

76

Regular Membership: 43%
Life Membership: 17%

Pres: **Chuck Gorum**

146 Prince George Street, Annapolis, MD 21401
h: 410-263-3337; e: cgorum@annap.infi.net

Sec'y: **Chuck Dirienzo**

2833 Horsemen Ridge Drive, Clayton, NC 27520
h: 919-550-2627; e: chuckles@ipass.net

Well, hello '76! I have just returned from a visit for the Environmental Protection Agency to Denver, Cincinnati and D.C. in the same week. It was a very tiring, but rewarding trip. I don't have that much to report. There was an Easter Card waiting for me from Peter (winvar@erols.com.) I suspect that I know who it's from, but I don't want to make a complete fool of myself. So, all I'll say is thanks! **Stephen M. Soules** (ssoules@erols.com) dropped me a line. He bumped into **John Sparks** and got the web site address. Steve is in the process of transitioning and looking to stay in the Washington area. He sees some of the guys once in a while when he gets to the Pentagon. John Sparks, **Jim McKee**, **Billy Mueller** and Steve actually did manage to get together for the Army-Navy game at his house. Thanks for getting in touch! I got a few others, but with my being on the road, I can't seem to find them. I'll try to track them down for the next installment. Semper Fi.

77

Regular Membership: 24%
Life Membership: 55%

Pres: **CAPT Richard (Rick) White, USN**

1404 Hunting Wood Road, Annapolis, MD 21403
w: 703-605-5605 ext 145; h: 410-295-0089

e: (w) WhiteRW@navsea.navy.mil;

(h) betwhite@erols.com

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

5013 Stone Haven Drive, Annandale, VA 22003
h: 703-250-3578

e: bmillwar@ix.netcom.com

Acting Sec'y: **CDR Mark Sobczak**

1522 South Sea Breeze Trail

Virginia Beach, VA 23452

h: 757-486-8056

e: pnh0mls@pnh10.4med.navy.mil

or usna77@pilot.infi.net

78

Regular Membership: 13%
Life Membership: 71%

Pres: **Arch Griffin**

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**

45 Little Fawn Drive, Shelton, CT 06484

e: CanoeU78@aol.com

website: http://usna1978.org

As I write this column, the dark ages have passed, but you could never tell by the shortage of mail I've had these days. I guess that little dry spell you guys saw at the beginning of the year had you wondering if I was still doing this or not. Well, I am. But I need something to work with. Of course Creative Writing 101 has been able to provide some filler once in a while. But these days I'm having a little brain drain. Must either be a little middle age crisis or just a synapse that encountered one of those "gaps" which resulted from one of those "sacrifices" for a great time I had as a young lieutenant. Either way, zap

me a line, please. Don't make me grovel. It's unbecoming in this column and besides, it's reserved these days for marital harmony. Looking over the slim pickings I've got so far...

On 12 March, **Scott Langdon** relinquished command of CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI (SSN-75) in Groton, CT. Marilyn (mj.langdon@cwix.com) followed up with an "end-of tour" email to fill us in on the details. Two weeks after the changeover, the packers arrived for their move to Italy. Scott was "advanced party" for the Langdon family having left in April. Marilyn and the kids, Kyle and Erin, were to follow this month (June). She expected the household goods to arrive by the time she and the kids get to Italy. Of course, with all the horror stories of Navy moves that could be wishful thinking. The Langdons have made a few comm shifts, but the safest way to catch them is still at their original address, MSLangdon@aol.com. That's until Marilyn can arrange another comm shift to an Italian email service.

Say, if Marilyn and Scott are headed toward Naples they can join Elisabeth and **Dave Bruce**. The Bruces are living in Varcaturro, a suburb just ten miles north of Naples. The home is a dream come true; almost as many bathrooms as bedrooms (four to five)! For the sole male in a family of four women, having almost personal head privileges is heaven! There are also gardens and orchards full of fruit trees. The house is certainly a step up from their single bathroom accommodations in Belgium. Besides, there's also plenty of room for guests (that's a hint from Dave and Elisabeth). Dave is in the Plans and Policy section at HQ Naval Striking and Support Forces, Southern Europe. That's the NATO counterpart to Sixth Fleet staff. It's probably been a very busy place lately. Between some modified version of home-schooling, soccer-momming and church, Elisabeth and the girls (Sandrine, Stephanie and Audrey) keep quite busy.

Steve Bartie retired from the Naval Reserve on 18 April down at NAS JAX. That means he's employed full-time as an airline pilot (but then, some may see that as a bit of an oxymoron).

