

Pres: **John Rudder**

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**

45 Little Fawn Drive, Shelton, CT 06484

[Ed. Note: Please see the "Mail Boat" in this issue for a letter from one of the illustrious members of the Grand Class of '78...Nancy]

Excuse me, but would somebody wake up that damn groundhog?! It's almost the middle of April (Yup, we've just encountered a time warp—cue the Rocky Horror Tune—"Let's do the time warp again!"), anyway, it's almost the middle April and it still snowed! I realize it didn't last very long and melted the next day. But it's the principle of the thing. The calendar weeks ago said "First Day of Spring" and that's what it's supposed to be! Of course on the plus side, I haven't had to break out the lawnmower. Then again, I usually wait until the middle of June to start mowing the lawn, or until we become aware of the abandoned UPS trunk in the street and the faint moans of help from the jungle out front. As the lawn will reach elephant grass proportions so too has this Longaberger dangley-thing that Elizabeth uses as my *Shipmate* letter in-basket. Now that the final school paper is almost out the door I can get back to the fun writing. So I guess I better get out the computer and shave some of this mail stack down to size.

Even when Mother Nature's mood clock is off, if the calendar says Spring is here "mom" will say it's Spring Cleaning time. You're all familiar with spring cleaning. That's when you really move the furniture to vacuum; actually gather and put away all the stuff you usually sealed up in the "office", hid in closets or shoved under beds when company appeared. Yes, spring cleaning is what you do when you know your mom or mother-in-law is coming over. You never know what you'll find when you move things around. Behind my night stand I found a watch, the pen I've been looking for and...well, none of your business. Behind the chest-on-chest was Mr. Hoffa picking Al Capone's safe and a couple of "Triangle" Flightcrews playing acey-deucey. Also among the Casper droppings was the famous **Jim Shulson** letter which in a previous life I said I'd get to!! So in keeping with our time warp theme let's go back in time to 1995, when gas was still \$1.49, Cal Ripkin was worried about missing games and a car ring meant only the stain left by a Firsties dripping oil pan along the sea wall...Submitted for you approval...Jim's up (outta) date from the "Rock", Okinawa.

Among the '78ers on The Rock (at the time):

**Jim Shulson** has been the MPF Officer at III MEF in the G-4 shop. (In English, that's the guy in supply who supposed to ensure that there is at least 90 days of toilet paper in the pre-positioned packup.)

**Tom Sudbeck** was in the III MEF G-5 in '94 and is now back where he belongs in the Wing (tho' flying a desk). **Rick "Pogo" Reece** is with the Special Ops Training Group doing "Black Pajama" stuff at Camp Hansen. **Tom McKeon** was with CTF-76 in their N3 shop; see I didn't forget the Navy guy! **Dave Barile** was the S-3 at 12th Marines; **Bill "IF" Fell** was with the Marine Wing Support Group-17 as the S-3. He had swapped jobs with **John Wissler** who is now the XO of Marine Wing Support Squadron-172. **Mike Combs** is the XO for H&S BN, 3d FSSG. Last and certainly not least is **Mike "Duffy" Dyer**, XO for HMM-262.

**Lon Yearly** was last seen at Command & Staff College in Quantico.

Jim passed on a big howdy to **Dog Callas**, "**Chooch**" **Mulhare**, **Dennis Reilly**, **Scott Eckert** and **Kenny Waldie**, wherever he is (Note: Waldo is with Rathoon, making the big bucks.).

By this time Shulson should be leaving the "Rock". He was due to leave in the summer of '96, when his tour as Mayor expires. Vicki is trailing Jim in the march to retirement. That means he'll be content to

be a camp following whenever he finally gets the DD214—maybe even follow Vicki back to Okinawa. Eventually he has his eye on a spread outside of Lost Wages, Nevada (aka—Las Vegas). It's a Shulson dream—loaded with sports bars that never close and jukeboxes with a CD of Mac the Knife playing continuously! Jim enclosed a photo of what could be the starting five for the Class of '09: the Fell boys, Jeffrey and Billy; Frank Barile (Dave's youngest); TJ Shulson and Frank McCallister's ('81) son Brendan. Conlin McCallister will have to wait for the next team.

