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Well, it is after the new year and I hope everyone had a happy and joyous holiday. I have had a few messages in my e-mail, so I thought I would pass them along. Ros and **Dick Gallagher** now have quarters and invite all to write! Post your letters to CAPT and Mrs. **Richard K. Gallagher**, 9003 Breezy Point CRES, Norfolk, VA 23511-3901. Julia and **Gary Hentz** are enjoying their new digs at 945 Glenangus Drive, Bel Air, MD 21015. Many of the Class are now on email and a comprehensive list of those addresses received to date was passed out at the reunion. I thought I'd pass along a few I've heard from recently.

Bill Kneller: kneller@wsii.com

Sam Nichols: nichosa@mail.auburn.edu

Mike West: allwest@iadfw.net

Jim McKee: mckeej@smtp-gw.spawar.navy.mil

Phil Poirier: Ppoirier@concentric.net

Chuck White: n314@c7f.navy.mil

Bates Estabrooks: besta@tis.eh.doe.gov

Peter Varsanyi: varsanyi_peter@TECH

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Bates Estabrooks also reports that he, Stephanie and their four boys are now living in New Mexico. He's still working for Westinghouse at a US DOE facility where we'll be storing radioactive waste. Stephanie stays busier than any of us want to be with homeschooling!

That's all for now, but please forward news to this lonely mailbox! This article is hard to write without inspiration!

Well, Chuck D. and I have succeeded in getting our article in after the deadline, again... Good thing I know the editor... I think! Anyway, I just wanted to add a couple of notes before this goes to press.

It has been a great year for many of us. As a Class, we once again enjoyed each other's company and reminded ourselves of an oft forgotten blessing in our lives. Individually, we've all had struggles mixed with our good times, but I bet if we put them all in balance, we'd find that life's scales continue to tip in our favor. Many of our crew will be making the transition from the service to the private sector over the next few years. There are very few areas where we can help each other more than by providing job leads, transition advice, or just plain encouragement when things look down during this tough time. Those of us who are already "out" know that employment these days is at best "fluid." We should all keep an eye out for opportunities that one of our own might capitalize upon. If you need some advice or help, just ask; please don't let your pride get in the way of doing what may be good for you and your family. The kind of loyalty we learned to have for each other is rare in my life and I expect in yours. I would be proud to think we take as good care of each other in our new endeavors as we would have in combat.

John Kruse sent in a Reunion photo:



L to R: John and Denise Kruse, Tommy Gardner, Daniel and Teal Mitchell, and Wayne and Mary Walters

Carol Petit sent in a photo of **Johnny Rowland** and his "crew"—Johnny, why is your chest about to bust outta that blazer and why are these women smiling?!!:



L to R: Rachael Steel, friend of the Gorum's and Kevin McHale '96, the beautiful Nancy Gorum, Johnny (Meatball) Rowland, Carol Rowland and Carol Petit, spouse of Bruce Petit.

Steve Clark wrote to relate a busy year. Steve wasn't quite as up to par as he appeared at Reunion time. He has recovered from ambulatory surgery (or semi-ambulatory as Steve puts it!) he underwent the next day. We are happy to hear he is feeling much better and passing out blessings once again.

Well, that's about it! Be careful out there! Please write and let Chuck D. know what is going on in your life and that of the Class. **Chuck '76**

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Membership: 80%

Pres: **CDR Owen G. Thorp III, USNR**

Sec'y: **CDR Bill Millward, USN**

1026 Magnolia Avenue, Norfolk, VA 23508

E-mail: bmillwar@ix.netcom.com

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Membership: 85%

Pres: **John Rudder**

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**

45 Little Fawn Drive, Shelton, CT 06484

I wish you barristers would quit using your firm's envelopes to mail me stuff! You guys don't know how very nervous one gets when one receives a letter with a return address of a law firm. Weird ideas start popping through your head, like: "Is some Fatal-Instinct-old girlfriend coming after me?!", "Did she really mean it when she said 'I've HAD IT' last night?!", "Does this envelope have anything to do with that 'unaccounted time' Plebe year from Army-Navy?!", **Charlie Pangburn** set my lifespan back a couple of years with his letter! I didn't know if a subpoena was gonna fall out of the envelope or what!

