

after an extended stay in the hospital and the old place is just too small. I suppose I'm excited to since we'll finally have a bathroom that isn't shared between four females and one male. As always, please give us a call if any of you are passing through. We'll leave the light on for you.

From Mike Lingerfelt:

Brian graduated from Furman University in May and will be going to Medical College of Virginia (MCV) in Richmond next fall. He is working at the Naval Research Lab this year and living at home, saving money for school. Kevin is sophomore at University of Richmond and has a full plate of computer science studies, on campus computer networking job, member of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity, and DJ for campus radio station. Becky is a junior in high school, involved in the international baccalaureate program, marching band, and crew. She is starting to look at potential colleges specializing in physical therapy master's program. Joanne and I both joined a rowing club this summer and are having some fun while staying in shape. If your down near the Navy Yard sometime, come by for a visit and cup of coffee. I'm now at 1201 M Street SE, Suite 100.

From Tom Madre:

I'm still teaching and Ruth is still working as a nurse. Our oldest, Elliot, will be going off to college to major in computer science next year. Probably North Carolina State, Georgia Tech, or Clemson. We are well and wish that anyone coming through Charlotte, NC, would stop by and visit.

From Ken Hart:

Our big news is that Christy is engaged to be married. The date is set for 12 October 2002. The mansion for the reception is booked and the dress bought. Things are moving along very well. She is completing her second year as a teacher in a Prince Georges County elementary school not far from Andrews AFB. She is living in a townhouse with some other teachers near Fort Meade. She plans to move to Frederick County next year where her fiancé is also an elementary school teacher. Christy and I had the opportunity to go to Appalachia for a week in July with a group from our church to repair homes—a fantastic experience. Chip (21) is a senior in mechanical engineering. He's participating in a short internship at NASA in January and would like to pursue engineering design work. While visiting a friend in North Carolina this summer, he did some sky diving. Susan (19) is a sophomore at Longwood College near Appomattox, VA, and is enjoying college. Susan and I had the opportunity to go to Philmont Scout Ranch in August. We spent 11 days backpacking through the back country, covered about 60 miles (including over 13,000 feet of up and down), climbed Mount Phillips at an elevation of nearly 12,000 feet, and participated in numerous other activities like black powder shooting, 3D archery, gold mine tour, panning for gold, goat milking, and much more. Prior to our return flight out of Albuquerque, we took a dawn hot air balloon ride. Sandy remains busy as a social worker at a nursing and rehabilitation center in Rockville. Sandy and I are in our 11th year of teaching the Confirmation class at our church.

From the 2000 Christmas cards, **Scott Bauer** noted that their son, Andy, has started college at Southwestern College where he was helping to manage the basketball team. He was also helping to teach a 6th grade class at Sunday school. Katie had recently obtained her driver's license. She is now a senior and thinking about colleges. Jamie has moved on to high school and participated in swimming and soccer. Scott still works at the Palo Verde nuclear plant. Jody began a battle with breast cancer last year and is hopefully well on her way to a full recovery.

Nyles Christensen wrote that his son, Mike, had started high school, completed his Eagle Scout award, and was playing basketball. Eric had graduated from high school and was attending Moorpark

College. Angie graduated from Weber State University with a degree in criminal justice and was working and living in Salt Lake City. Cindy remains busy and teaches class in the church and sings in the choir. Nyles was still with Chevron, 20 years now, and also busy with church activities and the basketball booster club at the high school.

Thanks, Ken, for a great update!

The cancer war progresses according to our battle plan. As I write (early January), I have one more cycle of chemotherapy to go. Then I can say a not-so-fond farewell to "Osama the IV stand"—tall, skinny, ugly, and evil. Special thanks to **Jamie Burd** for a beautiful, framed watercolor of my hometown church. It has to be one of the nicest things anybody ever did for me.

Go U.S.A.! Go Navy! Let's Roll! —Larry

76

Annual Membership: 55%
Life Membership: 28%

Pres: Chuck Gorum

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77

Annual Membership: 29%
Life Membership: 58%

Pres: CAPT Richard "Rick" White, USN

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From the Yard

Well, it looks like we've had our last "Party at the Dant's" (at least for the near future). **Sam Locklear** (samlock@erols.com) officially ended his two-year tour as the Commandant of Midshipmen on Monday, 17 December 2001, and has been assigned as the deputy director for requirements assessment (N81D) and the director, CINC Liaison Division (N83) at OpNav in Washington, DC. In the press release that announced his reassignment, an Academy spokesman said that Sam "has a reputation among Midshipmen for being 'strict but fair,'" which shouldn't be surprising for those of us who've known him. No successor had been named as of mid-January, so the Deputy Commandant, Marine Col John Allen, will take over until one is assigned. We wish all the best for Sam in his new position (or should I say "positions"), and hope to continue to see him and Pam in and around the Yard (since they've moved back into their former home in Annapolis).

