

Phil Wisecup (wisecupjp@verizon.net) checked-in after arriving back in Washington, DC, as director of the White House Situation Room. Phil says, "The hours are as you would imagine, and it's pretty interesting to say the least." Phil's coming off a short tour at the CNO Strategic Studies Group in Newport, RI, which "was really a great experience." That assignment was preceded by two years as commander, Destroyer Squadron 21 in San Diego, CA, where he deployed with JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN-74) Battle Group to the North Arabian Sea. In Phil's words, "Lots of ships, lots of allies, lots of boarding and search ops." His wife, Anne, and the kids are in DC now, and should have settled in Falls Church, VA (right off the West Falls Church Metro Station), by the time you read this column. Phil wanted everyone to know that if you're ever in the DC metropolitan area, feel free to call him at 703-538-6611.

Sumner Moore '48, who is the secretary and acting president of the Class of '48, received the following info about one of our Classmates from an "anonymous, but reliable" source:

On 11 October 2003, **Mark Gardner** (mgardne2@midsouth.rr.com), now a captain with Northwest Airlines, and living in Germantown, TN, with his wife, Martha, who is a dental hygienist, and their son, David Paul (13), visited his parents in Murfreesboro, TN, approximately 22 miles from Nashville, TN. They were joined by **Dave Cass**, who lives in Marietta, GA, and works for Morgan Stanley in Atlanta, GA, his wife, Gina, who teaches, and their daughter, Darrell Ann (3.5), who arrived dressed in blue and gold, complete with pom-poms. All made the tailgate party in Nashville and watched Navy beat Vanderbilt. Go Navy! Mark and Dave enjoyed reliving and rehashing their days at USNA, and Mark's parents, Paul and Helen Gardner, were proud as peacocks having such young and good-looking people with them.

After considerable probing about the "source" of this information, Sumner reluctantly admitted that Mark's mother sent him the letter along with a request that he send it to *Shipmate* for inclusion in the '77 column. Apparently the senior Gardner's didn't want Mark to know about the letter so that he could be surprised when it appeared in the column. (Note to Mark: You've got a pretty clever mom; make sure you show her the column.) Sumner noted that this was the first time that he'd ever seen this type of request after having written over 370 *Shipmate* columns for the Class of '48 over the last 37 years (don't think I'll ever be able to top that record!). Lots of thanks to everyone who made this mail bag item possible!

Last month I reported that **Ken Graber** (kgraber@SPA.com) retired on 7 October 2003 at the Washington Navy Yard, and now I have additional news from Ken himself. Not only was he honored to have our current Superintendent, VADM Rodney Rempt '66 as his guest speaker, but several of our Classmates were also able to attend the ceremony; namely, **Mike Frick** (FrickMS@navsea.navy.mil), **Tom Pickles** (tpickles@westexinc.com), **Skip Wagner** (dwagner@northropgrumman.com), **Rick White**, **Lee Geanuleas**, **Cary Hithon** (HithonC@navsea.navy.mil), **John Geary** (GearyJW@navsea.navy.mil), and **Chris Cain**.

Ken's most recent assignment was program manager for the NATO SEASPARROW Project Office, which is an international program with 12 participating nations. Ken said that the most exciting part the four-year tour was the successful Operational Evaluation of the Evolved SEASPARROW Missile (ESSM) from SHOU (DDG-86) in April 2003. Ken started his new job on 10 October 2003 in the International Cooperative Development Group at Systems Planning and Analysis, Inc. (SPA).



"Captain's Row" at Ken Graber's retirement ceremony, 1 to r: Mike Frick, Tom Pickles, Skip Wagner, Rick White, Lee Geanuleas, Ken Graber, Cary Hithon, Tom Adress (Penn State ROTC), John Geary, and Chris Cain

Class Communication

Sometime during or shortly after our superb 25th Reunion, **Pete Hyers** (hyersp@cs.com) let on that a Navy League friend of his is the general manager of The Hilton Head Marriott Palmetto Dunes Beach and Golf Resort on Hilton Head Island, SC. Needless to say, Pete was "strongly" recommended to capitalize on this relationship and plan a USNA '77 2004 Reunion. Well, Pete's come through with flying colors, and here's the deal to prove it: The Marriott is holding 50 rooms until February 2004 for the weekend of 5-7 March 2004. The hotel price is \$139/night on the ocean, and "extra activities" include golf, tennis, shopping, kayaking, dinner, and partying. (Talk to Pete about getting special rates for golf and tennis since he and Jane live in Palmetto Dunes.) A reception is also planned for Saturday evening at the Palmetto Dunes Club.

