

feels the Mids left with a much better understanding of that part of the world and a heightened feel for the reality of the issues that will occupy a great deal of their military and civilian careers.

While touring, Laura had the idea to contact active duty friends and have them send messages to the Mids. One of the three, from **Joe Kernan (19th Co.)**, was particularly appropriate to the trip, and I thought it well worth including in the column:

■ "Though I likely have not had the pleasure of meeting any of your personally, I know the likes of you very well.

First, thank you for choosing to serve your country in an incredibly noble way, and, given the global security environment, you have chosen to serve the security and humanitarian needs of nations everywhere. My sense is that you all understand this, or you would not be traveling to countries such as Israel, learning to appreciate the culture and history of another nation, one intimately familiar with the cost of freedom and democracy, as they have been engaged in protecting it since long before all of you were born.

Take every opportunity to understand global perspectives, whether they appear counter to your western intuition or not. While serving in the military, you will always be a global diplomat for your nation—whether you choose to or not, you will be a reflection of everything about your parent nation—its morale, ethical, and diverse fabric.

Remember, however, we are in fact warriors first—ready to defend our beliefs and our nation, so train and prepare to perfection in the community you choose. If not engaged in war, engage the cultures and people of the world at every opportunity, your actions may be the most effective deterrent to war. After 30 years serving in a "warrior-centric" community, I would choose peace over war any day—as will all Seals if asked.

You have a legacy of courage and service to follow—in the past 2 months, I have awarded 11 Silver Stars to Academy graduates from classes 2002 to 2006—essentially your contemporaries, all cited for extraordinary courage on behalf of fellow SEALS and innocent civilians alike. Never doubt that you are all of that cloth. All the best in your futures." ■

We have always been immensely proud of our association with all....well,....MOST of you, (I really used to respect **Joe Walsh**

(9th Co.) until he told me to stop calling him!) but there are a number for whom we've always had a particularly deep and abiding respect; Joe Kernan's one of them. Okay...so's Joe Walsh!

On another note, Jerry reports on the status of USS PONCE (LPD-15). You'll recall a 3/C cruise on the good ship PONCE when several hundred seasoned 19-year-old sailors were not as appreciative of this fine fighting ship as she perhaps deserved. The PONCE is one of a multi-ship contract that Earl Industries maintains, and as of April 15th, she's in Jerry's Portsmouth yard for 3 months. Anyone looking to reacquaint themselves with this vessel of legend should feel free to call Jerry. He promises you a quick tour followed by a wire brush and safety glasses to aid your to give you the full effect! By the way, SHREVEPORT is gone, but PONCE got some major modernization done a few years ago and is slated for service through 2018. No word on either the DENVER or DULUTH!

Moving on, **Mike Trueblood (36th Co.)** checked in from Pittsburgh with a photo taken at the Navy/Georgetown lacrosse game. Pictured from left to right are: **Mike Kennedy (36th Co.)** and wife **Kathy**, **Arch McKinlay (36th Co.)**, **Mike** and **Chuck August (36th Co.)**.



At the Navy Georgetown lacrosse game

They got to watch a great game. Navy was down by 5, but stormed back in the 4th quarter to tie the Hoyas in regulation, only to lose in OT.

In other class news of note, Interdigital, Inc. announced recently **Steve Sprecher (16th Co.)** was named General Counsel and Government Affairs Officer. Rumors that in addition to his duties managing the company's legal department, Steve will be offering stock tips to classmates could not be confirmed!

On a related note, **Ron Rodgers (5th Co.)** has been appointed U.S. Pardon Attorney. Ron will be responsible for reviewing petitions for executive clemency and preparing recommendations for the President. Prior to his recent

appointment, Ron, who has served with the Department of Justice since March '99, worked in the Drug Intelligence Unit of the Criminal Division's Narcotic and Dangerous Drug Section, where he had been Director of the Unit since September 2005. Ron, any chance you could rescind some of Slick Willy's last-minute grants of clemency?

