

Jim says you'd never know it. She just spent her annual two months down in Houston with Jim, and they had a ball (except for the fact that Jim had knee surgery during that time, and his mom got to take care of her little boy again). Jim says that if anyone is in Annapolis, you should stop by and see her (she loves the company and is still a staunch Navy fan).

Marian is diligently working on starting her own company; currently she's in the middle of filing patents and developing prototypes. Jim spent the past three years doing the same thing with his company, so he guesses that it's now her turn. Their son, Josh, turned 13 this fall ("I know many of you have kids older than that, but do any of you have a left-over user's manual for raising a teenage boy? We never had a course on that and it gets confusing!"). Besides football, they finally found lacrosse in Houston this year, and after a two-year hiatus, Josh is playing goalie for a local school. That's all Jim has to pass-on for now, but he says that if anyone is traveling through the Houston area, you should give him a call.

#### Class Communication

Well, I have some sad news to report in the Class Communication area; our beloved '77 helium balloon was brutally released by some unknown thugs in the parking lot of the Meadowlands during the Army-Navy game. Upon returning to our car after the game, we discovered that both tether lines had been cut and were dangling motionless from the side mirrors (fortunately, the USNA '77 Balloon Guest Book survived the attack, and will live to serve us another day). **Chris Cain** (cccain@prodigy.net) may have been the last Classmate to see the balloon alive as it was floating its way east across the Manhattan skyline. From there, we have no idea where it ended up or what its final condition may have been. I just want everyone to know that this '77 balloon has served our Class well and I'm sure it fought valiantly until the end. Since its resurrection from **Rick White's** garage several years ago, it's flown over four stadiums (as well as in one garage and one basement, but those stories are for another time), and it's brought together many members, friends, and relatives of the Class of '77. With a little luck (and a little cash from our Class fund), I hope to have USNA '77 II flying high at our first home game next season.

#### Closing Remarks

I'm not sure how I can top the last story, so I'll leave you with some words that have a little more meaning since last December, "Go Navy! Beat Army!" —**Bob Sanderson**

bear down to the details. In last month's *Shipmate* I posted some reunion gouge from a letter from Glen. To refresh your memories, go back and check it out. You can also go up online and check out the latest update on the reformatting '78 web site at [www.usna1978.org](http://www.usna1978.org). Like with CNN, the Class web site got a new look (but without all the nasty pop-ups or scrolling banners that confuse me when I watch the "Headline News"—does that bug you too?). The web site will be the principal means of getting out information on the reunion so stay in touch. Thanks go out to **Rob Cloutier** for taking on the job of Webmaster...Of course special thanks again goes out to **Mike Holden** who was the "daddy" of our web site. It was his vision, his sweat and toil that put together the first edition of our web site and dragged us into the age of the Internet and the 21st century. Over the years he kept it going despite the demands of his own personal life. Thanks again for your foresight and hard work, Mike. Building on the foundation you established, we hope the '78 web site continues to grow as a conduit for keeping the Class informed and in touch. Who knows, maybe one day even I'll get more computer-savvy—okay I guess I shouldn't stretch it that much.

Along with reunions comes the task of Class elections. Bet you guys thought you didn't have to cast ballots for anything until 2004. Well, guess again. In this case there won't be any long campaigns, boring conventions or problems with hanging chads. We follow the KISS principle (remember, I'm a Marine). So here's how it goes—per our Class charter we have the four Class officers: president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary. Today, **Arch Griffin**, **Bob Novak**, **Kevin Liddy** and I fill those jobs, respectively. There are also five members-at-large slots, which today are filled by **Matt Elias**, **John Skogsberg**, **Jim Fiorelli**, **Ron McNeal**, and **Mike Holden**. The Class officers' jobs are pretty self-explanatory. The function of the M-A-Ls is to provide additional representation and guidance on Class affairs (and share the work load). If anyone is interested in any of these jobs, here's what you have to do—send me a self-addressed stamped envelope and \$25 along with two box tops from Lucky Charms, Trix, or Frosted Flakes. Oops, sorry, that's not it. Oh, here's how it goes: Send me a written petition listing 25 Classmates who support your candidacy for the office for which you wish to run by 1 April—an email will also suffice. That petition is simply a note that says something like "Hey, I want to run for dog catcher and these guys support my nomination." Now Classmates, you can only support *one* person *per* position, so no dupes. That means you can't have your name supporting three different guys for—let's say the secretary slot, regardless of how many beers that gets you! Once I get all the nomination petitions, I'll put them up onto a ballot by May. Once the ballots are out, you'll have until 1 September to send in your vote. The results of the election will be announced at the reunion and in a *Shipmate* column that follows. Don't worry, I'll remind you of the elections and the process as we get going. Be sure to check the web site as that will be the quicker way of my putting out information, as well as my using the [usna78@calimar.com](mailto:usna78@calimar.com) mail list (so if you aren't on either,

get aboard.) You can send the petitions to me at the email and snail addresses in the header to this column or at my work address at [VBalderrama@Sikorsky.com](mailto:VBalderrama@Sikorsky.com). Now on to the news.