In February, Cammy and **Loren Divers** had an extended holiday to Hong Kong. Yup, Loren was being introduced to the in-laws. They celebrated the Chinese New Year with Cammy's family. Loren says they did a lot of sightseeing and even ventured a day into China. Suffice it to say that Loren

says the sights would amaze us Westerners. Loren did fulfill one of his lifelong dreams, he acquired an abacus. Now if only he could work the thing better than a calculator, he might have better luck in that high finance realty market in Hawaii.

Krisan and **Mike Murphy** sent a letter from Poland. Yes, I said Poland. Murphy resigned his Marine Corps commission back in '84. He got his ThM degree from Dallas Theological Seminary in '90. For the last eight years, he and Krisan have worked as missionaries with Church Resource Ministries in Warsaw. Married since '81, they have four lovely children. Jeremy is the eldest (10), followed by his younger brother, Nathan (8). The near-recent addition on 18 December 1997, of twin daughters, Katherine and Joanna, helped to maintain a gender-balanced household. You can reach Mike on email at mmurphy@crmnet.org or send him mail the old fashioned way at: ul. Symfoni 5m.24, 02-787 Warsaw, Poland. Unable to make our reunion for rather obvious reasons, he'd love to hear from anyone. Thanks for coming out of the cold Murph!

Here's a bit of news from **Mike Clendenning**:

While on a trip to Florida to get a break from the "dark ages," **Jeff Johnson '79** and family enjoyed a day of fishing in Tampa Bay with Cap'n **Mike Clendenning**. Mike's 20 years of oceanography experience was evident in his ability to find fish. Our arms were tired from hauling in pompano, trout and spanish mackerel. Mike runs Sun Up Fishing (727-376-1315) and offers inshore trips in the Tampa Bay/Tarpon Springs area.



Jeff Johnson '79 and Mike Clendenning



The Murphy's in Warsaw

You *know* it's a slow news day when I start resorting to Fleet Hometown News Releases. It's kinda like scraping the bottom of the peanut butter jar; not much to go on, but at least it'll spread.

I know sometimes my news is a bit stale (there are five plus weeks between the writing and the issue actually being mailed), but let's see what we have from the even more stale FHTNR press.

Bob Gulley is now the CO of Fleet Logistics Squadron 54 at NAS New Orleans. Hmmm, sounds like there's a possible LZ for Mardi Gras next year. **John Costello** is out in the med on the last ship I ever floated on, *NASSAU*. Big **Al Kuntz** and his squadron were on *ABE LINCOLN*. The FHTNR said they returned at the end of last year from a float. But, the way things are going as I write this column (Easter time approaching), they may be on the water again and chalking "With Love to Slobodan" onto some 500 pounders. The same goes for **Kevin White** who is on *IKE*. **Bill Landay** and his ship, the destroyer *PAUL HAMILTON*, should be back in Pearl Harbor. The news release had them visiting Hong Kong and Thailand. As the FHTNR said:

While visiting Thailand, after an extremely challenging transit to the straits of Malacca, crew members from Landay's ship participated in Operation Handclasp.

With that in mind, I'd like Bill to answer the question—How were those Malaccas?!

Hmm let's see what else is going on...

Keith Anderson '79 is searching for his upper-classman in 5th Company, **John Haley**. John or somebody who knows John's address can email Keith at: Ander7570@aol.com.

In closing, I've been remiss in letting you know about a worthwhile project to save the historical and world famous Naval aviator bar, Trader Jon's. Many of us who spent a second class cruise during the week at Pensacola, and those of us who spent even more time as flight students and instructors in P'cola, can remember this unique establishment. The bar was a landmark in downtown Pensacola. Naval aviation memorabilia decorated every wall, beam, doorway, including thousands of personal items from famous aces, astronauts, Blue Angels, naval aviation pioneers and other famous, not-so-famous and infamous stick jockeys who wore the wings of gold. With Trader Jon's failing health, the place is up for grabs to real estate speculators and builders who value property over history and heart. A group of aviators has formed a "Preservation Squadron" to save Trader's and keep it as a place for Naval Aviators to swap sea stories, tell tall tales and pass their history on to future generations, all over frosty beers. So far, they have gotten enough contributions to start formal negotiations to purchase the bar from the Weismann family (Trader Jon's family). Of course they can always use more capital. So if you're interested,

send your contributions to the Preservation Squadron, Inc., c/o First Navy Bank, 180 Taylor Road, Pensacola, FL 32508, or email them for more details at savetraders-owner@traderjons.com.

'Nuff said. I'm Launchin' Spot Four and dreaming of my old frosty at the corner of the bar at Trader's. 'Til next month, get those cards, letters and emails coming in.

79

Regular Membership: 3%
Life Membership: 90%

Pres: **Mike Finley**
Sec'y: **Ken Russell**
210 South Main Street
P.O. Box 380, Arlington, SD 57212
w: 605-983-3312; e: gone2pot@iw.net
Class Web site: www.usna79.com

Please refer to following pages for Reunion Information.