And the hits just keep on coming! Constructors & Associates named **Dan Busch (25th Co.)** president. Based in Dallas, Dan has technical, administrative, marketing and financial responsibility for all Constructors operations throughout Texas and the Southwest.

Finally, **Tom Pickles (26th Co.)** offers a corollary to the old "Take heed what you say of your seniors" adage: Be kind to your XO! Seems Tom retired from the Reserves in September, and looking for something meaningful to occupy his time, noted an item in the December *Shipmate* from Rich Rodriguez ('88), soliciting people to come work for him. He was Tom's XO ... twice ... so he took him up on the offer and is now in Dubai, UAE working for Emaar Properties (world's tallest building). His wife Karen (Toots to her friends!) will join him as soon as she sells the house in Chicago. Tom also mentions his youngest daughter, Michelle, was married in November. **Ken Graber (31st Co.)** and with Jan were able to attend and will hopefully be able to do likewise when Tom Jr. gets married this August. Tom noted this was his first entry in *Shipmate* in 30 years, and suggests the next offering from 26th Company should come from **Dan Hansen (26th Co.)**. Grode, balls in your court!

Best of luck to all four of you in your new positions! 'Til next time, here's wishing everyone a safe summer, with fair winds and following seas! And remember, keep those cards and letters coming! Magoo...out!

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

PRES: **Glen Woods**  
SEC'Y: **Vince Balderrama**  
3402 Van Wie Dr. East, Baldwinsville, NY 13027  
E: vince.balderrama@lmco.com  
WEB SITE: [usna1978.org](http://usna1978.org)

Lots to cover and not a lot of space. So here we go....Apologies to **Charlie Sotomayor** for having left him off the list of Brigade Boxing Smoker attendees. (And we even chatted...auugh!) **Vinny DiGirolamo's** cool technology has gone



# Class of 1978

## 30th Reunion

October 24-26, 2008

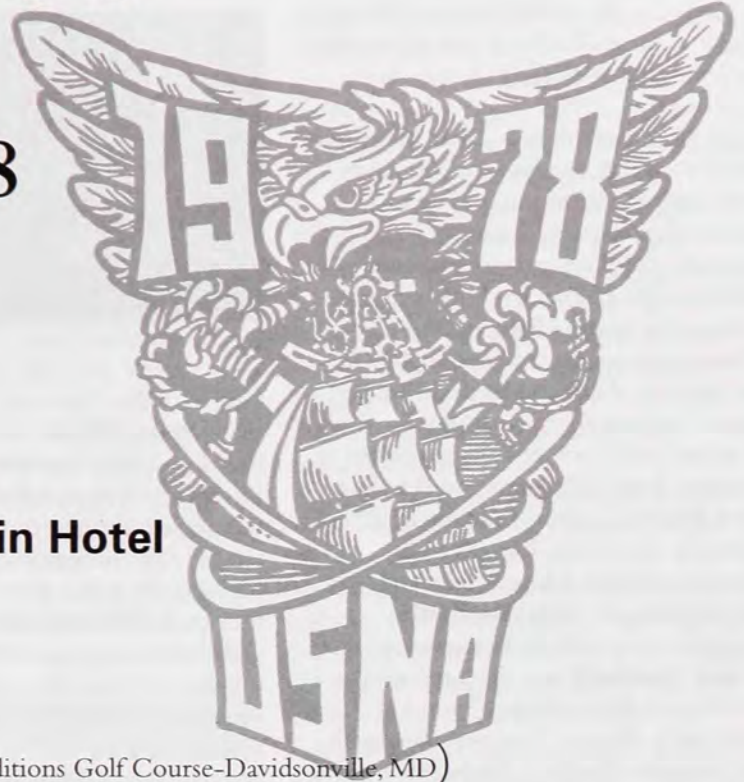
**Hotel (Reunion Headquarters):**  
**Loews, West St., Annapolis**

*Call 410-263-7777 for reservations*

– ask for the “Class of 1978”