Also from the lost and found department—**Kevin O'Keefe** wrote from San Diego to dispel any rumors of his professional military demise (He'd been listed as an O-2 in some previous *Shipmates*). This was actually his first letter since graduation. He was as surprised of many of you to be selected for lieutenant colonel by the USMC FY96 promotion board. He pinned on the silver last October. Slated for command of an infantry battalion at Camp Pendleton in late 1996 or early 1997, by now he's either the "old man" or the "old man in waiting". Kevin claims that "both of these occurrences are further evidence of my benefiting from the proverbial 2% rule—"that no matter how hard an institution tries to prevent it, 2% will always slip through the cracks!" Hey, if it wasn't for the 2% percent, Kevin, some of us would never have gotten that certificate of attendance. If the minimum wasn't good enough...Diane is still putting up with Kevin. They have three great kids—Kerry (9), Patrick (5) and Bridget (4). They anticipate being in southern California through at least the Summer of 1998 and would love to hear from anyone in the area or passing through, especially 26th companymates. (Home:619-729-5058 or work: 619-725-3719/3891).



Rusty Chang and his turbo weenie (T34C)

**Scott Langdon** was in the PCO pipeline since the Summer (1995) and was to be working at Squadron 2 until a deployment this Summer. He'll then go on to his boat CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI (SSN-705) in the Fall. Other classmates in the PCO class with Scott were **Cecil Haney**, **Jim Rielly**, **Eric Nelson**, and **Tom Rubenstein**. Scott and Marilyn have two children Kyle and Erin.

Anne and **Sean Coffey** moved from Manhattan to the town of Bronxville, a few miles north of the big city. They have two wonderful children, Kate (3) and Cameron (1). Number three was on course, on glidepath for April '96. Sean left the U.S. Attorney's Office and joined the private sector. He is "of counsel" which means he's a worker bee associate but not yet a partner. The firm was founded by two aviators in LA in the 1930's. He came here after three and a half wonderful years as a federal prosecutor. It was a demanding job but great playing "cops and robbers". Sean said he had the truly rare pleasure as a lawyer "to be able to walk into office every day believing you always wore the white hat." Most of his cases were about guns, gangs, and drugs [like being a Navy JAG]. He got to try about twice as many cases as his contemporaries. (He thought defendants saw how he fumbled at the early pre-trial conferences and decided to take their chances rather



Starting five—Class of '09 and "coaches"

President Emeritus of the Olivia Newton-John Fan Club and fellow coxswain **Rusty Chang** jotted a quick note from Virginia Beach. He said that **John Woodward** has moved to his new home in Williamsburg with his wife Flora and is attending William & Mary graduate school. Rusty took over as CO at FACSAC VACAPES. He says it's a "Great command [bet you fly boys say it to all your units] of, 150 or so people". I don't know what-the-hey that acronym stands for but as Rusty explained, they do range scheduling stuff and operate those massive golf balls "radars" near NAS Oceana. From those massive straying "trons" Rusty figures he'll probably wind up sterile by the end of his tour, like one of those EA-6B drivers. Rusty also has an extensive video of school days and crew races which he offers to show to any visitors. Butter up the popcorn, Ming, I can't wait to see those Navy home movies!

than plead...suckers!) Navy-wise, he was selected for command of a Reserve P-3 squadron in 1995 and became XO of the VP-92 Minutemen at NAS South Weymouth in June. BRAC is moving the unit to Brunswick, ME in the Spring. While checking out Brunswick, Sean saw some '78ers on the "face board". **Dave Williams** is CO at VP-11; **Glen Woods** is XO at VP-10. When Sean wrote his note from New Orleans (two changes of command) he had run into **Mike McGee** who as a TAR just took over as XO of VP-69 at Whidbey, and **Andy Cuca**, a pilot for Northwest and XO at VP-91 at Moffett. He had heard that **Vinnie Belleza** just took over a shore command billet at NAS Willow Grove. **Harry Binkley Harris, Jr.** had sent him an invite to his change of command for VP 46. Problem was, the Binkster didn't provide a parking pass for the ceremony on Diego Garcia and he was afraid he'd be turned away at the gate...!

