



Roommate Reunion Weekend (L-R): Mike Anderson, Gordy McElroy, and Pete Knoetgen

In September 2004, **Paul McMahan** (mcmahon@aol.com) took a job as the VP of Operations at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in Newark, NJ. His family is still in Charleston, SC, since "it just got too hard trying to coordinate the move, find a house, and sell a house; plus I decided to test-drive the job and the area a bit before we fully commit." Paul says that the role looks like a Navsta/Subbase/NAS XO in a lot of ways since he's responsible for Facilities, Material Management (transportation, mailrooms, warehousing, supply, and purchasing), Parking, and Security. According to Paul, "The transition is both interesting and ongoing. I get home every other week, and it looks like we won't move the family 'til the school year's over." He also mentioned that another classmate, **Rob Prodoehl** (rob.prodoehl@1977.usna.com), is at the University as the Director of Operations for the School of Osteopathic Medicine.

My apologies to **Pete Green** and **Larry Endacott**, whose photos and submissions will appear next month.

**Class Communication**

I've got some great stories and photos from recent Navy home games that I'll include in next month's column, so once again with due consideration to the word count, please stay tuned for another month.

**Closing Remarks**

OK, everybody, in light of the new column length limitations, it's time to start using more *big* words that can substitute for several *little* words. In any event, I'll see you again next month. Go Navy!—

**Bob Sanderson**

**78** ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 2%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 76%

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It's all about change isn't it? Seasons come and go, life begins and ends, tides rise and fall and any other clichéd phrase you want to fill in here. But behind every cliché is truth and reality. Often it's a truth so prevalent that we try to dampen the exhilaration and sometime harshness of it by relegation to the less imposing form of cliché. So with the new year upon us, what's changed with your lives? Here's a little insight into what's happened among our classmates, some exhilarating, some sad and some hopeful...but never cliché.

Erin Griffin has taken a position as Chief Information Officer at Loyola Marymount University in southern California. She had hoped to complete the home sale in Annapolis and purchase one on the west coast by the end of last year. That would've enabled her and Jenna to be in San Diego in time to meet Jeff's return from his six-month cruise to the Persian Gulf.

I normally delete those virus-sent "hello" e-mails when they hit my in-basket but this time I had to reply I was curious as to who was [Us78na3817@aol.com](mailto:Us78na3817@aol.com). Well, it was **Don Urquidez** and now we all know that he's alive and well and an NJROTC instructor for a San Fernando Valley school. Cammy and **Loren Divers** gave their daughter, Soho, a little sister. She's Ms. Madison Y. Divers and was born on October 16<sup>th</sup>. As Loren said, they're "just starting our family out when you all are graduating yours. What a difference! In a few years we'll be the only ones with children at the reunions!" You can check out photos of the happy family at Muff's website [http://homepage.mac.com/lorendd/Madison\\_Y\\_Divers/PhotoAlbum8.html](http://homepage.mac.com/lorendd/Madison_Y_Divers/PhotoAlbum8.html). Back in November **Marty Thamm** and **Mike Sears** celebrated in style the 229<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Marine Corps. They enjoyed the lovely Northern California wine country with more of the "Few and the Proud", the Association of Sonoma Marines. The group has graciously

adopted the aviators from the former NAS Alameda (mostly A-4 drivers from VMA-133) Colonel **Mike Kalashian** ('68) was one of those A-4 drivers and the Master of Ceremonies.



Marine Corps Ball West

You have to check out Ann and **Mark Nault's** new restaurant next time you are in Baltimore. It's got a LA/New York City style décor and you just have to love a place with a two-level wine display and solid walnut bar! Mark does the books and such but the kitchen is all Ann. It's an "open kitchen" design so Ann can rap with guest and they can watch her work her culinary magic (that she polished at the renowned culinary school, Johnson & Wales (or Johnny & Wales as fellow alumnus Emeril would say-BAM!)) The restaurant business is a tough business but since they opened up in October the place has been packed. We wish them continued success. Check out their website for a preview at [www.taste-restaurant.biz](http://www.taste-restaurant.biz). Save me a good table guys.