**Overflow Hotel: Annapolis Westin Hotel**

*Call 410-972-4300 for reservations*



### Friday, Oct 24

- 0730 Golf Tournament (Renditions Golf Course–Davidsonville, MD)
- 1400 State of the Yard (Mahan Hall)
- 1500 Class Meeting & election results (Alumni Hall-tentative)
- 1600 (Tentative) Class Parade (Worden Field)
- 1730 Class Reception at the Superintendent’s House

### Saturday, Oct 25

- 0800 – Class Prayer Breakfast (Officer and Faculty Club)
- 0900 – Class Memorial Service (USNA Chapel)
- 1300 – Tailgate – until 2130 (Stadium Banquet Rm.)  
*A game ticket will be required for entrance into the stadium and the Tailgate. Contact NAAA for tickets-ask for '78 section*
- 1530 – Navy vs. SMU  
*Game ticket required. Contact NAAA for tickets.*

### Sunday, Oct 26

- Chapel Services

A link to On-Line Registration is available on our class website at: [www.usna1978.org](http://www.usna1978.org) or you can go directly to the Alumni website: [www.usna.com](http://www.usna.com). Registration requires an account on the Alumni website. If you don't already have one, go to the Alumni website and create one. It's free, but it takes 24 hours to activate.

For the latest updates on events, cost and registration and FAQs, go to the class website [www.usna1978.org](http://www.usna1978.org).

Please also update your personal profiles and information at [www.usna.com](http://www.usna.com) and [www.usna1978.org](http://www.usna1978.org).



Hollywood and the big screen. Yup it makes sense that technology used for advanced structural engineering, homeland defense, demolition, and forensics can be applied to the world of special effects. Check it out on YouTube ([www.youtube.com/tsnstudios](http://www.youtube.com/tsnstudios)). As the kids say—it's "way cool".

In March of this year **Tom Martinez** joined Red Hat, Inc an enterprise software company. With some 25 years in semiconductor sales Tom had a little anxiety about no direct crossover to enterprise software sales. But with a little help from Rebecca he saw the light. Besides, he's a '78 man and we can do anything! As I said, prior to the Red Hat deal Tom had been a "semiconductor sale guy for almost 25 years." He'd worked for such outfits as National Semi, ST Micro, and Raytheon Semi (Division sold to Fairchild in 97). Congrats on the job, Tom. Keep us apprised of what's happening in and around Raleigh! **Tom Abernethy** dropped a note and pic that reported that **Byron Marchant** was the guest speaker at this year's Black History Month Banquet in the yard. Tom was there with his Youngster daughter, **Alana Abernethy** ('10) and other '78 classmates, **Bruce Latta** and **Jim Fiorelli**. Jim was there with his son Mike (who at this writing looked like he was bound for VMI on a NROTC scholarship and an academic scholarship as an Institute Scholar).



Alana, Tom, Bruce, Mike, Byron and Jim

**Joe Martin** was at a Littoral Combat Ship meeting in Washington DC in April, 2008. Besides Joe, **Vic Guillory** and **Bruce Carter** were also in attendance. Vic is the Director, Surface Warfare Division on the OPNAV staff. Before the following pic was made, Vic had just finished regaling the attendees about the roles, missions and importance of the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) to the Navy. Bruce works Electronic Warfare for BAE Systems in New Hampshire while Joe works Command and Control with Northrop Grumman in Virginia. As Joe put it, "Good to see we haven't changed much since '78. [and] To quote Vic, 'we

haven't changed a bit since our Academy Days—lookin' good!" Something tells me we'll all be saying the same thing at our 30th reunion (as our wives roll their eyes).