From the Mail Bag

This month's "Mail Bag Spotlight" goes to **Gordy McElroy** (mcelroy77@msn.com), who happened to be the sole contributor. Gordy wanted everyone to know that Lockheed Martin has "finally" brought him back to the U.S. after a four-and-a-half year assignment in Australia, where he was the project director for the Jindalee Over-the-Horizon Radar Network (JORN) program, which is now in its final acceptance testing phase. Gordy's new

assignment is the project director for the Integrated Weapons System that's being developed for the yet-to-be-named CVN-77 (how appropriate!), which will be commissioned in 2008. He'll be working out of the Virginia Advanced Carrier Integration Center (VASCIC) located in Newport News, VA, and living in nearby Williamsburg, VA. Gordy says that since he lived in Australia for so long, he's become a world class expert at cooking shrimp on the barbie (and since he also said he's looking forward to renewing friendships with Classmates in the area, I'm sure he'd be willing to put an extra shrimp on the barbie for you if you drop by). Speaking of dropping by, Gordy's still skydiving so if you can't find him at home, look for him at any of the local Virginia drop zones.

Class Communication

No changes to report for our 25th Reunion (I'm sure everyone's already marked their calendars for the weekend of 20-22 September 2002). Just to remind you once again, the dinner dance is scheduled for Friday, 20 September 2002 at the Annapolis Marriott Waterfront, and the tailgate party will be held at Navy-Marine Corps Stadium on Saturday, 21 September 2002. The estimated cost for the combined dinner dance and tailgate party is \$150 per person, and the cost of the tailgate party only will be approximately \$60 per person.

We've reserved rooms for Friday and Saturday nights at both the Annapolis Marriott Waterfront (410-268-7555) and the Sheraton Barcelo Annapolis (410-266-3131), and reservations should be made early. Also, don't forget to verify and update your contact information with the Alumni Association so we know where to send your registration packages (go to the "Alumni Only" link at www.usna.com, look-up your record, and makes any changes). We're now down to six months and counting, so make sure to plan accordingly. Feel free to contact **Tom "Soup" Campbell** (Tom.Campbell@longandfoster.com; 703-293-6368) if you have any specific questions about the reunion.

Closing Remarks

For the most part, our Annapolis winter's been somewhat quiet so far, which is a welcome relief considering the recent world events. And now as we head into a new year, I wish you and your family members a safe, happy, and healthy 2002. Let's see who makes the "spotlight" next month! Go Navy! —**Bob Sanderson**

78

Annual Membership: 18%
Life Membership: 70%

Pres: Arch Griffin

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**
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I'm heading out on the road on business travel—visiting customers in Germany. It's the first *real* travel I've done in almost a year and a half. That's plenty of time to have recovered from the "deployment" I made to Turkey on business, the last time around. Still trying to cleanup the emails and photo works so I'll keep the intro short and roll into the news.

Jim Carr (carrjm@clf.navy.mil) left ENTERPRISE, and is currently at CLF (or as he says "CFFC for those of us that are struggling to bring that on line!"). He said it's *great* to be on shore duty. Dana is still working on overcoming her disbelief that they have two consecutive assignments in the same

town! Jim on the other hand is working on overcoming many folks' disbelief that he completed the full tour on ENTERPRISE! He wonders, "who would've ever thunk" those eight reactors would've survived Jim Carr as Reactor O and he survived the job too.

Back in December, **Mike Sears** (michael@reticle.com) and his family were in the middle of making a move back to the San Francisco Bay area. He said while it's been great being able to see **Rick Lowell** and his family in Seattle for the last year (lunches, trips to the cabin, and Halloween, et al.), it's time to head back south. Mike is finally going to try to start a company, from the ground up. He's got the idea, now all he needs is an office and equipment, and a name. It should be fun. If you have any ideas or old furniture, drop him a line.

