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Another quick and dirty column this month. It seems just like yesterday that I wrapped up one of these puppies and put it to print. Lo and behold another deadline is upon us! With our reunion just a few days away, the 'trons have been zipping around and the email been stacking up. Of course, much of it has been "the dog ate my registration papers" and last minute "Failure to get the word" Form Two stuff. Do the words Romeo Tango Foxtrot Quebec ring a bell? (Or in this case Gulf [for Gouge] rather than the "Quebec.") It's okay though, the stats are pretty much in and the Reunion committees have planned for "stragglers." Besides, most of our wives have sent in the proper forms. After all, they always just tell us where to be, when to be there and what to wear anyway, kinda like our wedding day. Elizabeth was reflecting on one fact of life Navy wives have learned. That is, that despite what Mrs. Marshall may have tried to teach us in "Service Etiquette 101," if it weren't for spouses, two-thirds of us would never attend a thing. After all, they're the ones who are always doing the RSVPing. On to the feedbag...

Brett Ayotte, 29th Co., (bayotte@ix.netcom.com) passed a "Cliff Notes" version of *How I Spent My Twenty Summers Vacation from Mother B*. Like most of us over the years, he's had many good intentions to send in some news. As he put it "and we all know where the road that is paved with good intentions leads." (I certainly do, my road is a freakin' 16 lane superhighway with a clover leaf and expanded on-ramp!) Of course his writing was two-fold prompted, first was his hope to make the 20th Reunion. That was torpedoed by his recent selection to command a Reserve unit in D.C., which was complicated by his living in Florida. The commute (which we reservists know is on his own nickel) of two trips to the D.C. area in as many weeks created too much havoc on his other commitments. So, he'll have to wait until the 25th. His other writing prompt was to tell me he too is one of those the Naval Reserve O-6 selectees I left off my earlier list. Back to his Cliff Notes, after graduation he went Nuke. In October '78 plus one (I just can't say your Class number, KR.) between leaving prototype and starting sub school, Brett married Karen O'Donnell. Of course, he was quick to say they had met in the parking lot after the Navy-Air Force game our First Class Year. (Sounds like he got a future wife while most of us just got a hangover that day!) Karen's a nurse and does in-service training at hospitals for Baxter Healthcare. They have three children: Tim (15) is a strapping 6' 3" high school swimmer. (Brett's not sure where the height came from, but he said it's a good thing that they have found that asthma stunts a child's growth, otherwise who knows where Tim would be!); Suzanne (11 going on 25, or so she thinks). Brett "can't wait" (read that with appropriate sarcasm) for her to become a teenager at which time he may wish once more for those loooooong cruises; Emily (7) carries the nickname "Hurricane Emily" in honor of one of the recent storms to visit the Florida coast. Brett didn't think he need to expound on that further. After typical sub tours he left active duty and moved from Ledyard, CT, to Palm Harbor, FL.

(That's just to the west of Tampa, on the Gulf Coast. In fact, they can see the Gulf of Mexico from their bedroom window...Hmmm and the Coast Guard can see their bedroom from the Gulf of Mexico, better get those curtains, Karen!). Over the years, he's changed jobs a couple of times, but always pretty much staying in the consulting and technical services for utilities and government nuclear facilities (i.e., weapons sites) around the Tampa area. Today, he's the General Manager, Sales Administration, Proposals, and Business Planning for MDM Services Corporation. That's a long title to say that he's a jack of all trades in the area of strategic planning, preparing proposals to win work, and anything else that needs to be done. He runs the Florida office for the company. This past December, he served on the USNA/Merchant Marine Academy screening committee for local Republican Congressman (Mike Bilirakis). He said it was a real treat to feel like he was contributing, in a small way, to the continuity of the Academy. [I know how that is, as I too was on my Congressman's service academy selection committee. I encourage the rest of you to also get involved the same way.] Over the years, Brett managed to get an MBA from the University of South Florida, Tampa, and his Professional Engineering license. He also makes some pin money (read that beer money) doing some moonlighting by helping a neighbor who's a general contractor. In the Reserves since January '84, he's had a variety of tours, from six years with NR ComSubRon 16 Det 1208, when it existed in Kings Bay, GA, to a unit that supported the old SOSUS facility in Keflavik, Iceland; Area Team/Action Officer duty at the U.S. Special Operations Command at MacDill AFB. (Where, while there, he crossed paths with **John Weidner**. John was there following his XO tour.); CO of a Det supporting the Special Operations Command, South; drill pointed it with a VTU (Volunteer Training Unit). Now he's CO of CinCiberLant Det 106, a paid job! He summarized by saying that, since leaving Canoe U, he's primarily been keeping his head down and trying make a living. He invited anyone who may come to the Tampa area and wants a cold one or two, to feel free to look him up at 210 Shore Drive Palm Harbor, FL 34683. It's an invitation he admits he may live to regret. In Brett-gram Two he said he saw a NavAdmin message the other day (Sep '98) that announced that **Cecil Haney** (CO of HONOLULU, [SSN-718]) was one of two officers to be awarded the ADM Stockdale Leadership Award. The unique fleet award was established in honor of VADM **James Bond Stockdale** "whose distinguished naval career symbolized the highest standards of excellence in both personal example and

