



Mary informed us Ashley was a big hit with many of the pilots; no kidding! And it appears Ashley wasn't the only Vail who made a positive impression in the world of aviation. Mother Mary, along with an aircraft near and dear to our heart, was the subject of a recent Hank Caruso drawing.



You go girl! P.S. We're generally not in the business of telling others how to raise their children, and Ashley certainly appears old enough to take care of herself...but Rich Stone is the LAST guy we'd have hanging over OUR daughter's shoulder!

We conclude by noting the passing of a great American. Dan McCarthy (23rd Co.) informed us RADM Max Morris died recently. RADM Morris, our first Commandant, had a long and distinguished career of service to his country, having entered the military during WWII in the Army and seeing combat in Italy. He graduated from USNA with the class of '48 and served the majority of his time as an aviator at NAS JAX, retiring in 1977. His funeral service concluded with Anchors Aweigh. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends.

Remember, keep those emails and pictures coming; these columns don't write themselves! Go Navy, Beat Hopkins!

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

PRES: **Glen Woods**  
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Okay for starters lets covers some lose tracks from the last month or two. One of the first items is the photo that should've accompanied news of Claudine and **Curt Perry** and their kids, plus a little more info culled from a phone call or two. As you may or may not know, their oldest son, **Christopher A. Perry ('07)** was commissioned a 2/Lt of Marines after receiving his diploma in Systems Engineering at graduation from the Academy back in May. I hear he is on his way to Pensacola for flight training and hopes to follow in dad's footsteps as a Cobra pilot. As Chris put it to his dad—it's all about being close to and supporting the grunts. Ooorah! Their youngest, son, **Craig ('10)** is a Youngster majoring in History with Arabic as his language—but then he also jumps out of perfectly good airplanes for fun! Their eldest, Candace (25), graduated from Armstrong Atlantic University and is living in Colorado Springs, working for Compassion International. All of them were home schooled K-12 by Claudine, a decision they made for reasons of personal conviction for reinforcement of Christian fundamentals. After 21 years in the Corps, and a furlough from US Airways after 9-11 (3 years of flying) Curt is now a Production Test Pilot for Gulfstream. Lucky dog, he gets to fly G-IVs, 450 and 550s out of Savannah, GA. Well, after finally getting e-mail worked out, here's the photo of that proud commissioning day.



*The Proud Perrys on Graduation Day*

Got word from **Randy Duncan's** and my house mate at the "Chiefs Club" in Folkstone, NC, **JB "Jack or Brad" Richardson**. He and Julie's eldest, Ashley, passed the Florida Bar in July and is working for a fairly large Florida Law Firm at their home office in Tallahassee. She's doing general corporate defense with a specialty in Labor and

Employment litigation. JB's still trying to figure out what he wants to do when he grows up. Since the outdoor host on ESPN job is taken and his handicap is too high for the Champions Tour he figures he'll need to really get focused. What he really wrote about was his involvement with *Honor Air*. That's the organization founded by Jeff Miller from Henderson County, NC. It charters 737's and other large aircraft to take WWII Veterans to DC—primarily to see the WWII monument and then to Arlington (Iwo and Tomb of the Unknown). The trip is free of charge to the veterans and they take about 100 at a time with 33 Guardians to assist these folks in making the trip. JB has acted as one of the "Guardians". He says the day of the trip is amazing!! — Direct to D.C with music, water cannons shooting over the plane as they taxied in, banners, flags and 100's of people greeting these guys as they walked through Reagan. The police escort down the left side of the road to the monument raised more than a few looks on Saturday morning. Elizabeth Dole met them at the monument and had her picture taken with every WWII Vet that wanted one. (Bob usually does as well but he was unavailable.) JB said her kind words of thanks were emotionally memorable. JB also said that walking the monument with his three guys was priceless as they shared memories of buddies and battles that we've only read about or see on the history channel. He says if you ever get a chance to make one of these trips in a city near you it is an experience you will never forget. JB sent a pic of himself and one of his Vets—a fellow Marine, Robert Youngdeer of Cherokee, NC. He was a member of the 1st Marine Raider Battalion (Edson's Raiders) and fought on Guadalcanal (Bloody Ridge) and many other battles too numerous to name. JB considers him a true giant of the heritage of the Corps and was proud to get to know him well. JB and all we Marines have benefited from the legacy Robert and others like him built for us. If you are interested in contributing to the Honor Air Fund, Honor Air Fund, Veterans of Foreign Wars, U.S. Post 891, P.O. box 17754, Asheville, NC 28816-7754



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JB Richardson and Robert Youngdeer