Work has kept me from some class fun. One was participating in an annual boxing smoker at the New York athletic club.



Grinch hits a home run with Maguire

From what **Jock Maloney** says it seems others were also otherwise precluded. Still he, **Kevin "Grinch" Lynch** and **Ed Reid** were there. As Jock said, they watched the fights, had a "few" (by their standards) beers at *Corney's* and then crashed at the club. Jock shared a room with Ed and claimed he was awakened at 0300 by Eddie's snoring and that he is "almost as bad as Vinnie!" Hey, but at least I provide ear plugs for you, Jock. Speaking of Grinch, the man does travel

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in some amazing circles as the photos he sent me of a sports banquet he attended attest to. There he is rubbing shoulders with the famous including Captain of the US Olympic gold medal hockey "Miracle Team" Mike Iruzzioni but especially home run hit champ Mark Maguire. Grinch even gives good "quote" as noted by alleged comments of the evening in the Newport *Daily News*. "I don't know about PO and Sturge, but Admiral Itchy was definitely sprinkling a granulated supplement on his pizza just before he did a Greg Luganis like face plant into it. Could'a been steroids I guess, course it could'a been parmesan cheese too."

Thanks to **Terry O'Brien** for all his fine work again with our sponsored ship, USS Porter (DDG-78). Once again he represented the class in the presentation of our **Archie Griffin Leadership Awards** to the crewmen selected for recognition by their ship. Moreover this year he spearheaded our class effort to help the Navy League of Philly in hosting a tail-gater for the crew as the ship came to Philly for that great Army-Navy game. He also coordinated a ship tour and brunch for some classmates. It was the ship's way of thanking us for being a "part of the crew". **Rob Cloutier** reported their CO, CDR Williamson, as saying that that most of the sponsoring classes just show up couple times a year looking for pictures or ballcaps, but the class of '78 has made a real difference. Thanks OB for leading the way. Speaking of Army-Navy. That was a great way to even the series record wasn't it? I hope **Kurt Tidd** placed a better bet than the beer he said he had with Gen. Abizaid (former WOOP Dant and his theater Commander). They watched from the Arabian Gulf. **Mark Fox** is still living the dream. His #2 son graduated from the Academy in May and is in primary flight training at Vance AFB (joint training squadron). His #3 son is a youngster in 15th company, living in 7-4, one deck above where Mark lived back in the day.

**Dan Mori** [mori@aaahawk.com] checked in with info on an impromptu 28<sup>th</sup> Company Labor Day mini-reunion in Dallas. They had so much fun he says they may just expand it and have it every year and invite anyone else to join them in 2005! The invading hoard included: Vivian and **Dave Hampshire**, Virginia

and **Kevin Cheezum**, Brenda and **Tom Hamilton**, Jaime and **Tom Bond**, and Judy and **Dan Mori**. Credit went to Jaime Bond and Vivian Hampshire for organizing the get together. The long weekend event found them doing snackin' and BS'ing at the Bond home; touring local museums (including the Sixth Floor and the Conspiracy Museum); tubing and floating on Joe Pool Lake. Throughout the tubing the boat's engine had some sputtering trouble, probably from pulling all the extra weight. But Tom was still able to speed up sufficiently to sling them off. No matter how many times he would shake them off that thing, they all floated. (Coach Higgins would be proud!) Sunday was a day of relaxation or recuperation from the sunburns and sore muscles! The Mori's mess hall provided chow. Judy spent most of her time in the kitchen – supposedly cooking (But we know she just couldn't handle "the mids"). Dan gathered all the cards from the camera and compiled CD's for everyone and created a slide show of the entire weekend. Some mighty interesting photographs were discovered—like one that has two of the wives still trying to explain the "Condoms To Go" sign in background. (There really is such a store in Dallas. Don't be surprised if you see a franchise back east soon!) As for what everyone is up to: Jaime and **Tom Bond** are in Arlington, Texas. Tom is the owner and principal of the Dallas Consulting Group. Jamie is an Insurance agent and a self-proclaimed antique hound. Virginia and **Kevin Cheezum** are in Fairfax, Virginia. Kevin is a Principal Associate with McManis & Monsalve Associates. Brenda and **Tom Hamilton** are in Tucker, Georgia. Tom is the founder and pastor of the Sozo New Covenant Fellowship. (He's also the unofficial recipient of our 30<sup>th</sup> Reunion's "Most Changed Midshipman".) Vivian and **Dave Hampshire** are in Harrisonville, New Jersey. Dave works for NAVSEA in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Judy and **Dan Mori** are in Rockwall, Texas. Dan is a Senior Systems Engineer with Lockheed Martin. In his spare time, he is pursuing his masters degree.