Larry Whitmeyer (Larry.Whitmeyer@lmco.com) zapped his first contribution to our Class column. The cause for the occasion? None other than a monumental and "very newsworthy event." Larry belatedly reported on the 26 May 2001, of **Fred Sheehan** and Margaret Ann Golden. Yes, it's true. Larry's 12th Company mate, roommate for over two years at USNA and the godfather of his second son finally "took the plunge." Befitting such a momentous occasion, a sunny day highlighted the beautiful ceremony that was held at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Braintree, MA. The celebration continued with a reception at the neighborhood club in nearby Quincy. All present attested that Fred and Margaret are truly meant for each other. Fred's mother even remarked to Larry that it was the happiest she had ever seen Fred. (Of course, she never saw his face after surviving his first come-around during Plebe Summer.) Their fellow 12th Company shipmate Navy Chaplain LCDR **William "Duke" Brown '76**, USN took part as one of the scripture readers. Besides Larry, other Classmates witnessing the event were **Mike Moore** and **John Rudder**. The Sheehan and Golden families have known each other for years, and one treat of the evening prior to wedding day was watching a video clip of Margaret in the batting cage ripping some "wicked" (as they say in New England) line drives, including one directly at the camera. Maybe the Red Sox should take some pointers. (Looks like someone "**Boston John**" Ehlers should scout out!) We all join Larry, Mike, and John in congratulating Fred and Margaret and wishing them the best in the years ahead. Welcome to the "Club."

Enclosed is a photo from that happy day with William "Duke" Brown '76, Fred and Margaret

Sheehan, John Rudder, Larry Whitmeyer, and Mike Moore.

As for Larry's own news, he currently works for Lockheed Martin Global telecommunications in Bethesda, MD. He's their director of business development for the World Systems group. They specialize in providing communications satellite capacity on the Intelsat and LMI-1 satellites. Larry retired as a P-3C NFO. Along the way to his 20 he served: his initial squadron tour in Jacksonville, FL, instructor duty in Pensacola (where he earned a master's from University of West Florida, and a private pilot license); a NATO joint staff tour in Naples, Italy (he learned to speak Italian); a second squadron tour in Moffett Field, CA, then earned an M.S. in Space Systems Operations from NPS in Monterey. His final Navy assignment was in Crystal City with the Navy's communications satellite program office. Larry and Antoinette "Toni" have been married for 20 years, and have two sons, Alec (9) and Kevin (7). They've lived in Bethesda (Toni's hometown) for the past eight years, and enjoy the DC area. By the way, Toni is a commander in the Navy Medical Corps. She's currently on the academic staff at USUHS in Bethesda. In his spare time Larry coaches the kids' baseball and basketball teams and gets over to the Academy for various sporting events during the year. Already Alec has informed him that he wants to go to the Naval Academy and fly Lockheed's Joint Strike Fighter. He could do both—in fact, the way these acquisition programs go he could be among the *first* JSF pilots. Thanks for the news, Larry. Don't make it such a long time between writings.

Bill Kasten (Bkasten@aol.com) guessed he had also stayed incognito long enough and dropped back on the scope. Bill left the Academy in '76. He completed a B.S. in political science at University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1979. In 1982, he was elected as a State Representative (Republican) to the Wisconsin legislature. He served two terms. In '87 Bill decided he wasn't quite done with the military, so he enlisted as QM2 Coast Guard Reserve. After also working that year in business, he returned to political life as Chief-of-Staff to State Senator Robert Cowles. When EXXON VALDEZ went aground in Alaska, he volunteered for call up to help clean the mess. He's been on active duty ever since. He was commissioned in 1990, did a tour at Coast Guard headquarters the first couple of years in the '90s. That was followed by a tour as on USCGC SWEETGUM (WLB-309). While SWEETGUM was sent

to the yards, he did a seven-month TAD to Pushkin Institute of Russian Language in Moscow. (Yes, the Moscow.) While there, he met and married his wife, Anli. (She was a fellow student and native of Sichuan, China.) Detailers being what they are, with his hot Russian language skills, they bundled him off to be an Ocean Representative Panama (an ONI/DIA gig) ('94-'96). During that time, he was integrated into the "Regulars." Then followed by a tour as chief, tactical branch in the Coast Guard's Pacific Area Command Intel Division ('96-'99). Finally realizing that Russian is *not* a dialect of the Spanish tongue, the detailers wisened up and sent Bill to Juneau, AK. That's where he is right now, an old LCDR in the "Shallow Water Navy" serving as the Coast Guard's Russian liaison officer. He and Anli have three children, Mike (14), Andrei (6), and Lisa (3). He hasn't had any Classmate sightings since the winter of December '93. That was when he was driving to his parents in Wisconsin from Mobile, AL. Somewhere in North Alabama, he needed a quick coffee break. He got off the interstate and stopped at a McDonald's. As he was walking in the front door, he caught a brief glance of a familiar looking guy going out the opposite door. He chased down the familiar face and turned out to belong to **Bill Berry**, a fellow 26th Company compadre. Bill (Berry) was driving from Jacksonville, FL, to Colorado to visit his parents. Bill (Kasten—gotta keep those Bills straight) admits to not being a statistician, but he ventures to say that the chances of that kind of meeting were the slimmest imaginable. While he can't retire with 20 until '09, he realizes many of us already have. So, he invites those of you who may enjoy your newfound retirement freedom by taking a cruise up Alaska's Inner Passage to look me up in Juneau. You can catch him at his email, above.