Lucky for me a picture of Charlie and **Ron Brownley** fell out instead—but then again, some might think that itself is just as frightening an image as a subpoena.

Anyway, Charlie reported that Ron's an Annapolitan. (seems we always return to the scenes of our "crimes"...Annapolis, Pensacola, Cubi O-club...) The photo depicts these two at Ron's house just across the bay from Annapolis. (I guess that would make Ron a "near-Annapolitan" to be more precise.) [Ed. Note: Unfortunately we don't have the photo...sorry]

Ron and Vicki are still happily married and have two daughters, Holly and Olivia. Ron's a captain with American Airlines and flies out of National Airport in DC. As for Charlie, he and Patty continue to match married anniversaries with those of our graduation (18 now going on 19 years). They live in Northern Kentucky with their two children, Kimberly (17) and Chas (10). Charlie's Marine Corps JAG training prepared him well for that new partnership with Taft, Stettinius & Hollister, a Cincinnati-based firm of about 160 lawyers. He's been with them since leaving active duty back in 1990. He stayed in the Reserve and is currently the G-1 (Admin for you non-green types) for the 4th FSSG (Force Service Support Group). He hopes to get a battalion within a year or two.

A couple of other changes of command occurred again. Five days after the Marine Corps Birthday, **Dick "Finner" Findlay** assumed command of a Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron, VMFA(AW)-322, at MCAS Beaufort, SC. Also assuming command of a Harrier squadron out in MCAS Yuma, was **Mark Bolin**. I'm waiting for a specific report from **Brad** "you-can-call-me-Jack, or you-can-call-me-JB" **Richardson** along with some photos. In his brief PIREP (that stands for "pilot report" for you earth bounders) on the change of command Brad mentioned that also in attendance were **Ray Baltera, Doug Meyers, Don Beverlin and Jim Lippard**. There's a very humorous story to Bolin's assumption of command comments, but I'll reserve them until the next column, when I have a full accounting from JB. As for Brad and Julie, they and the kids are now living in Tallahassee, FL. Another new job, a promotion and warmer climate.

Mark Fox gave up his command on November 4th. In true "warrior" fashion he did it while deployed aboard ENTERPRISE, somewhere out in the Arabian Sea. Some would attribute it to the ops tempo of Navy Air. I'm sure others, however, would characterize it as a pretty cheap way to get out of paying for a big reception and shelling out a lot of bucks for the brews for all those friends-of-Bill W-graduates. By now Mark is on his way to "Pilot Purgatory"—the five-sided Puzzle Palace known as the Pentagon. He's going to the Navy's Office of Legislative Affairs. Instead of an F/A-18, he'll be SHARING an SSD (small steel desk) with five other O-5s in Cubicleland.

I talked to **Bill Yeager** the other day. He's in Milton, FL and is the CO of my old training squadron, the "Do-er Birds" of VT-2. I was calling to check on the status of my flight records and to see if he couldn't "improve" those grades of mine back in primary. I figure you never know when there might be an opening with the new Pan Am. As a matter of fact, Yeags said they were just discussing what to do with all those old records. Seems they are choking on old archives and getting ready to dump the batch. If only they would've dumped them 17 years ago, before aircraft selection, I'd have had my choice of aircraft and coast! Anyway, I'm still asking Bill for my records. Though some of those instructors were pretty brutal to this nugget, they should be now be good for a laugh. That's only because time has healed all wounds—and because I had all that fleet time in

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which I think I proved myself a better "stick" than some—o.k., a lot—of instructors felt I was. Besides, I also think I've finally gotten rid of that nervous tick I used to get when someone would sneak up behind me and ask me in quiet omnipotently instructor fashion, "What're you doing?" Eeeeeeeh, I guess I'm not fully over it... Anyway, Bill gives up the squadron next year and will be heading to VX-1 at Pax River. That means he'll be back to micro-wave cooking on the cross-country P-3s. Guess I'll have to brush up on my "Space A+" pass so he can take me on those long cooking and wine excursions to sunny southern California.