It's with a heavy heart that I tell you of the death **Rich Holzknecht's** wife, Jennifer at the end of October. Jennifer

died after suffering a severe brain aneurysm. The aneurysm induced a massive seizure, and she was rushed into surgery shortly thereafter. Along the way she suffered several formidable setbacks before ultimately succumbing. Through it all, Jennifer never regained consciousness, and her slip into eternity was peaceful. Jennifer's mom had been visiting them in Turkey (Rich was the Naval attaché in Ankara.). So fortunately she was there with her in last moments and to help Rich care for their four young children, Rich (5), Dan (3) and Nate (2); and their newborn daughter, Savannah (3 months by now). A deeply spiritual family, Rich has found comfort in that and in the many prayers and support friends, Shipmates and classmates have provided. Most especially he is deriving comfort from his faith and articulated that he knows that "Jennifer is safely in the hands of her heavenly father and would not now choose to return... There will only be memories of her signature smile and fun-loving nature and not some empty shadow of her former self... I have received phone calls from friends around the planet — believers and unbelievers — all sharing my sorrow and loss and offering comfort. There are many, many people who loved Jennifer and have very soft hearts and 'ears to hear'. As difficult as this has been personally, events like this cause us all to reflect and to think about life beyond the grave." A memorial for Jennifer was conducted in Ankara at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Ankara. It was attended by a large U.S. and international and Turkish community. Funeral services were later conducted in the States at Pensacola. The outpouring of tender loving care was so great that the service had to be moved to the Naval Aviation Memorial Chapel at NAS Pensacola. Since then, Rich has received a humanitarian transfer to the CNET staff in Pensacola. He's found a house in Pensacola—despite the tough market caused by the hurricane damage to the region. The miracle of it was that the family who lived *directly across the street* from Jennifer's parents decided — after one year in their Pensacola home — to move to Tucson, AZ. Rich was able to arrange with the owner to purchase the house. The Joint Military Attaché school



is taking up a collection to assist him with child care. If you choose to make a contribution, please make your check payable to CDR Rich Holznecht and mail them to: Joint Military Attaché School, C/O: Teresa Babb or JP Sherkus, Building 6000, Bolling Air Force Base, Washington DC 20340. Lastly, I know that Rich would appreciate continued words of encouragement and comfort from friends and classmates so here's his e-mail address. :holznechtfamily@aol.com.

'Nuff said...Launchin' Spot 4, with the sky pilot and a prayer.

79

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 0%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 90%

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Greetings, 79!

It is my privilege to begin this month by announcing that our own **Ted "Twig" Branch** has climbed another significant rung on the ladder of professional success. Just before Thanksgiving, Ted assumed command of NIMITZ at a ceremony aboard Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego. Ted had been serving as executive assistant to the Commander, US Pacific Fleet in Hawaii. He was formerly XO of STENNIS and CO of CORONADO, flagship of the Third Fleet. For more on this story, here's our San Diego correspondent **Russell Nevitt** (rnevitt1@san.rr.com):