In the lost but finally found category... **Al Whiting '79** sent me a note saying that while fencing was disestablished as a sport at Navy back in '93, there was a group of Mids and Alums determined to bring it back. Among them is our own **Dick Richards**. In case you can't make out the "178" on his mask, Dick is the one (on the left) showing off the "old form" with an effective parry. Here's one photo "sans" mask. You determine in which he looks better.



Dick Richards checking tournament standings



Dick "El Zorro" Richards



'78: Fred and Margaret Sheehan's Wedding

Quite a while back, **Jon Sears'** mom sent me a photo of Jon, **Harry Harris**, and **John Cohoon** enjoying a TGIF at the Pentagon. This time it was a special occasion—Jon's farewell. He was headed off to Norfolk. Jon and Barbara's son, Nathan, was enrolled in NROTC at Penn State. Their other son, Geoffrey, is in middle school. Sorry for the loooong wait, Mrs. Sears!



Harry, Jon, and John

Well, I gotta dash on out. This rain is supposed to turn into snow and I have to give myself plenty of time to make it to Kennedy Airport and make it through the security. Just in case, I'm mentally preparing myself like I'm going for a flight physical—you know, in case the search gets a little "too intrusive." Adios...launchin' Spot Four.

79

Annual Membership: 4%
Life Membership: 88%

Pres: **LCDR Sean Cate, USN (Ret.)**

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Sec'y: **LCDR John "Wiz" Withers, USN (Ret.)**

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Greetings, '79! Every once in a while, something will come along, jar me loose from my own little corner of the world, and give me some perspective.

Last month I wrote how my job had sent me to Hawaii. It was a two week trip, most of which was spent underway on a Navy frigate. However, we had a couple of days at each end of the trip to spend "on the economy." In addition to seeing some of the sights, I wanted to use the time to get some unique Christmas presents. I had this great plan. I spent a couple of days before we boarded the ship to scout out and decide on what I wanted to get. Later, once we returned to port, I'd go back, pick up what I wanted, put it in my luggage, and fly home. As I said, it was a great plan.

One of my major shopping stops was the Hale Koa Hotel in Waikiki. This is the hotel for the Fort DeRussy Military Reservation, and it has a nice post exchange on the ground floor. It is a great spot for Hawaiian attire, macadamia nuts, and other tropical treasures. To be sure, I picked out some things at several other stores, but I had a list of things for the Hale Koa. Yes, it was a great plan, and it was working well. Eight days later we returned to port, checked off the ship, and got set up for our last couple of days before heading home. I headed out with my list, all set to complete a major portion of my Christmas shopping in just a few minutes. Or so I thought.

I knew something was up the instant I opened the door to the PX. It was quite busy—crowded would be a better word. I noticed that there were a lot of, shall we say, "older" people in the store. Most were accompanied by their families (several generations of them), and they were everywhere. To my dismay, they obviously had spent some money, for inventories were reduced, selection of some items was meager at best, and other things were completely sold out. And then there were the lines—whole families waiting in line with carts full of stuff. And to make matters worse, the cashiers seemed to be more interested in talking to customers than checking them out. My plan was suffering: not only did I have to fall back on some alternate choices, but now I'm in a long line in a crowded store. I had little Christmas spirit, and even less patience.

I glanced at my watch for about the fourth time since I joined the checkout line. This time, however, I noticed something else: the date was Friday, 7 December. I looked around at these "older" men. Most had nametags on and many had multi-colored garrison caps on their heads. I took a good look at one of the nametags and it all made sense: this was the 60th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack, and I was in a store full of survivors of that tragic event. They had come from all over the world to take part in the memorial ceremonies earlier in the day, and now they were reliving old memories with their families. No wonder they were chatting up a storm with the cashiers—these folks were just glad to be alive! And here I am, safe and sound in a country they defended, and I'm annoyed that I had to get Karen a blue sarong because they were out of red ones in her size (she liked the blue one, by the way). Needless to say, I was more than a little chagrined. So once again, life gave me a little perspective, even if it had to slap me upside the head to do it.

Well, let's get started. First, as a follow-up to last month's column, Class President **Sean Cate** passes on the following:

I received a very nice note from Mrs. Pat DeConto, Fish's mom that I would like to share with the Class. The note card cover shows an eagle soaring over the American flag, and inside the following was printed: "The Family of Captain **Gerald F. DeConto** acknowledges with grateful appreciation your kindness and sympathy."