leadership". The award is presented annually to two commissioned officers on active duty below the grade of captain who are in command of a ship, submarine, or aviation squadron at the time of nomination. Candidates are nominated by peers who themselves must be eligible for the award. Cecil and his award partner were chosen from among seven outstanding finalists in a review that included screening at the fleet commanders level and a final selection by a board of senior officers in Washington, D.C. The awards were to be presented in October in D.C. by the CNO. Congrats, Cecil!

Dave Roberts (drobert2@us.ibm.com) heartily endorses email and says "this stuff is great!" Dave was writing from an airplane in which he was flying back to Ohio after having attended **John Hancock's** retirement ceremony (23 September in Memorial Hall at USNA). John and Dave were roommates from Youngster Year through graduation. Dave said the ceremony was outstanding and proudly reflected on how John's retiring remarks were wonderful. John's wife, Maura, had confessed to Dave that John had sweated over his speech for weeks (It was vintage John, still never passing up an opportunity to fret and worry!) Although he only spoke for about ten minutes, his comments contained volumes about his warmth, sense of humor, and his love for his family, friends, the Academy, and the Naval Service. John had been Associate Chair of the Weapons and Systems Engineering Department at USNA for the last five years. During his tenure, he oversaw the accreditation review process which was proved out by the Systems Engineering program currently being ranked number one in the country! For his contribution to the Navy, Academy and his country John was presented with the Meritorious Service Medal. With his retirement John is also wrapping up a Ph.D. from George Mason. His dissertation is *Service Academies. Do they Make a Difference?* Well, we all know the short answer, Hell Yah! But now John has spent thousands of hours of research and hundreds of pages of documentation to back us up! Also attending the ceremony from 3rd Company were **Mike Durnan** and **John Hemry**. Mike recently completed a surface command tour and is now at the Pentagon. He's still single but his mom continues to scout out bridal prospects for him. John Hemry took early retirement and is now living and working in Maryland. He has three kids ages five, three and one who keep him busy. **John Hancock** has been married for 19 years to Maura, his lovely wife, and they have two great kids, Jon (15) and Kyle (13). As for Dave, he too has a lovely wife of 14 years, Kyle, and two great boys, Aaron (10) and Nolan (8). As for Dave, he's still in WKRP land, Cincinnati and still works for IBM. As usual, if anyone is in the area, he asks you look him up in the book.

Reunion fever also got to **Dusty Gray** (dovendel@hafa.sprint.net.gu). He wrote that after one and a half years with 10th Company at USNA, he got out and joined the Air Force. He's served seven years active duty with the Air Force as a radar navigator in B-52s and then got out to go to seminary. Since 1988, he's been in the Army National Guard as a chaplain. Right now, he serves as an assistant pastor to Harvest Baptist Church in Guam (you can find it on the internet by looking at virtualguam.com). He's also the senior chaplain for the Army and Air National Guard here. Youngster cruise showed Dusty that ship life was not for him. While he was preparing to leave Mother B, his fiancé was doing the leg work for him on an Air Force