You're encouraged to bring your wives and family for a great weekend, so if you're interested, please contact Pete *immediately* via phone 843-247-1159 or email (see above). You can also obtain info about the Marriott at www.hiltonheadmarriott.com or by calling 843-686-8400, and info about the Palmetto Dunes Club at www.palmettodunes.com. Jane and Pete look forward to seeing you all in March!

Closing Remarks

Hope you enjoyed this month's *Shipmate* edition; stay tuned for more news next month, and remember...Go Navy! —**Bob Sanderson**

78

Annual Membership: 3%
Life Membership: 75%

Pres: **Glen Woods**
Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**
45 Little Fawn Drive, Shelton, CT 06484
e: VBalderrama@SIKORSKY.com
web site: <http://usna1978.org>

Well, it's the first column of a new year. I hadn't expected so long a pause between

columns. Due to some budget issues, *Shipmate* had to consolidate the end of the year '03 issues. They hadn't done that before. What that meant is, on the plus side, I had even more time to procrastinate, um, I mean—write this issue. On the downside, I have tons of stuff (pics, emails and encounters, reunion and post reunion news) that I can't cram into the couple of thousand-word limit I'm allocated. So I'll do my best to recall and write in FIFO (first in-first out fashion) or FICR (First I Can Remember). The balance will run over the course of the months. So let's get to it.

You read in the last column the results of the elections (sorry, you're stuck with me for another five years). With that here are few words from "El Jefe," our recently elected Class President, **Glen Woods**:

First, let me thank you for nominating and electing me to be your new Class president. I know I have very large shoes to fill, but I welcome the challenge and I am very honored to serve as your president. You have chosen a great group of Class officers and members-at-large, and we all look forward to working for you over these next five years. We encourage you to contact any of us with your thoughts and ideas about how our Class can stay active in the Alumni leadership and keep the Naval Academy the distinguished institution we have always known and respected.

Second, this hopefully will be my last correspondence about our 25th Reunion. That was a heck of a hurricane party! We had about 550 people for the dinner dance and nearly 700 at the tailgate. Time and tide may not wait for anyone, but we can easily say that if there is a party, '78 will be there! We have sent checks to all our Classmates that could not make it to Annapolis and who requested a refund. A special thank you to all our Classmates that donated their fees to our Class funds—we will put that money to good use in support of our Class efforts. Also, we tried to identify our Classmates who had paid a registration fee but did not receive a Class crest afghan and Class coin, and we have mailed those items to you. Finally, we are already working on our 30th Reunion. We have requested quotes from several hotels closer to Annapolis harbor so we all can enjoy more of Old Town Annapolis and have easy access to the Yard. We will keep you posted...but we have a little time.

A couple of quick items. On 18 November, **Terry O'Brien**, **Bob Novak**, **Ed Reid**, and I had the privilege to go aboard PORTER (DDG-78) to present the annual leadership awards that the Class of 1978 sponsors for the ships' crew. These awards are very unique in that the awardees are nominated by their peers for their outstanding leadership qualities. Three Sailors are nominated in each of the categories for E-3 and below, E-4, E-5, E-6, E-7, and above, and O-3 and below. The nominees then go before a board that has a Class of '78 rep as a voting member. Terry O'Brien has been our rep the last three years and has really helped to keep us connected to the ship—thanks Terry! I must say that these young men and women are truly impressive Sailors! We presented each of them a monetary award while the crew watched from formation. We were all very proud that our Class is maintaining a true link back to the ship we are sponsoring. Let me tell you about another unique aspect of these awards. The money our Class gives is structured so that we

give the highest dollar amount to the most junior Sailor. The ship CO, CDR **John Nowell '84**, has written a ship's instruction that captures the unique aspects of these awards—thanks, Captain, for your outstanding support and hospitality. Finally, I must add that these leadership awards and their unique features originated with our late president, **Arch Griffin**—he was certainly with us as we presented the awards both in memory and spirit. Fittingly, we have asked the Captain to rename his instruction “The Arch Griffin Memorial Leadership Award.” He is rewriting the instruction. We will post on our Class web site more about this ceremony.

