ohio with Phil's. Unfortunately, Nathalie (3), had to stay at home with mom, dad and . . . the chickenpox (I can identify with that!). In addition to enjoying the concerts in the park, he has been wrestling with base closures, ship decommissionings, homeport shifts, and deployment plans—all with the incredibly shrinking budget—while working in Force Plans and Operations at ComNavSurfPac. In his capacity, he has been able to visit **Jeff Sapp**, CO INGERSON, and **Sam Locklear**, CO LEFTWICH. He also reports that **Tom Lindner** is in the N1 personnel shop at ComNavSurfLant, **Mike McVay**, lives in Encinitas while maintaining ties with the Naval Reserve. **Gar Wright** is his neighbor in Coronado, and **Dan Thompson** is at the Hoover Institute at Stanford. Phil's number at SurfPac is 619 437-2306. Thanks for the terrific news!

From **Mike Wertz's** Public Affairs Officer: Cdr. **Mike "Turbo" Wertz** became the 23rd Commanding Officer of VAW-116 in a Change of Command Ceremony held 5 May 1993 at NAS Miramar in San Diego. He has accumulated more than 5,000 flight hours and more than 700 carrier landings. He is married to the former Catherine McCarthy of Chatham, N.Y., and resides in San Diego with wife and their children Megan, Maureen and Kyle.

In continuing our discussion regarding the Class gift, **Bruce Campbell** forwards the following thoughts:

This is a follow-on to the letter I wrote last month about the Class gift. I mentioned that I had an idea I thought was pretty interesting, and I've talked it over with a few people and I think I ought to toss it out to the Class. Nowhere at the Academy is there a memorial for those who died as Midshipmen. These are individuals who went through the same hardships, challenges, depressions and exalted experiences as we did, but were denied the rewards of life-after-Academy through accident or illness. It seems fitting that we who now can look back and more fully appreciate what it takes to get to, and through, the Academy come up with some way of remembering those who paid the price but did not get the chance to serve.

This idea has some personal impetus behind it as my brother Reg '73 died at the end of his Second Class year (during June Week) in a freak swimming accident. Reg was far from the ideal midshipman (even farther than I was!) and he probably wouldn't have made CNO or anything like that. But he was a star of the soccer team (popped in the winning goal against Army one year) and he was really looking forward to flying helicopters after graduation. When I showed up the year after he died, I would think of Reg whenever I was chopping down those same halls or braced up at a come-around, remembering that he had told me about these strange customs. He also told me about the friends, football games, and the cool military-related things like flying or driving a ship that you don't do at "normal" colleges. We were really close as kids, but now, knowing how special my Classmate friends are, I know that Reg and I would feel all the more connected due to this shared Naval Academy experience. A memorial to midshipmen who died while at the Academy would be an acknowledgement that, in this same way, we are all connected.

I've talked to some of the officers at the Alumni Association who have also talked it up with Academy officials and there's a lot of interest in this idea. Though no specific type of memorial has been suggested, this could be a Memorial Hall kind of thing where Classes could pause before graduation to remember their Classmates who would be accompanying them only in their thoughts. A first-cut search has been done on the records and it looks like it should be possible to identify all midshipmen who have died while attending the Naval Academy. It looks like the number is around 200.

There is still the weight room idea that we have begun collecting donations for. In the light of giving

something to the Academy specifically for midshipmen to use, I think it's, an awfully nice thing for us to do. But as far as calling it our "Class gift," I would rather work towards something that would be more generally appreciated and be more of a remembrance of the Class of '77. The Alumni officials are quick to point out that we can always do both, and that certainly is an option, but I come back to the crux of my last letter which is that it's a decision that the whole class should be involved in. I suggest that any of you who care, drop a note to **Bill Milward** or **Owen Thorpe** (or me if you like) and voice your opinion. Like I said last time also: we're in no hurry.

There has been a great deal of effort working this project. The dialogue should continue until a resolution is reached.

Until next month, Happy trails . . . **Bill**.

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Membership: 85%

Pres., **Steve Maloney**  
Sec'y, **Vince Balderrama**  
45 Little Fawn Dr., Shelton, Conn. 06484

This column is probably going to shock the heck out of you because it really will be the shortest ever!!!! This time I **really** mean it. Honest, I'm NOT KIDDING. (I can hear you all saying, yeah, sure, Vince.) Well, suffice to say that I'm **extremely** behind the power curve this time. There are stacks of Alumni Updates all about me (which I have to go through, consolidate and get into *Shipmate* form), paper on top of the stacks of paper I have to do for work, on top of the stacks of paper I have to file, on top of the stacks of paper which are bills I have to pay—OOPs, better get to that stack of paper, first . . . Well, there go the lights. I better get to that one piece of paper to United Illuminating, NOW!

So, in the hopes of not having an empty column in your hands, I get on my knees and beg the Almighty One (The *Shipmate* Editor) to once more look favorably on my belated fax, and put this humble attempt at a column into this month's edition.