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ROTC scholarship at the University of Alabama. That August of '76, Sandra, his fiancé (and high school best friend), became his bride. After 22 years of marriage, she still makes his plans. His Zoomie career was as B-52 navigator. In September '82, while assigned to Robins AFB, he and his crew successfully landed an aircraft in which they all should have been killed (as he put it... "fools rush in where angels fear to tread"). For that brave/foolish act the crew designator, "E-21," was placed on the McKay trophy at the Smithsonian Institute, a position they share with such names as Chuck Yeager. Check it out next time you are there! It was during his assignment on Guam that Dusty got his calling into the ministry. (Guam will do that, among other things.) He attended seminary at Bob Jones University in Greenville, SC, and took a reserve commission. His home town pastor performed the ceremony (he was the head chaplain for the Army National Guard in Alabama). After the ceremony he offered Dusty the opportunity to enter the chaplain candidate program in Alabama, and so now having been in the Navy, the Air Force, Dusty entered the *Army*...he was now a regular joint-service kinda guy! To make a long story shorter, a variety of twist and turns finally found him back in Guam in '93 as an Associate Pastor and full Chaplain with the Army Guard with Sandra as a high school principal and guidance counselor. Today, Dusty's also Director for a Bible Institute (a three year work/study program for high school graduates out of the Micronesian islands...they receive an associate degree...) trying to make it transition into a full fledged Bible college. Their oldest daughter, Jessica, is now a sophomore at BJU in physical therapy; Lindsay is a junior in a Christian school on Guam and Hannah is in the sixth grade. He and Sandra are both slowly pursuing their doctorates. They weren't able to make it back for the 20th but are shooting for the 25th. Dusty asks that his old friends from Good Time Ten and others drop him a line.

My old Companymate, **Matt Elias** (MPGEE@aol.com), joined the ranks of the retired. Like John Hancock's ceremony, Matt's was a very emotional time, not only was Matt giving up the job as Commanding Officer that he had held for the last 37 months and loved, but he was also giving up the only job he had ever held as an adult! A double whammy! (It's a condition many of you are now experiencing. But believe me there *is* life after active duty and those of us on the other side can help!) Matt was supported by **Phil Winters** who flew in from California and **Rusty Cone** who came from across town (Dallas). Matt almost didn't have a retirement ceremony, but he was convinced to have one by Phil. Matt admitted it was great advice and he was really glad he did go through with it. He hasn't made any decisions on the job front but continues to have serious and "very positive discussions" with three companies, two Christian nonprofits and a high tech company. (Already Matt has that business lingo down.) All the opportunities are in Dallas and he says he'd be very happy with any of the bunch. Phil is just a couple of months behind Matt, his change of command is scheduled for 5 December. Matt reminded that "Who would have thought that when we were back at the Academy that Phil and I would be retiring after twenty years. I know there were a lot better bets in the Company." I know, ain't life strange?

Gary Thompson (glt@solutions2000.net), 32nd Company, so far has zapped one of the longest distanced emails. Gary got out of the

Marine Corps in 1987. He admits to having been really been out of touch, considering that since 1987 he's been living and working in Central and South America. He currently calls Guyana home. He's reactivating his membership in the Alumni Association and looks forward to receiving *Shipmate* once again and catching up with some old pals.

Larry Olsen (lolsen@devron12.com) was apologetic for the very brief email, but hey, it's better than nothing, Larry. He's Chief of Staff for Submarine Development Squadron Twelve. It's a great job, but he says there are not enough hours in a day to keep up with everything. (He should do what I did—get the boss to add four hours to your day.) He and Janet were planning to be at the Reunion and had asked me for my Mr. Blackwell recommendations on what to wear to the events. Clothes, I told him.

Chris Powers (CPowersR2@aol.com) is the Air Boss on JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN-74) and lives in Virginia Beach, VA. **Rudy Escher** (RudyEscher@aol.com) has a new bride, the former Pamela Hartline. **Gary Rupp** wanted to let everyone know he has a new personal email address. It's cgrupp@earthlink.com. That's the best address to reach him for the time being. He'll be sending us a new business email address as soon he has access to it.