Speaking of the web site, I want to thank our webmasters, **Mike Holden**, who created and maintained our site for over 20 years, and now **Rob Cloutier**, who has added many dynamic features. We had a few bugs as we started the new site up for the reunion, but overall, the web site has offered us tremendous new utilities. We encourage you to check the site often and please help us keep it up-to-date with information you would like to share with the Class. We are always looking for new photos. Also remember that our ship's store will always be available to buy Class merchandise; we will change the selection generally as the seasons change.

Got to shove off...wishing you all the best.



Glen, Terry, Bob, and Ed



'78 and Porter's Arch Griffin Memorial Leadership

Alex Hnarakis is having a great time as CO, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake. His Change of Command will likely happen late spring or early summer when he'll take over as Commander, Test Wing, Pacific. The specific date of the change will depend of course on the training track for the Wing. **Andy Winns** was nominated for his second star (Rear Admiral). Andy currently serves as deputy director, Air Warfare Division, N78B, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, DC. **Tim McGee** was nominated for his first star. Tim is currently the deputy vice commander, Assistance Chief of Naval Operations, Office of Naval Research in Arlington. Sounds like a “jack of all trades” type billet, Tim. You all also know that **Joe Leidig** is the Commandant of Midshipmen. Well, if you didn't know, or you



'78: The Bruce family circa 2001



'78: The Wisslers, the Clasens, and the Provows



'78: Faris bids farewell to his crew

did but you still have to pinch yourself to believe it, here's some proof.



I relieve you, sir



The Commandant and his ladies

Scott Miller dropped a note after reading the *Shipmate* with **RADM Robert W. McNitt '38** on the cover. Even before our Academy days,

Scott's path crossed the Dean's. Scott recounted how Dean McNitt presented him his Eagle Scout on 13 February 1970 in Monterey. That was when he was the Superintendent of the Post Graduate School and Scott's dad was a student there. Today, Scott is the CO of the Navy Center for Tactical Systems Interoperability in San Diego. Scott notes that he is the senior information professional officer in the San Diego area, and the only Class member in that new community (there are several P-3 community members that transitioned to 1600). Forty yards away from his office is **Mike "Flex" Galpin**. Flex is the Chief of Staff at ComThirdFlt. Even closer is Delta pilot and Classmate **Scott Godfrey** who lives just a couple of houses down from the Millers in Coronado Island.

David Bruce retired last year. Besides David's family (except his oldest daughter who's in her freshman year at Mary Washington), **Scott Langdon** was also present to provide Classmate support. When we exchanged emails in October, David was still in the job hunting mode (and getting caught up with that "honey do" list that Elisabeth had long been making). He did have a book translation project pending and was waiting on an evaluation of the first 12 pages to see if it is of sufficient quality for them to give him a contract for the 230-page book. He also had resumes on file at a couple of language schools.



Scott Langdon and David Bruce

In the course of their globetrotting Leslie and **Scott Provow** have had two unique experiences with Classmates. In November they spent a weekend with Sue and **John Wissler** in Jacksonville, NC. While there, they participated in Second Force Service Support Group's (FSSG) celebration of the Marine Corps 228th Birthday. Joining them at the officer's club celebration was another '78 couple—well, USAFA '78, zoomie Greg Clasen and his wife, Kim. John is a battalion commander in the Second FSSG and has his change of command planned for next July. If you've never been to one of these Marine Corps birthday celebrations you don't know what you're missing! With all that is going on in the world, it was especially poignant. As Scott wrote:

I can't express the appropriate feelings in words that you feel, as you are among those that are still living the daily grind on the pointy end of the spear...but it was humbling to be among those that do...and made me even more grateful for their service to our country. John allowed us to join in the fun even though after midnight he had to depart and drive to Cherry Point MCAS where he met the last company in his battalion at 3 a.m. returning from Iraq...the

last company of Marines deployed in Iraq period. John returned with his men, checked in their equipment and weapons, and then had an incredible celebration reuniting them to their families...band playing, donated food, decorations, lots of homemade baked goods...this all at 5 a.m. back at Camp Lejeune...in the dark! So even though hours earlier there were what seemed like hundreds of Marine officers celebrating...the Marine officers that had men returning made sure that they took care of their men and their families first. In the morning John came home and Sue had a house full of Marines and their spouses over for breakfast at 9 a.m. and John was still awake at 10:30 a.m. when we left.

From North Carolina, the Provows found themselves in Madrid, Spain, and spent time with Gretchen and **Charlie Sottomayor** and their 3-year old daughter. Charlie is a military consultant with the Office of Defense Cooperation. We all know Charlie's Spanish fluency but thanks to that tour they had in Panama, Gretchen also is pretty good at it herself.