Mrs. DeConto also added the following note: "I wish to thank the members of the Class of '79 for their support during this very tragic time. The beautiful floral arrangements were very much appreciated, as were the many cards and letters I received. Your support meant a great deal to me and my family."

Once again, I want to thank our Class for coming together and supporting the DeConto family as we shared their great loss. God Bless America!

For the last several columns I've been trying to keep you apprised on how the events of last September have affected us as a Class. Unfortunately, I have more disappointing news to report. Right before Christmas I received the following email from **Roger Chapa** (rchapa1@earthlink.net):

Wiz, just got my December *Shipmate* and was moved to write by your column. The dignity and pride shown by the '79 family has prompted me to share my loss with the rest of our Class. My mother, Rosemary Chapa, was a victim of the attack on the Pentagon on 11 September. She was a 31-year civil servant and had been working for the DIA at the time of her death. Her specialty was personnel and was a close personal advisor on those issues during my later years as a reservist. Mostly though, I will remember her for her devotion and loyalty as a mother. I know that I am not alone in saying this, but I would have had little chance of going to the Naval Academy if not

for my mother. She knew and used every motivational tool, up to and including the "swift kick to the pants" with extreme effectiveness. She was a true Midshipman's mom and the pride with which she spoke of me was at times embarrassing. Living in Texas during my Midshipman years, she only knew a few of my Classmates, but treated those she met as a son. I will miss her.

We were honored to inter her at Arlington National Cemetery the week 7 October. There were also separate ceremonies at the DIA and at the Pentagon. **Dave Lindsey** and **Craig McDonald '76** were in attendance at the interment at Arlington. I ran into **Mark Tempestilli** at the Pentagon ceremony and **Kenny Panos** afterwards. **Jack Rickman** called a week afterwards and we had a great talk. He is now a minister in San Diego and doing well. I also spoke to **Lee Armor** several times during the crisis. I spent last weekend at the home of **Rocky Kropp** for a little R and R. He and his wife, Dawn, were perfect hosts. It was great making contact with all these guys.

I would like to thank everyone who has sent along their condolences. It has given me a great deal of comfort. I also would like to thank those '79ers who are still wearing the uniform. Your efforts in righting this wrong are vital. Good luck and give 'em hell! Omnes Viri.

Roger, I really can't find the words to express how sorry I am—how sorry we all are at your loss. Please accept our sincere condolences, and know that your Classmates share in your loss. It must have been a difficult note to write. Thanks for letting us know.

Roger's comments about '79ers in uniform reminds me that a while back I heard from **Chuck Wright** (CWright@cvw11.navy.mil). Chuck is the commander of Carrier Air Wing 11 on **CARL VINSON**, one of the first units to deliver America's response to the Taliban. He's back home by now, but Chuck sent the following while still underway:

Wiz, I'm writing to you from **CARL VINSON** as we are just heading home after 71 days of near continuous combat operations. Just to let you and the rest of the Class know, we aren't forgetting Fish DeConto and all the other casualties of the opening round of this war. There are several of us '79ers out here giving a little back, you might say. Over on **THEODORE ROOSEVELT** **Steve "Coolie" Voetsch** is CAG-1. I took command of CAG-11 here on 1 December. Also on **VINSON** are **Rich Fitzpatrick** as CarGru 3 Asst Ops and **Dave Yoshihara** as ComDesRon-9. Just coming into the fight and relieving us is **Don Quinn** as DCAG-9 on **JOHN C. STENNIS**. Coolie and I have already personally delivered our responses to the Taliban and Al Qaeda gangs—usually in units of either 500, 1,000, or 2,000 pounds. DQ may have also done a little "special delivery" of his own. If not, it won't be long. I have been amazed at how well Operation Enduring Freedom has progressed. We've pretty much had our way with (them) to this point and now we'll just have to wait and see where the terror trail leads next. We all know operational security has gone back to what we remember when we were youngsters during the cold war so I won't spill the details, but I have never been more proud of the sailors and junior officers I've had the privilege of serving with than I am today of this particular ship and air wing team. If you had been in combat with them like I have been lucky enough to experience, then you'd be proud of them too.

I know we are in for a surprise when we get back home in January. Everyone has told us that America has changed, and a lot of it for the better, but we are probably the last ones who don't understand it yet since we have been at sea since 3 September and haven't seen a foreign port, let alone the U.S.A. Life is good, freedom is better, and America is the best of both. Take care and Omnes Viri.