Well, that's it gotta go. I'm juggling two jobs as I transition from doing S-76 Commercial helicopter manufacturing operations stuff to returning to the Heavy Lift Programs at Sikorsky. To put it succinctly, I go from the floor to the office and I am now my old boss. Does that makes sense? Probably not. See me over a beer at the Reunion and I'll make much better sense. Of course, as this issue comes to release you'll all be thinking to yourselves that the Reunion is long since over. Well, that's part of the illusion of these columns, they're done several weeks in advance! So put yourself back a few months as you read this. Adios, until next time, I'm launchin'.... oops, I'm on hold. Still choked and chained. Let me explain that Spot Four stuff. For all the Retorheads and Gator Black shoes out there, you already know this. Spot Four is one of the first Spots on the helo flattops, right by the island. It's a choice location, smooth and easy access to the hatch down to officers country for quick exits to and from flying with the old helmet bag. Got it? Now I'm outta here!

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Regular Membership: 3%
Life Membership: 90%

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Well, where the heck was I last month? I do have an excuse, sir. The Laptop of Love had a serious hard drive crash. How serious, you ask? Well, for those of you who are in the computer/software/IMS business, my hard drive crashed so badly, that it locked up Norton's Disk Doctor and couldn't even be low-level formatted. A feat very few have managed to accomplish. And, had I backed it up in the past four months? Had I backed up all my financial data; accounts receivables, payables, future sales orders? You know, that silly stuff that can make any business

stop dead in its tracks, real soon, pretty quick if it's lost? Has Clinton ever told the truth in the past six years? Oh man, it was ugly and *real* expensive. Missed a shipment date, orders screwed up, hapless villagers killed; brutal. Shut me down completely for four days and cost a few grand. Ouchees. And, of course, it happened right around the article deadline. Fortunately, the old L o' L (for **Bill Enslin**, **Vince Bousa** and **Doc Francis**, the L o' L is short for the Laptop of Love) was under warranty and at least they replaced the hard drive at no cost. Plus, my old roomie, computer genius and famous denture wearer **Sam Hull**, sent me some stuff and talked me through open heart surgery to help get a few lunched files copied off the drive. Computers: *They make our lives simpler.*

Well all righty, enough about confusers, your Give King is back with a vengeance, so let's plp down some info, shall we?

First up, is a letter I got from **Russ Nevitt**. Seems that **Dan Bursch** got a little sick of the beautiful weather in Moscow while Space Shuttle training with the Rooskies, so he decided to spend some time in that town well known for terrible weather, San Diego. While there, Russ took Uncle Bud on a FAM flight in an S-3. Russ is CO of VS-41 0294 so, gettin' a plane for some real good press wasn't too difficult. On final approach, Russ asked Dan, "So whattya think?" Uncle Bud's response was, "Nice, but can it circle the earth in ninety minutes?"

Russ sent updates on a few other folks from 22nd Company:

Mike Muldoon is putting broken stuff back together at Balboa. Mike's in charge of the Orthopedic Surgery department. Mike, Jeanie and their three kidmeisters live on Point Loma. Bummer. **Pat Temple** and **Denny Fitzgerald** enjoyed triple digit temps last summer in Dallas. Can you believe Pat wants to leave Texas and move back to Colorado? Go figure. **Ted Branch** is slated for XO of STENNIS and will be moving to Coronado next summer if he isn't deep selected for CNO first. Ted, you really need to quit throwing your life away and find something you're good at. **Rob Sterling** will be finishing up his CO of VS-21 tour next year. [Corr. Sec'y: Hey Rob, remember Ron Miller, the math prof at NAPS? Yeah well, when my hard drive crashed without a recent backup, I could just hear him saying in that venomously sarcastic voice, "Wrong, wrong, stupid, wrong, stupid, stupid." A little blast from the past.] **Doug Fremont** is feet dry after a few years as a Trident skipper. Five Sided Puzzle Palace lover and '79 D.C. Newsletter writer, **Kirk Michaelson** is punching out next June. [Sec'y: Russ believes that Kirk's retiring the Ginsu knives for some real ones.] **John Ziegler** and **Johnny Ikeda** are long time Civ Divvers there in San Diego. Johnny does that Reservist thing at TSC, North Island.

Russ, thanks a bunch for the update and photo. Sorry about canceling the UnHomecoming here in South Dakota. If you think you're disappointed, those poor folks at Mount Marty College in Yankton are mortified. They were really countin' on a huge win.

Mrs. DQ, that would be the wife of **Don Quinn**, sent a change of command invitation to Yours Truly last month. Apparently, the good flyin' deal is over and DQ may be DIFDEN for a while. Films at eleven. Thanks for the invite

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