■ With a lump in my throat and a tear in my one good eye, I watched **Ted Branch** assume command of NIMITZ yesterday. Amidst all of the pomp and circumstance, with the skyline of San Diego as a backdrop, I realized that Twig had come quite a long way from Long Beach, Mississippi. Classmate, Company-mate and roommate, it was absolutely thrilling to watch my friend reach this pinnacle of his career. Whatever further goals he may have, the apex for a Naval Aviator has to be command of an aircraft carrier. With all of the stories told last night still ringing in my ears (and none to be repeated here), I am reminded what august company it has been my privilege to rub shoulders with

since the summer of '75. With no disrespect to the many MBAs, JDs, MDs and Benjamins earned by other classmates in 22<sup>nd</sup> Company, the guys that stayed the course and made a career of it stand out most in my mind. When **Doug Fremont** assumed command of an SSBN at 16 years, relieving a 24-year O6, I was stunned. To watch Dan Bursch truly slip the bonds of planet Earth, I was speechless. When **Mike Muldoon** completed his fellowship at the Mayo Clinic and became a leader among orthopedic surgeons, I needed a drink. To see **Rob Sterling** take command of a squadron, and then subsequent Major Shore Command, I needed two drinks. But to watch Ted, that was the icing on the cake. I know that other Classmates have achieved this much and perhaps more, but by God, these guys I know, and I could not be more proud.

It was great to have **Dan Bursch, Pat Temple, Mike Muldoon** and **Skip Krause**, all from 22<sup>nd</sup> Company make the trip. Even **John Ziegler**, who opted out after Plebe year, was there. A Change of Command two days before Thanksgiving was tough, but the scheduling was one of those "needs of the Navy" things. Ted's speech, short as an incoming CO's should be, was nonetheless outstanding. His wife Jodi, and children Kelsea (15) and Austin (13) have become part of our extended family over the years here in San Diego, and their contributions to his career are innumerable. The Mississippi relatives were out in force, and I don't believe I have heard that much "Southern" spoken in Coronado in quite some time.

In these difficult times we live in, NIMITZ is an awesome weapon at our disposal, and truly an instrument for the protection and preservation of our country. Ted Branch is her Commanding Officer, and I find that most reassuring. In the Southern vernacular, he's done us all proud. Sincerely, Russell ■

Ted, please allow me to join the long list of '79ers extending heartiest congratulations on your new command. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family as you take on your new duties.

More from our 25<sup>th</sup> Reunion. **Bob Tata** (btata@hunton.com) updates us on some familiar names in the class:

■ Dear Wiz: I wanted to write to say hello and send in a couple photos. We ended up making it to the '79 homecoming weekend after all where we met up with **Phil McConkey** (and family), **Herb Wilson** (and family), **Larry Kihlstadius**, **Mark Decker**, Mike Ashford (from McGarvey's) and a number of others from our and surrounding classes and their families. We thoroughly enjoyed a great game and catching up with many old friends.

Phil McConkey, as you may know, is doing well. In addition to his lovely wife Erin and his new 18 month old May, he's a partner in an institutional trading brokerage and continues to do his "Giants" TV show.

Now a family man, Phil has bought a house on a lake in Connecticut to relax and wake-board on the weekends. Phil and I also went to the Navy-Notre Dame game and tailgaters a few weeks later at Giants Stadium and, although the company was good, the tradition continued.

Herb Wilson currently resides in Virginia Beach with his wife Stephany and two daughters Lauren (8th grade) and Taylor (7th grade). Herb works for Lockheed Martin as an US Navy aviation mission planning analyst. Stephany has recently started her jewelry and accessory business. Lauren runs the 400m and 1600m relay race for her middle school. Taylor plays guitar with heavy emphasis on classic rock. Herb, now quite the wine connoisseur (having graduated from Malt Duck and Ripple at USNA), also hosts an annual Wine Tasting party that is a highlight of the season.

Speaking of guys in great shape, Larry Kihlstadius is still "pumped up." Larry runs Accenture's "business development and solutions team." So, if you need "solutions," call Larry. While we enjoyed seeing Larry, we really missed seeing his better half, Ronnie. Ronnie is a PTA Vice President and quite a tennis player. Larry is living outside Atlanta and enjoying Ronnie and his children, Sierra and Evan. Sierra is a 5th grader in honors choir (always know Larry was a "choir boy" at heart) and Cotillion. Evan is in 2nd grade and just wrestled (and won) his first tournament - big surprise for the son of an Olympic wrestler. They go on lots of family ski trips together.