

And if anyone needed proof miracles *do* indeed still happen, **Bill D'Amico** emailed me last night from his new home in High Point, NC, where he's taken a job with Sealy, Inc. as V.P. of Quality and Safety. After serving with distinction for 21+ years, Bill retired after his selection to O6, but before he could collect O6 retirement so as to spare his lovely wife Darlene yet another move and allow his daughters to graduate from the same high school in which they'd started. Cara, now 24, and Andi, 22 are both Gainesville Gators; Andi is finishing her undergrad degree and Cara is in post graduate nursing school. Bill observed Sealy is an equal opportunity employer, as he has the pleasure of working with not only a number of other Navy alums, but a couple of West Point grads as well. He promises HUGE price breaks on matched bedding sets for anyone willing to drive to High Point!

I'll close by reminding everyone our 30<sup>th</sup> reunion, Thursday September 13<sup>th</sup> through Sunday September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007, is fast approaching. Participation in two events, the golf tournament and the Friday night reception, will be limited, so sign up early. Also, it's important we have correct emails for as many classmates as possible, so if you recently changed emails, or Rick White's all-hands messages haven't been reaching you, please send corrected addresses to either Rick or me at [bettynrick@comcast.net](mailto:bettynrick@comcast.net) or [mago01310@comcast.net](mailto:mago01310@comcast.net).

A Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night! Magoo

**78** ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 2%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 75%

PRES: **Glen Woods**

SEC'Y: **Vince Balderrama**

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All I want for Christmas is to win a big Power Ball Lottery pot, lose 20 pounds, grow 6 inches, restore hair to the head, have world peace, or get another 500 words this month in Shipmate column length...okay, world peace is the more realistic possibility...so I'll trim what I have and make you wait for the next installment....Anyway, on to the news...

A while ago, **Ray Milton** reported a successful "MOONSTANFORDOP5.0". Ray, **John "Boy" Rogers**, **Lafayette Norton**, **Mike "the KOZ" Kozlarek**, and descended upon **Ray "Ray-Moon" Luevano's** house in Palo Alto for the Navy-Stanford game (They used the

"moonmile" flight program). Ray noted that Koz won the shake off to see who got use of the "Balderrama Room" in the Luevano household. (That's my home away from home when I'm out west that the Luevano's graciously afford me). They gang hooked up with **Ed Reid**, **John Sturges**, **Pat McCormick**, **Otto Bulich**, **Jim Degree**, and **Mike Sears** for the tailgater (which Moon missed due to still being on a Tokyo time clock) and the game. Ray praised the pre-game show that Navy put on — a Seal Parachute Team jump into the stadium and a fly-over that was perfectly timed to just as the crowd ended singing the words "the home of the brave". He figured that fly-over stunned the Stanford players right from the start and they remained such all the way to the end — even up to Navy singing "Blue and Gold". Ray says we sang it louder than the Stanford home fans sang their alma mater — the resounding "BEAT ARMY!" echoed nicely off the empty seats. I'm still waiting on some photos so that John Boy can finally see more than his name in this column (and it won't be because you're included in a shot with Sturge, Reid and Degree!).

Following the same advice Otter and Boone gave Flounder in "Animal House"—Ray said that west coast "Road Trip" was a great shot in the arm for him. This year his measured points for stress level have been "off the scale" as he's had to contend with a lot of family trauma (his mom's cancer, sister's divorce, oldest son's marriage, wife's stroke, and baby girl off to college (U of Mary Washington)). Top all that off with this weight of his job in Annapolis as Maintenance Lead Manager for the Navy ERP ACAT1 program (working toward a Milestone C) and he's definitely a candidate to be "grounded". But after being with the boys and seeing a great Navy victory, he's rejuvenated! You may see more of Ray Milton around town next year as he's looking to move to Annapolis from Virginia Beach. He'll then set up shop for hosting 78 visits for games. Ray also reported that after retiring from his billet as CO NAWC Orlando, **Andy Mohler** is now working for Northrop Grumman and remains a Floridian. Ray also had a great time visiting his roomie, **Ted Null**, over Labor Day weekend. Ted and Cindy hosted Patricia and Ray while they had been checking up on her Patricia's mom's medical progress and to move her into a care facility. Ted and Cindy are recent

grand-parents again with the birth of their "gorgeous, black haired" granddaughter, Sabrina Vienna Mattaliano, on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Thanks for the scoop, Ray.