#### Here's an update from **Scott Provow**.

In February Leslie was to have finished her self-imposed leave of absence from United. When they wrote she looked to return to a "restructured company," as I write the column we hope the company is still around. Leslie was based in LAX, flying the B747-400, on the South Pacific routes, but that's probably changed by now. Our twins, Stef and Liz, are tenth graders and are now driving with their learner's permit. They turn sweet 16 this July at which time the license comes (and the car insurance jumps). The girls recently had their FAM 1 introduction to flying. It remains to be seen if they fly solo before they drive solo! Active teens, they write the *Wood Creek Newsletter* for my homeowners association, baby-sit, sing in the high school chorus, are active mentors to fifth graders, are on a traveling volleyball team, and also managed the JV high school volleyball team. They continue to excel in their academics and when not studying, spend much of their time "IMing" their friends on their computers (that's "instant messaging" for those of you without teenagers or computers). Stef went to France and Liz went to Spain for an international youth exchange during July. Fifth-grade son, Matt, has traded in his piano to take up the bells and drums. Traded along was also the family peace and tranquility. Matt has never met a stranger, never complains about personal shortcomings, and keeps us on our toes with his quick wit and sense of humor. (*Sec'y note*: But Scott, he's not a *teen* yet!) Matt auditioned and was selected to sing in the Fayette Youth Choral and has performed extensively throughout the holiday season. Since Delta grounded their MD-11 fleet I was scheduled to return as a B767 ER captain. Unless more downsizing is experienced I expect to continue to fly the international routes. I serve on the Wood Creek board of directors and as the chairman of the master executive council's training committee for the union at Delta. Leslie is the super mom juggling both airline and mom careers. She is the chairperson for the talent show this year and volunteers in Matt's class extensively. She maintains an active tennis schedule and hosted her team at the house in Grayton Beach this fall for a tennis clinic at San Destin, FL. She also hosted her "Texas Ladies" for a few days at the beach! We continued to travel extensively in 2002. The year was highlighted by a family trip to Paris over Thanksgiving and a weeklong trip to Alaska with Grayton Beach soulmates, Edmond and Cynthia Alexander. They invite anyone to come visit them when your schedules permit. They'd love to see ya'll and spend time retelling old lies of how great we once were! Fish stories are welcomed and are supposed to be embellished!

**David "Deke" Philman**, (philmandl@cwv3.navy.mil) celebrated the Christmas holidays ashore in Marseille, France. While there, he and the crew of HARRY TRUMAN took full advantage of some of the tours that were available. Many went to Paris, Monte Carlo or skiing in the French Alps. Deke stayed in Marseille to attend some official functions that the local civilian and military leaders have arranged for them. He went to church in a very old cathedral (about 1,500 years old). While he didn't understand much of what was said, he did have a good idea of what went on with the

# 78

Annual Membership: 3%  
Life Membership: 73%

Pres: **Arch Griffin**  
Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**  
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The clock's winding down—the reunion date is getting closer and your reunion committee and sub-committees, led by **Glen Woods**, are starting to

Christmas play! Christmas Day he shared Christmas meal at the home of a local family that is actively involved in the French-American cultural exchange program. In January onboard TRUMAN, at sea in the Mediterranean, Deke was properly relieved as commander, Carrier Air Wing three, by his good friend CAPT Mark "Cyrus" Vance. Deke regretted giving up the greatest job he'd ever had in his naval career but was glad that he'd left an outstanding unit in the hands of a good man. Deke will now be in the in the Pentagon. He'll be the strike requirements officer in N78.



Deke Philman



Deke and his relief

**Marty Thamm** (martythamm@aol.com) was recently mobilized, again. You may recall that in 2002 he did several months of active duty with the Marine Forces, Pacific (MarForPac) in Hawaii. Well, he only returned to civilian life in October, and working with Lockheed Martin, when in January he was mobilized as part of the Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing. By now he is in Southwest Asia, where we hope he and all you others are safe and to shortly return home. **Ken "Sox" Bowersox** is serving what I would call the furthest unaccompanied tour ever among our Class. Sox is in the space station. You can see what he's been up to on one of those NASA web sites. You can even see his menu choices—talk about your lack of privacy! By the way, I see there is a lot of fiber in your diet, Sox. **Mark Nault** spent the New Year with John and Barbara and **John Cohoon** at their new vacation/rental property at the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Mark thinks the place is called Friso (later confirmed by John) and that it's about an hour drive south from **Maurice Tose's** palatial place in Duck, NC. Also enjoying the festivities were Steph and **Kevin Hannan**.