Remember, 'tis better to have something, than nothing at all! Or is it, it's better to look good than feel good, dahling?—Same thing.

So here's all the news for which I have time to write—

Saw some of you, talked to a couple of you, drank beer and ate some of your food, got no mail this month, and as for me—I'm hanging in there. About the 15 year reunion—

Been there. Saw it. DID IT . . . Still recovering from the revelry.

Well, that's it. I told you I'd make this quick. Believe me, a little smelling salts, or breathing into a paper bag will help you in your recovery.

In the next edition, look for Real sightings of Shipmates, loose talk from a few "confidential" sources, "Socks the Cat—A closet Canine?", "Philo T. McGiffin found with Jimmy Hoffa in 4th Floor 7th Wing Medicine Cabinet," "Confessions of a Tailhooker." From our Science Editor—"How to Gauge the Purity of Gouge," and from our Legal Editor—"How to Gauge the Purity of the Gouge." Also look for **genuine** stories of the Reunion, real photos, real balderdash. As you can guess, verbosity and volume will be the name of the game next month! After all, if I can say THIS much about NOTHING, in this month's column; think of what I can do next month when I DO have something on which to write—it'll be kinda like a novella, Kurt Vonnegut-meets-James Michener-like.

Well, I'm outta here before I embarrass myself even more. My signal's Buster (with a capital B). Launchin', Spot 4.

## 79

Membership: 93%

Pres., **Mike Finley**  
Sec'y, **Ken Russell**  
6234 Azalea Dr., Quartz Hill, Calif. 93536  
(805) 943-7933

Well, it's another blue, down in the mouth sorta time for yours truly. The Antelope Valley (yeah, it's a bogus name for the Mojave Desert) is turning into the Fall season with manic depressia winds from hell and for some unexplained reason, it's got me a little melancholy. I'm pretty much over Ling-Ling's death so I think this time it's gotta be due to either the Dodgers being twenty and a half games out, that Bert and Loni thing or the fact that the last episode of Cheers was rerun only five times this month. I have decided that instead of constantly picking up the tumble weeds around the house, I'm gonna spray paint them white and make a bunch of "desert-scape" snowmen. The plastic pink flamingo on the front lawn is getting too old and faded and needs replacing. All right, enough psycho-comedy-babble; we've got a news bag to get to and it's time to shift gears, so let's move along smartly, shall we?

Straight from across the pond, Linda and **Al Whiting** are happy and healthy as Al continues on with his Doctorate in, I think, Astralphysics, Tiny Particle Physics, Lots of Complex Chalkboard Sized Equations Physics, or some kind of Black Hole quantum, Heisenberg uncertainty, Hawkings radiation type of deal. Whatever the heck it is, I hope it results in a new "Stop the Wind" in a spray can product. Anyway, back in England, Al has seen some Niners there while doing his ACDUTRAs in London; they are **Dick Tobey**, **Dave Jackson** and **Mike Weiss**. Dick and his wife Jean have two young'ns, Sarah (8) and Matt (6). Al said that they spend time on the river with the Tobeyes doing some activity called "punting." Forgive my ignorance, but it sounds like they go through lots of footballs if they spend afternoons kicking them into the river. I remember Navy doing a whole lot of that also during the Fall of our sophomore year. Doughball reminded me that he and I have spent more time in the Reserve than we have spent on active duty, so I guess the hidden meaning behind that is we're old. Al, thanks for the info and explanations of the Black Holes, but I already knew one heck of a lot about them since the Lancaster Post Office lost the shoes I ordered from Brookes Brothers.

**Gary Herbold** left an incredible message on the Home Office BBS, "Over The Wall" about his doin's with the Class act folks from 22d Company. I copied it straight from the board so here goes:

I just got back Sunday from Cape Canaveral to see **Dan Bursch**, 22d Company go up in the Space Shuttle. Unfortunately they had mechanical problems and they scrubbed the mission, but we had a good reunion anyway. The people attending from 22d were myself, **Bob Smout**, **Mike Muldoon**, **Mario Bladnell**, and **Russ Nevitt**, all attending without families. Mario travelled the furthest, coming all the way from Frankfurt, W. Germany. On the family side were **Ted Branch**, **Rob Sterling**, **Michelle Brower**, **Pat Temple**, **Andy Hagelin**, **Becky Fremont**, all in attendance with a whole bunch of great kids to carry-on some great traditions. We cannot forget the parents who attended! They include Jackie Branch, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Temple, Rob and Marge Sterling, Michelle Brower's folks, the Krauses to include Ellen, and Steve Jones' family. The most important people this weekend were Roni Bursch and Dan's parents as they were in their glory. Our party central was the Radisson in Cape Canaveral, which had an awesome pool. To say the least it was a great weekend despite the fact that many of us will have to watch the first astronaut from our Class go into space on the T.V. Congratulations to Uncle Bud, we are all proud of what you have accomplished!