I also got another invitation to a shuttle launch from **Ken Bowersox**. Sox will be the Mission Commander for STS-82 scheduled to launch on February 13th. I was a little surprised insofar as Sox seems to think an invitation to me is like an invitation to a Jonah. Everytime I show up something gets delayed—a launch, a landing. I keep convincing him that it's because of those guys he invites from Brand X class, but that's starting to be a old dog that won't hunt. Let's hope invitation number four is a charm and I get to watch without a hitch. It looks like Ken and his crew will be doing another service call on the Hubble telescope. Jeez, talk about your house calls! The hourly rates for these guys is outta this world I'm sure (no pun intended.)! At least with those space suits on you won't be subjected to the "6 o'clock vertical smile" like your are with your plumber. I don't know how soon after the Shuttle lands you can expect to find them on the Tim Allen show. I'm sure you guys should keep alert to your TV Guide Seems Sox and his crews have been such regular visitors to Tim Taylor's Tool Time that NASA is now issuing them SAG (Screen ACTORS Guild) cards. So keep tuned in to your sets sports fans. By way Sox, this time why don't you take something out in space that shows off USNA 78? (like me). Anyway, good luck with the mission, Ken, and be prepared for a lot of Honey-do's from Annie when you get back from that "cross country".

I close with on a couple of sad notes.

While deployed this past Fall, **Skip Bayes'** squadron, HS-15, lost a helicopter and, along with it, a few good sailors. It's a pretty heavy responsibility you all have being in those command billets—both Skip and Charlene have an especially hard task ahead of them in helping heal the wounds of families and fliers. We send our prayers and best wishes to the families of those men killed in the accident and particularly to Skip and Charlene, as well, as they work to mend up the squadron and get everyone back to the business of life.

In November I also received a letter from **Rob Blandford's** dad, **Jim Blandford '55**, advising me of the death of Kathleen M. Blandford, Academy wife, mother, mother-in-law (members of '79), god-mother (to **Mike McNish**) and friend. Kathleen, Rob's mother, succumbed finally to cancer. She was interred at the Naval Academy Columbarium after a service in St. Andrews Chapel. As with all "Academy women," her presence graced the lives of all those of who came in contact with her and her "family" spanned a myriad of Navy men—Classmates and shipmates to spouse and sons across the decades. It's comforting to know that, resting along the Severn, she'll continue in some fashion to touch the lives of countless other Mids, as they parade opposite on Warden Field, meander in escort along the pathways of Hospital Point, jog, struggle over obstacles or glide on College Creek in rowing shells. Our prayers and condolences go out to Rob and his family.

Well that's the short of it all (Hey, stop with those sandblower thoughts you wise guys!). Next month will be filled with the results of the annual Christmas newsletters everyone mailed to me. With that,

I'll end with a New Year's wish for new beginnings, second chances and faster typing. See you in two, 'til then—launhin' Spot Four.

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Membership: 94%

Pres: **Mike Finley**
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So I've been getting calls from Classmates who are dads and invariably the conversation turns to how to make sure no more kids show up in the stork's beak. I've got some pretty good do's and don'ts, so I'll try to give some of you a few tips on what to do and what not to do while at the same time trying to stay within standards of decorum (Yeah, right, Kenny. You pretty much define decorum. If you're thinking about the big "V", take my advice and go with a general anesthesia. You don't want to get a local anesthesia, be looking down at a critical moment, suddenly go into shock, jump up off the table and start dancin' around the doc's waiting room in front of the other dads who are up next. They see that, the blood, the snippers and they're liable to go into sympathy shock themselves. Also, forget about trying to avoid the big "V" by getting the safe sex training films now available in all the high schools across the country. They don't work. Vicky and I got the one from the greater Chicago High School District just before she got pregnant with our youngest son, Chris. ...[Ed Note: as you can well imagine knowing Ken, there was more, but...what can we say...] Remember: go with the general anesthesia. Also, make sure your wife gets a few ten pound bags of ice on the way home. Enough free medical advice, let's get on with the Classmate info, shall we?