My Plebe Summer roommate, **Bart Buechner** wrote about a reserve experience of his. While working on a project at NAVPGSCOL Monterey, he ran into Dr. **Don Brutzman**, Ph.D. and CDR **Mike Holden**. Doctor Don is a Prof in the computer science area and Mike is doing post graduate work there. They've teamed up on a "Project Phoenix" (so named because the first one blew up). Not to be confused with a Charles Barkley cloning effort, Phoenix is an autonomous submersible that well could replace dolphins in the anti-mine business (The "save the dolphins" people will be ecstatic. But will it star with Luke Halpin in the "Flipper" Reunion special?). Bart had just changed reserve units after a two-year command tour. He's now assigned to CINCPACFLEET DET 420 which provides management consulting support to active duty Navy commands. There are a few USNA types in the unit including two Classmates: **Ray Luevano** and **Charlie Dawson**. Ray is currently with Sun Microsystems, a major player in Silicon Valley. Charlie just scored a major career move—signing on with Northwest Airlines. Other faces seen around the San Fran Reserve Center include **John Plencner**, who is in real life a program manager with the Dept. of Energy at Lawrence Livermore Lab.



Bart Buechner, Don Brutzman, Mike Holden and "Phoenix"

Bridget Grodek, **Tom Grodek's** eldest daughter, wrote to get her dad into *Shipmate*. See guys, sometimes it takes a wife and sometimes it's your kids, but sooner or later (if I ever get of the proverbial dime) you'll be mentioned in the column. Anyway, Bridget wrote to say that all are well and living in Annandale, VA. Tom is an Engineering Duty Officer on his second penance tour in Washington, DC. He's with the AEGIS Program Office in Crystal City beating off carpetbagging beltway Classmates with his slide rule. There are four kids in the Grodek household. Bridget's the eldest—sweet sixteen and a junior at Pope Paul VI High School. She's active with clubs, Sunday school teaching and college searching (It's never too early—and no, Navy is not on her short or long list. By the way, that's Tom's wallet crying in the background.). Maureen (15) attends a special education school, Kilmer Center. When Bridget wrote last fall Moey was recovering from ear and foot surgery. We hope she's doing better nowadays. Tommy (13) is the jock at Holy Spirit ["junior high" program]—a three letter threat—track, basketball and band (well, two outta three). Stephen (11) is in 5th grade at Holy Spirit and a baseball fanatic—fall ball, spring ball, baseball cards. I wouldn't be surprised if I found him on the Internet with his own major league team playing Web Ball! Marilyn, is the ever steady rock—mom. As if four active kids wasn't enough, she's a school volunteer, big fund raising genius for the Cub Scouts and band and owner and operator of the Grodek family taxi service. (Though now armed with a license, Bridget is a volunteer shuttle driver.) In closing Bridget pondered the question as to why Dad was never mentioned or had the time to write *Shipmate*. The answer was a "No Excuse" from Dad and a take matters into her own hands by her. I'm glad you did, Bridget. Your folks's are lucky to have you care enough about them to write and let their friends know how you all are

doing. I was touched. Just forgive me for the taking so long to publish it. Drop me a line any time and who knows? Maybe one day, dad will get the idea and write himself.