New Year's at the Outer Banks

In January **Bill Timme** assumed two jobs—deputy commander for Undersea Warfare, SEA-07,

commander, Naval Sea Systems Command, and commander, Naval Undersea Warfare Center. In the case of the former (SEA-07), he's responsible for in-service submarines including major availabilities, SubSafe, Deep Submergence and Rescue, etc. In the latter role he's the boss of two warfare centers with about 5,000 people. Until that reassignment, Bill had for two and a half years been the program manager, Undersea Weapons Program Office, and was responsible for all the Navy's torpedo programs for aircraft, surface ships, and submarines for the past two and a half years. He'll remain in DC, but travel extensively to Newport, RI, Keyport, WA, and the submarine fleet concentration centers. Bill went through the New Flag Officer Course this past summer with our other new admiral select Classmates, **Jeff Fowler**, **Rich Cellon**, and **Mel Williams**. Bill runs into a number of Classmates in the DC area regularly. He sees **Tim Arcano** and **Vic Guillory** frequently, and talks to **Bob Novak** down in Pax River occasionally. Remaining in DC works well for Bill and Suzette. Suzette is the general manager of a major regional mall in the area, the Dulles Town Center. She really enjoys it, except the holiday season is her busy time of year so she ends up working many weekends up until Christmas. She is president of WIRRE (Women in Retail Real Estate), a women's professional organization. Bill says he keeps asking to join because they throw great parties, but for some reason Suzette keeps saying he doesn't have the right qualifications.

Speaking of the new flags—Katie and Jeff Fowler are now in New York City. Jeff has a fellowship with the Council on Foreign Relations—a non-profit "think tank" that studies foreign policy issues. For the year, Katie has traded in her teaching to act as New York cabbie for all the kids. She's gotten quite good at bumper cars, horn etiquette, double parking, and creative gesturing. As for the kids, **Brittany (15)** is enjoying ninth grade at one of the biggest high schools in the U.S. and is active in level eight gymnastics. She's even earned second place in her first meet! **Lynsee (13)** is also a top-notch gymnast (level seven) and has readily acclimated to the Big Apple. She loves bargaining for purses on Canal Street and mimicking the "new yawk" accent. **Connor (9)** hasn't quite picked up the language of his many Russian Classmates but he has learned that he loves the New York City toy stores! The Fowlers will be in there at least until June when Jeff finishes that fellowship. After that, one can only guess.

Lora and **Guido Manzo's** Midshipman daughter, **MIDN Melanie Manzo '05** is spending her Third Class Year in 30th Company. After a rough and tumble Plebe Year, she's got her grades into the "sat" range—but not without a lot of hard work, frustration, help, and focus. (Sounds familiar, doesn't it?) Melanie's on the track team—although not competing much. Guido says she's in absolutely incredible shape—does something like 900 crunches a day. (Which sounds vaguely familiar to many of us.) Number two daughter, **Marissa (15)**, won a Varsity letter in basketball as a freshman last year. This year she starts "in the middle" as a sophomore. She played JV volleyball in the

fall—but was not, as Guido put it, "infatuated by the sport." It was, however, a good way to stay in shape. Already she's had some letters of interest from some (smaller) colleges about playing b-ball. I guess if she doesn't plan on trying for a "small un-college" on the Severn. There is always this university up where I live in Connecticut that's got a pretty good team she could play for (Go Huskies!). As for the Manzo seniors—Lora continues to love her job as a teacher's assistant at the Educational Services Commission—which is essentially a school for disturbed or difficult high school students. It continues to be a tough, grueling job, but she loves her teacher partner—it's their second year together. Some days the teachers win—some days it's the students! Guido is quickly approaching four years at ITC as vice president of sales. Things have gone well since being acquired by Thoratec and the arrival of a new president. He is staying very busy and challenged—and has the occasional jaunt to the Far East or Europe. Unfortunately, the trips are all business. At the end of the day—it's not too much travel—but enough to give Lora the "break" she needs! One of their favorite pastimes is boating on the Delaware River, but I happen to know it's also making the trek to Annapolis for Navy home games and playing tailgater host to Lora and her Classmates.

Well that's all the news I can fit into this months column limits. I'll leave with an ad for one last Navy good deal. It's not like the other "good" deals you may have been offered during your Naval careers—like extended deployment, cross-decking, or three-year unaccompanied tours in great places like Diego Garcia or Okinawa. This one's for real and can help save you money in the long run. Here it is—in 2003 there is a special price break for '78ers celebrating their 25th reunion—lifetime membership will be \$410 in 2003! So for all you guys who have been paying annual dues since 1978 this is really a bennie. For more information contact the Membership Supervisor, **Laura Strayer** (laura.strayer@usna.com) at 410-263-4448, ext. 203.

That's all she wrote for now. With all this activity going on, whether deployed, deploying, mobilizing, or just going about our everyday hectic-scheduled lives, don't forget to pause, take a short breather, and keep safe.

Until next month—Semper Fi. —Launchin' Spot Four.

# 79

Annual Membership: 1%  
Life Membership: 89%

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Greetings, '79!

I believe it was Joe Gish who reportedly said, "If God had been a Mid, He would have bagged