Speaking of charitable organizations, congratulations to **John Semcken** and his partners at Majestic Realty in Los Angeles, CA (and former Marines) Ed Roski and Kent Valley. This year they founded the Land of the Free Foundation (<http://www.landofthefreefoundation.com>). It is a charitable foundation committed to celebrating the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States, past, present and future. The foundation supports programs that help our armed service personnel and their families and ensures that "the commitment of our nation's heroes will never be taken for granted and that all Americans recognize, because of the sacrifices of our armed service personnel, we will always live in the "Land of the Free". In its inaugural year they raised \$1 million and have distributed funds to such organizations as the Semper Fi Fund, Any Soldier, Any Marine, TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors). May the next years be even more successful, John. You guys make us proud. As for family life for John, his boys (Reed and Jack) are doing great in high school, playing football. His daughter, Rebecca has started her Master in Public Health and JD degree at the University of Maryland College Park. The hotel renovation is complete (Pacific Palms Conference Resort, Industry, CA). This summer he and his wife, Mee, are off to Scotland to celebrate her 50th.



Ed Roski, John Semcken and Kent Valley

In some loose info — **Bob Engel** visited **Kurt Tidd** at the White House this

spring. Kurt is assigned on the NSC staff and was kind enough to give Bob and his family a guided tour of the White House and the Old Executive Office. **Jock Maloney** wrote that **Tom Abernathy** retired in early November at the Navy Memorial in DC. Jock said Tom did a great job, and that his comments were witty and articulate and that "someone should get his comments because they expressed my [Jock's] sentiments", but that Tom did a much better delivery. Not many folks knew that among the many honors in Tom's career was the fact he was Instructor of the Year at West Point when he did a tour as a Systems Engineering instructor. Other revelations to Jock were that Tom also has one kid that graduated from USNA and another there as a youngster. While Tom's official retirement is January '08 he'll still be among those to participate in the '78 group retirement ceremony that Jock is organizing at the Academy in June. Besides Jock, others of '78 in attendance at Tom's ceremony were **Joe Peterson, Tony Cato, Vic Guillory, Andy Winns, Mike Powell, Larry Thompson** and quite a few non-classmate Admirals and several others, including **Hithon** and **Trass** ('77 football players — not the fencers).



Bob and Kurt at the White House

**Jim Pointer** wrote that 36th company's **Buck Connally** sent along the happy (?) news that he is now *Grandpa* Buck, and Kathy is *Grandma*. Jim thinks that Buck is the first '78 grandpa in 36th company and wonders how many other grandpas are in our class. Hmmm, me too but I think I'll try not to dwell on the number ('cuz I may start to feel *very* old). Buck wrote: "I'm a Grand Pa as of 4 June. My oldest son Sean and his wife Niccole have a beautiful baby girl, Emma. Am I the first? Unless there is a new set of Callaway clubs involved, I don't have to know!" Well, actually, Buck is far from being the *first* grandpa in our class. If memory serves me, the first person I ever received correspondence on having reached that grandparent role was **Ted Null**—and that was a long time ago. Anyway, congratulations,

Grandpa (formerly Disco) Buck and Grandma Kathy!

Well, I am running out of my word limit so I'll try and wrap this up with a reminder and a request. This year is our 30<sup>th</sup> reunion year. (I know—it doesn't seem that long ago.) The weekend is scheduled for Oct 23rd-27th, 2008. The hotel is Lowes Annapolis on West Street and we have blocked (or are in the process of blocking) rooms. Bottom line, keep checking our website and stay in touch with your company rep (whom you'll also find out who that is on the class website ([www.usna1978.org](http://www.usna1978.org)). I also ask that you update your information on the website. We use the information from the Alumni Association for any mailings or snail mail notices and as the foundation for reunion gouge. Lastly, when you send me some e-mail, please put somewhere in the subject line "78" so I can tell when mail is from you and not a spammer. This is especially for those with—um—*creative* e-mail addresses. Okay, I'm off the soapbox before I get a nose bleed. Launchin' Spot Four!

**79**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 0%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 90%

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Greetings, 79ers!

I received a note from **RDML Rob Wray** ([robert.wray.jr@gmail.com](mailto:robert.wray.jr@gmail.com)) saying that on 19 October 2007 he was promoted to his current rank at the Pentagon. Several classmates attended the ceremony, including **Jeff McFadden, Butler Newman, Ralph Quarles, Mark Shell, Rich Fitzpatrick, Jack Bruno, Pete Kurzenhauser, Chris Brehany, Ken Panos, and Dick Tobey**. Rob apologizes: he may have missed a classmate or two — it was a very busy day. Congratulations, Rob!

**Allan Kuong** ([akuong@pol.net](mailto:akuong@pol.net)) recently alerted me to a Brunswick, Maine newspaper article about our very own Antarctic explorer, **Michael Weiss**. Last fall Mike received the Antarctica Service Medal of the United States from Dr. Bruce Marsh, one of the world's leading geophysicists. In 2002-2003 Dr. Marsh led a 2-month expedition to Antarctica to study the magma system and geological structure in the McMurdo Dry