The Grodeks

In closing, I have to write a bit of sad and dated news. During the Thanksgiving holidays last year, **Lanny King** suffered an aneurysm in the brain while driving his family home. [Ed. Note: See Class of '64 column for a discussion of the leadership award named for him...Nancy] Fortunately, his wife and children were spared any injury in the ensuing accident, but Lanny was rushed to Savannah Memorial Hospital. For almost a month he struggled on in ICU during which time he was medically retired from the Navy. On December 14th, he died. Lanny was blazing a successful Naval career, PCO of **CARNEY** (DDG-64), when he was called by God to serve orders with **Him**. Gini and the children, Rebecca (14) and Ritchie (11) have remained in Mayport until the close of the school year and then will return to their home in Virginia Beach. **Drew Mulhare** and many Classmates and friends (**Barb** and **Scott Eckert**, **Chuck Hefren** and **John Whatley**) attended the memorial service. Drew said it was an uplifting experience due to the positive nature of those who spoke of Lanny, what he stood for, the fond memories held of him and the love which embraced them all. CAPT Mark Rodgers, Lanny's CO on **LEYTE GULF** when he was XO, gave the eulogy and inspired all with his recollections of Lanny as an outstanding officer, friend, father, husband—Shipmate. It was a reaffirmation of all that was already known and felt. Lanny's biography contained the final remarks... "Commander King is survived by his wife Virginia Ritchie Allen of Holmdel, New Jersey; one daughter, Rebecca; one son Ritchie; and a host of relatives and friends." Those who knew him through shared experience, casually or intimately—companymates, shipmates and Classmates are honored to be among that host. An educational fund has been established for the children. It is being handled by the American National Bank in Mayport. You can remember Lanny and do our Classmate honor with a contribution payable to: The Children of CDR **Lanny L. King**, USN (Ret.), c/o American National Bank, Mayport Naval Station, Mayport, Florida 32228. As the months have passed we hope that Gini and the kids are doing well. I apologize greatly for this belated notice; send our love and best wishes; and urge you to drop them a line.

Well, that's all the room I have for the month. I'm making better headway into the pile before me. I find now that school's out, that I have some free time to sort the letters, get out and "touch someone"—like

**Dr. Barry Talley**

**Surprise Celebration of 25 Years at USNA**  
—Homecoming 1996 for a tribute to be determined. If you have any photos or stories concerning Dr. Talley, please send them to Shipmate, PO Box 2363, Annapolis, MD 21401.

my keyboard—and write about it. I think I'll just reflect on it all, for now. I know I have a couple more "to-be-continueds" lingering out there, letters yet unpublished, and sightings yet to claim. So I'll start the next issue; press on. I think I'll stay Choked and Chained, Spot Four, and walk the flight deck for a minute...

## 79

Membership: 94%

Pres: **Mike Finley**  
Sec'y: **Ken Russell**

210 South Main Street, P.O. Box 380  
Arlington, SD 57212; (H) 605-983-4777  
E-mail: 75053.2444@compuserve.com

Kids, this is the all time Mother of Pathetic Excuses but as the article deadline approached, your Give King just flat didn't have time to create an article worthy of what you've come to expect (oh yeah, our expectations of this thing are pretty much on a par with Tom Peter's *Search For Excellence*). Anyway, I'm backed up against the article deadline and pottery orders and the orders won out (It's a food, clothing, shelter thing). In a few years, if you're driving down I-80, I-90, or I-29 and you see a Wall Drug sign that says "Only 751 miles to get your Wall Drug Mug", you'll say, "Hey, remember when that Bozo, **Kenny Russell** horked up a REAL short article that one time because he was whining about making pots to feed his family? Geez, what a loser!!", well that's one of the reasons this is so darned short. Kids, I'll be comin' atcha in July with a no-kiddin' real article that will certainly be preceded by that vertically challenged guy from the second to the last all male class. (I'd give him crap right now for having so many blank months but I have to suck up to him on account of needing a place to stay while exhibiting at The Lincoln Center in NYC this July 6th). Anyway, blanket apologies, and get the Give King voodoo doll out with those BIG stick pins to get your revenge. See ya in July. Ken. '79, **Omnnes Viri**.

## 80

Membership: 97%

Pres: **Tim Kobosko**  
Sec'y: **LCDR Joseph A. Grace, Jr., USNR**

15 Allard Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70119  
(H) 504-486-9040(W) 504-539-9255  
E-mail: notc@gnofn.org  
http://sammy.kingtech.com/USNA/

Hey Mon, I just returned from the British Virgin Islands where I spent a week cruising the Islands with a few friends on a chartered sailboat. What an experience. I recommend this form of R & R to any of you who are stressed out with the everyday trials of business, life, family or just plain existence. It was fabulous! We cruised from Tortola to St. Johns and all that was around and in between on a 405 Beneteau. A little close for non sailors, but a great time was had by all. So this is the first day back on