Thanks also to **Russell Puppe ('66)**, President of the Columbus/Central Ohio USNA alumni chapter for a report on **CAPT Thomas "Chip" Walston's** retirement on Sept 29<sup>th</sup>. Chip finished off his career as the Commanding Officer and Professor of Naval Science, NROTC Unit, at Ohio State University. The ceremony was held in the recruiting room of the Ohio State football stadium, "the Shoe". The *original* plan was to hold the ceremony on the football field with the stadium as a backdrop but quick plans to change the grass sod on the field forced the alternative venue. In attendance besides Chip's wife, Susan, and their children, were his mother, Navy League reps **Bill Hanf**, President; **Bill Jordan**; and **Chuck Cooper**, many other family members from around the country and classmate and alumni: Chip's plebe year roommate, **Bill Yeager ('78)**; **Roy Girod ('53)**; **Russell Puppe ('66)** and **D. Michael Crites ('70)**. Besides the usual accolades and certificates, Chip's shadow box included an American Flag that had flown over Bancroft Hall, the USS Constitution, the USS Arizona Memorial, and the Ohio State football stadium. Chip and his family will be staying in Columbus, OH. Enjoy phase two of your life Chip. But I admit, while it can be great—it ain't as good as flying!

Speaking of flying—Remember when we were young Plebes sitting en masse, listening to one of those professional lectures about this really Sierra Hotel new Navy fighter with all this, standoff sensors and missiles, able to engage and to simultaneously kill multiple targets at long range and then if it had too, it had the speed and maneuverability to best them in a dogfight? We all ooh'ed and ah'h'ed and all us fledgling aviators drooled in hopes of one day flying that F-14 Tomcat. Well, a lot of aviators have done so over the years and the last one finally flew into the sunset this year. Sending her off in fashion was our own **Glen "Wheels" Wheless**. From start to finish, Wheels was the F-14 Tomcat Sunset reunion coordinator for all squadrons. He reported long days and fun nights (accent on the *fun nights!*) and was in large part responsible for the successful 4 days of debauchery and camaraderie. He saw a lot of people he'd forgotten he knew and one we could never forget—

**Mike "Flex" Galpin** (Flex is an active duty O6 in Key West). We're all sad to see the truly last Big Fighter go but you did her proud in the Sunset sendoff, Wheels. (Great pic of you and your old VF14 skipper- "Rattler" Rucker.)



Rattler Rucker and Wheels

As for sendoffs- other recent retirements (that I know about) were: **John Cohoon** - on Sept 29<sup>th</sup> in a Ceremony in Memorial Hall at the Academy and the party was at Robert Crown Sailing Center; **Bruce Latta's** retirement ceremony was also in Memorial Hall on October 26<sup>th</sup> and I can't remember if I mentioned **Paul Russo's** retirement on May 26<sup>th</sup>. Paul's ceremony was at the Navy Memorial in downtown DC.

**Kimber "Kim" Tageson** sent an e-mail address update [tagesonk@sbcglobal.net]. He also reported that the Tageson household is empty nested. In regards to my question if the dollars in the wallet hadn't also flown the nest with his prodigy he remarked, "The wallet isn't totally empty but it is sorta a "feed and bleed" situation. Both Kids are in college this semester, then two more semesters, before I am back down to one in college." Yup, that'll definitely bleed a wallet! Both his kids are doing great. Matt is majoring in marketing - but Kim suggested he go Corps (Supply or Marines - he can figure it out). Either way, Kim—like me—hopes they do well so that they can keep us in the life style to which we aspire (I'm moving in with my son when he's successful!) As for other parental pride—sincere apologies to Diane and **Ed Henkler** for dropping the ball on mentioning that there older daughter is a very successful crew jock! Unfortunately she rows for Bucknell. Last season she led her boat to helping Bucknell defeat Navy at the Patriot League championships. Here's where blood is thicker than water as Ed's -"proud Papa" won out over alumni loyalties, as you might expect. Sorry about the neglected note, Ed (I'm sure that's not the only one—apologies to