Rich Hayes and Leigh Anne; Chuck Wright and Toby

Rich Hayes sent news of **Chuck Wright** and Chuck's change of command ceremony for VFA-147. Chuck also had a long list of accomplishments not least of which was receiving the Stephen B. Luce award at the Naval War College back in '94. You know, I checked the old FHTNR's in the Database of Love and I never saw one for the Chuckmaster's kudos. Is there a nasty trend developing where no one fills out those FHTNR sheets there in admin? If there is, Chuck's not gonna be the only guy with a blistered damn fanny. Don't make me stop this car. Chuck's wife Toby and their cutie pie girls, Sarah and Katlyn were there at the CoC with Rich and Leigh Anne. Last April Rich and his family moved to Thousand Oaks to get a better view of the Malibu fires when the Santa Ana's start blowing and to take over as GM of the local Kaiser Aluminum plant. Rich also flies to Saginaw, MI a few times a month to do his Reserve CO duty with NR LKA Support Unit A. Rich, not to make you feel bad but down the road at Mugu, guys like **Doc Francis** are getting around 60 AFTPs per year in addition to a month of AD and

lots of SPECAC. Don't worry, now that I'm taking things like the Naval Orientation course for points and no pay, I hate him too. Only 35 points worth of correspondence courses and 15 points for breathing and I'll have my twenty. Rich said that if you're in the area or just escaping from an earthquake in the San Fernando Valley, stop on by his digs. His number is 805-375-5047 and he also said to bring beer. Rich, thanks for the info and great photo.

Another CoC that took place just this last October was **Tim Giardina's**. He's now the Skipper of KENTUCKY, one of those long black things that flies underwater and can construct HUGE nation-sized parking lots at the touch of a button. When Tim's not running silent/running deep, he'll be on terra firma in King's Bay, GA with his doctor wife Missy. Missy works as a contract doc at the Navy clinic in Mayport. Tim joins other Niner Skippers, **Scott Gray** (MARYLAND/Blue) and **Doug Fremont** (WEST VIRGINIA/Gold) in King's Bay. Good on you Tim and thanks for all the info.

Rick Lopez sent an update from Hotlanta and Classmates in Delta Airlines. Heidi and **Russ Nevitt** live in San Diego with their kid units. Russ flies 767's. **Keith Retterer**, who I believe may be owed a few beers for finding someone's 200 dollar headset, flies MD-88's out of Atlanta. **Bob Weisenburg** is switching from MD-88's to 767's. Gramps and **Tim Ebbinghouse** got a chance to see the Navy/GA Tech game last November. Tim and Becky have a few curtain climbers in Peachtree City. Tim's also switching from MD-11's to the 767. Is it me, or are some of you getting that "If it ain't Boeing, I won't be going" sorta feeling? **Pat Temple** lives in Dallas and flies 727's. The only United guy in the bunch is **Simon Boocock** who lives in Mesa, AZ. Twenty bucks says Simon flies a Boeing product. Rick, thanks for the update and especially for the care package. Now I owe someone LOTS of beers. Maybe when I'm at the Atlanta Gift Show in February, we can hook up.

For a night pilot update, **Roger Chapa** sent news of his and other Niner doin's at FedEx. Roger and Sharel with their three young'ns, Monica, Karisa and Daniel, live there in Memphis, home of the world famous band, Dread Zeppelin (no thank you darlin', I'm on a diet). Roger and **Brian Ward** work together as "Flex" instructors (one of those Semper Gumby deals). Other guys at FedEx include **Stu Cummings**, **Bart Sparks**, **Dave Dennis**, **Harvey T. Walsh**, and **Phil Pirrozi**. Roger said there's more, but the cholesterol is kicking in now that he's 40 and that's dorkin' with his short term memory cells. Roger is also the Skipper of VAW-78 a Reserve electric two outfit. **Dave Lindsey** is the Skipper of the other Reserve E-2C squadron, VAW-77. Now two Niner's command all of the AEW assets in the Naval Reserve. Sorta makes you all tingly inside, huh? Roger recently crossed paths with **Tom Forsythe** in Nashville. Tom was driving cross country relocating due to a promotion. Roger sent an encrypted message for Class prez, **Mike Finley**: "Tsai Ping...Da big one!" Roger, thanks for the info and the photo of you and Dave.



Dave Lindsey and Roger Chapa