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Regular Membership: 1%
Life Membership: 96%

Pres: **Tim Kobosko**
Sec'y: **CDR Joseph A. Grace, Jr., USNR**
15 Allard Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70119
h: 504-486-9040; w: 504-539-9255
f: 504-539-9257; e: jgrace@USNA1980.org
<http://www.USNA1980.org>

Sorry about the last column gang. I know that is was shorter than most. I finally didn't have any letters to print and no time to hunt out the gouge. Life is a little hectic to say the least. We recently had the chance to spend the afternoon with Dr. Jim Clark, the founder of Netscape and Silicon Graphics. He is now the multi-billion dollar man. It's hard to comprehend a billion dollars. That is a thousand million. I have trouble parting with \$20 so to think of that sum is a little mind-boggling. He was here to talk to the Technology Council and help us in our quest to transform this place into the silicon swamp. We're working on it. So all of you who are technically qualified and interested in hunting electronic alligators come on down!

Enough rambling! Not too many letters this month either, but more than last. I know that I seem to whine and cry about the mailbag, but it sure would help to have a few new scribes to fill the pages. If you haven't written in a long time, or ever, now is a good time to try it out! I did get a great box from one of our great authors, **Michael DiMercurio**, (readermail@ussdevilfish.com) who

was good enough to send me a copy of his latest book. All of them are really well done and bring out the adventurer in each of us. They are hard to put down once you get to know the characters. He sinks a few too many of the "big and black and never come back" boats for me, as I always identify with the bubbleheads, but he is one hell of a writer. If you haven't checked out his stuff—get hot. It's great reading, makes a great gift, and it feeds his kids ok! Here is a note from Mike. Congrats by the way, and keep it up!

Loved the March '99 column. Latest news:

My fifth novel, *Piranha Firing Point* made *USA Today's* Top 150 Bestseller List for two weeks, reaching a rank of 112, which, although a triple digit, is the first time I've made the list, and gloriously three slots above Tom Clancy's *Rainbow Six*, and on the heels of one of those *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books (there's six of them on the market now—drink up). The *USA Today* list makes me an official "bestseller."

The news is made better by the fact that my old publisher, Don Fine, who sold to Penguin Putnam in '96 and then passed away in '97, had a fairly low distribution list, and of the Don Fine authors, I'm the only one still writing, and now I hope to get a better print run for the next book. I turned in *Threat Vector* on 1 March for February 2000 publication, and am keeping fingers crossed that it climbs above 112. I'm writing the last of this contract now, working title, *Scorpion Vortex*, for delivery later this year. Patti and the kids are doing well, and it's great to read the news of the Class. Please put out the new email address, and ask the folks to visit the renewed website.

Michael DiMercurio, Princeton, NJ, Author of: *Voyage of the Devilfish*, *Attack of the Seawolf*, *Phoenix Sub Zero*, *Barracuda Final Bearing*, *Piranha Firing Point* and—coming soon—*Threat Vector*.

All available at your local bookstores or through Amazon.com, Barnesandnoble.com or my website. See you at (readermail@ussdevilfish.com).

"Remain undetected." (Motto of the U.S. Silent Service.) "I still have one torpedo and two main engines." (CAPT Michael Pacino, SEAWOLF, surrounded by Chinese destroyers and aircraft.)

I really have had a great time following Michael Pacino through his trials and tribulations. Great reading and lots of fun. Give them a try!

I received a note from our esteemed President, **Tim Kobosko** (tim.kobosko@usna.com), who answered my pleas with a short update on a few Class-mates:

If this has not made the column yet, **Jeff Johnstone** took command of *YORKTOWN* (CG-48) in February. Unfortunately, he had his change of command at sea so his family and friends could not attend, but we are all very proud of this significant accomplishment. He is homeported out of Pascagoula. From the emails we have exchanged, it sounds like being the Captain is the best job in the Navy!

Anyone who would like to get involved in Homecoming 2000 should give Kobo a call. We are playing Air Force at Jack Kent Cooke stadium on 9 October. The Alumni Association will be sponsoring a tailgate area for Alumni and we can do a 19-year Reunion (warm up for the 20) there.

A surprise response to my howling for news came from the true lifeblood of the service, a Navy wife. This time it was Bernadette Gernand, who wrote:

My husband, **Jeff Gernand**, (jgernand@erols.com) is out at sea right now, nearing the end of a six-month deployment. He is the captain of *NORFOLK* based out of Norfolk, VA. On 3 April, he will have been in command for one year. He is *loving* command! If you need any more information, you may contact me again.

Well, being the Secretary that I am, and hungry for a letter (desperate might be too strong a word but it's close), I wrote her back and she gave me a little more news:

Homecoming is 22-24 October 1999



Go Navy—Beat Army!