Jon Kutler attended **Faris Farwell's** change of command in November. Jon hadn't seen Faris for 25 years. The last time their paths crossed was during SWOS, when they were rooming together along with **John Anderson** and **Chuck Goddard** at the Oakwood Garden Apartments in Coronado (even then they figured out how "not" to stay in the BOQ). Jon has relied on Judi Farwell's regular inputs to *Shipmate* to keep him updated on Faris' career. Now as he said—fast forward 25 years and he found himself watching CAPT Faris' passing on the Bunker Hill to his relief. Despite the long separation Jon said "as I'm sure you've experienced, it seemed like a couple months, not decades since we were last together in San Diego." He said Faris gave a great speech. Judi added later that he was the recipient of some good going away presents from the crew and some award that I can't seem to recall.

In some stray voltage: our Class Treasure, **Kevin Liddy**, was recently appointed a commissioner of the Milford, CT, Inland Wetlands Agency by the Mayor of Milford for a three year term of office. Hmm, Inland Wetlands...I'm still scratching my head on that one. **Fred Butterfield** (Butterfield.Fred@epamail.epa.gov) reported that they had a modest turnout of six Classmates at their December joint '78 and '81 luncheon at the Fort Myer Officers Club. **Bruce Latta** was their guest speaker and he talked on the USNA admissions process. Joining them from '78 were also **Larry Whitmeyer**, **Matt Leavitt**, **Kevin O'Keefe**, and **Craig Diffie**. Fred has penciled-in the DC area's next quarterly gathering for Wednesday, 31 March 2004. This time it will be in the charming ambience of the Pentagon City Mall food court (that is until a better offer comes across my desk). He says he's not "wedded" to Wednesday gatherings, so please let him know if Tuesday or Thursday might work better for any of you. If you are in the area and are interested in attending these lunches—drop Fred a line.

Unfortunately, **Ken Bowersox** won't be able to make it (or fortunately if you happen to be Sox and his family). By then his short-term turned long-term TAD to NASA headquarters in DC should be at an end. He should be home in

Houston. If you guys thought the back-to-back "deployments" were only a thing for the fleet, talk to Sox. Seems once he got back from that *extended* deployment in the International Space Station, NASA sent him for a couple week TAD that became a few *months*. Some things stay the same. For those of you who have been asking—that hard landing in Soyuz that you read about in the papers wasn't any harder on Sox than a "hard trap on the boat" (his words). So that means he and I won't be seeing each other "eye-to-eye," yet. Well that's the space I'm allotted—I think. For more, check us out next month and check out the web site—www.usna1978.org. Until then, I'm laughin' Spot Four in the New Year!

79

Annual Membership: 0%
Life Membership: 89%

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

e: Sean.Cate@1979.usna.com

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

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Greetings, '79!

And welcome to 2004! This would be the time for an obligatory comment about how fast time is flying by, how another year has come and gone, and how I still haven't finished writing my list of resolutions for last year. But since I rarely do the obligatory stuff, I'll dispense with all that for now.

I would, however, like to make all of you aware of some changes in my email addresses and work phone number. I still work for the same company, but I've recently moved my desk from NAS Patuxent River to a company building nearby. Also, the company has just been purchased, so we're presently becoming integrated into the new system. (Sort of reminds me of the Borg on *Star Trek—The Next Generation*: "Resistance is futile. You will be assimilated!") At any rate, I'm still living in Leonardtown, MD, which (depending on traffic) is about an hour away from DC. My new email address is JDWithers@1979.usna.com, and my current work phone number is 240-725-7751. So please feel free to write or call anytime. And if you happen to find yourself in the DC area, let me know. I get up there a lot, and maybe could hook up for an appropriate beverage.

Before I get started, I just wanted to acknowledge the efforts of Coach Paul Johnson and the Navy football team. This past year we were treated to Navy football the way we remember it from our days in the Yard. And the CinC Trophy looks so at home on the Severn. After years at "an undisclosed location," it's nice to have it at home where it belongs. I recently saw an article detailing how the Supe assigned a Navy captain to bring the trophy back to Annapolis. The officer showed up in Colorado Springs the Monday after the Army-Navy game, startling our Air Force brethren. Since it was too big to ship, the captain personally drove cross-country with it to deliver the prize. Again,