all the others. Thanks for reminding me— geez, after all my years in cox'ing and coaching crew I can't believe I dropped a crew story too. I'm getting senile!)

Got some other saved rounds: **Martin Bushika** is the Assistant Program Manager for Training Technology Development for Marine Corps Systems Command's Training Systems Program Office in Orlando, FL. Hope to report next time that we got together for lunch or a drink when he visited Syracuse for some business in October. We'll see.

Colleen and **M.F. "Mac" McKeon** made it to the NAVY-TULSA football game.

Mac was curious on the new security measures and how restrictive they were on bringing beverages into the stadium. I apologize for seeing his e-mail too late and being unable to answer him in time. I'm sure he discovered that while there is no—um—"intrusive" body search. They just don't let you bring liquids or containers into the stadium. They'll take your bottles of water ("holy" or otherwise) and other sodas or "soda sweeteners". But Mac, you *had* a Plebe summer and a Marine Corps career, I'm sure you figured out alternatives. Mac's working in Suffolk, VA as a Joint M&S Technology Advisor, USMC JCDE Liaison Office.

Congratulations to **Mel Williams** on his appointment to vice admiral and assignment as deputy commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Va. By now they have left the flatlands of U.S. Strategic Command, in Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska and are now where a sailor should be—by the water. Also congrats and best wishes to **Mark Fox** who leaves his job as deputy assistant to the president and director, White House Military Office to become the deputy to the deputy chief of staff for political, military and economic business, Multi-National Forces Iraq. Hmm, going from the White House to Baghdad... is that congrats or sympathies? The irony isn't lost that where Mark once flew missions bombing the country, he'll now be responsible for helping rebuild it. In today's world, they're both "hard" assignments but he'll do well regardless in what "airspace" he operates. Lastly, belated congrats to recent parents-in-laws, Julia and **Rand Lebouvier**. This summer they married off daughter Tara to **Mike Lilleberg** ('04). Thirty-second company mates present were **Mike Kalnoske, Roy Bookmiller, Ray Kwong, JD Oliver, Bill Hession, and Tim Murphy**.

Now retired, Rand works as a Business Development Manager for Bluefin Robotics in Cambridge, MA.



32<sup>nd</sup> Co. at Tara and Mike's Wedding

Well, that's it for this month. With a pic or two I'm at the limit. Next month look for more news and—tailgate images, a Glee Club reunion in which '78 was featured and of course *Christmas card* news. As for the Balderramas, next month our son, Michael is off to Greece for his college junior year second semester for a study abroad program. As classics major, it's the perfect place for him to learn. A request goes to **Sam Tangredi** to look out for him (if Sam's still out there as the Naval Attaché' to Greece.) or send gouge! Gotta go look for cheap flights to Athens for our spring break visit. Happy Holidays to everyone (Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanza, etc) ...Launchin' Spot Four in support of Toys for Tots!

**79**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 0%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 90%

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Greetings, 79ers!

So here you are, reading these words in the December issue of *Shipmate*. Perhaps you're walking in from the mailbox, quickly scanning these pages looking for and **Bolded Names** that you recognize. Or you may be sitting down with a cup of coffee, sorting through the Christmas Cards, credit card offers, mortgage refinance applications, and catalogs (and catalogs, and CATALOGS!).

This time of year can be especially frenzied, given all the things that we try to "pack in". You may be traveling, or expecting company. The kids may be coming home from college, or perhaps they're still involved in the myriad of activities of today's high schools (or