Joe, Vic and Bruce

Got an update from my 11th Company mate, **Marty Drake**. He reported that all is well in Tampa and that he is having a blast as the Science Advisor in US Central Command. He gets to still get to be around folks in uniform; visit the AOR periodically; watch some of the things they pushed through the system in action; globetrot looking for technology that may support our warriors; and on occasion he even gets "to blow things up". Geez—all that fun and they still pay you?! Marty talks to **Glenn Fogg** weekly. Glen's the Deputy to the Director of the Rapid Reaction Technology Office—a "govvie" like Marty. Glen has the money. Marty has the need. As Marty puts it, "He [Glenn] makes me beg. He enjoys that aspect of his job too much. I think he does it because of pent up feelings for not being able to drive ships and being forced into Naval Aviation." [I'll let that aviator crack slide, Poodle.] Anyway, Marty says Glenn's even having a greater impact that he as Glenn discovers and funds some pretty neat new technology. His position allows him to take some risks for potential great gain. Most of his efforts are targeted at counter-terrorism, so Marty couldn't go into any details. He mentioned that when he would make trips to DC to visit old friends in my former boss' office (DDRE) he would run into **Tim Arcano** periodically. Tim had developed a 'virtual' Reserve Unit that he had Marty 'buy' into while he was the MilAdvisor to the Director, Defense Research and Engineering. Tim's idea brought a greater depth and breadth of talent to the Director and was a huge win-win for the technical community. (Not to mention some great drill points!) The last '78er Marty runs across frequently is **RADM Bill (Professor) Landay**. Bill's the Chief of Naval Research, and Marty sees him as

they both move from cocktail party to cocktail party—um—make that from conference to conference. Marty also talks to fellow 11th company mates, **Prentiss Hall** and **Rusty Cone** from time to time. Rusty's daughter, Kristen, is a LT (jg) on the cruiser PRINCETON; where she's the Disbursing Officer. PRINCETON was scheduled to conduct a Tiger Cruise from Seattle to San Diego and Kristen may have some "long lost Uncles on her Dad's side's third cousin trying to sneak aboard the family cruise (yup— Marty and Prentiss). Speaking of my 11th Company mates— while attending some company training in Bethesda I had the pleasure of being hosted by Cathy and **Barth Doroshuk** at their home in Bethesda. Barth's President and CEO of the Washington ENT Group and has been a leading advocate of the paperless medical practice. In fact, in 2005 he was among panelists discussing health care information technology in a forum with President Bush. It even got him a ride on Air Force One! As for his wife, Cathy, she's one great gal and a well respected and highly successful physician specializing in Otolaryngology—**Dr. Catherine Picken**. In April Cathy was named to *Washingtonian Magazine's* Top Doctors List in her field. They are quite the DC high power successful couple but most especially great hosts who put on a great steak meal! Thanks for the free meal and great company!



Barth and Cathy

On April 16th, **Mark Ferguson** was promoted to Vice Admiral. Fergie is now head of all Chief of Naval Personnel. On March 31st in a change of command ceremony at Naples Support Activity (NSA) Naples at Capodichino, Rear Admiral **David Mercer** relieved Michael R. Grootousen as Commander, Navy Region Europe (CNRE) and Commander, Maritime Air Naples. Besides the usual tunes played at such an event this one was different. Unique to the day's event was the singing of Happy



Birthday by guests and the Navy band vocalist, accompanied by the Navy band to Dave's son, "who was celebrating his first birthday". Okay, let's see how that places him in the "Anchor Baby" ranking. In April **Mel Williams** was nominated for reappointment to Vice Admiral and assignment as commander, Second Fleet. Mel had been the deputy commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, VA. On May 2<sup>nd</sup> **Michael Johnson** was selected as director of the Office of New Reactors, Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Before the promotion Mike was the deputy director of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES) - the agency office that plans and executes research supporting NRC programs. He'd held that post since April 2007. Mike's been with the NRC since 1986 when he joined as a reactor operations engineer. Since then it's been onward and upward. His assignments have included deputy director of the Division of Inspection Program Management, the Division of Inspection Program Management and the Division of Systems Safety and Analysis. From 2005 to 2006 he was Director of the Office of Enforcement, and before accepting the position in RES he worked as the assistant for operations in the EDO office. Besides being an illustrious member of our "UNCOLLEG" he's also a graduate of the NRC's Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program. Congrats!

On May 16th, **Glen Ives** relinquished command of NAS Patuxent River and retired from active duty. Later that month, on May 28th, **Bob Novak** was also retired from active duty. For those of you in or around Annapolis - at 3 pm on June 6th, 30 years to the date from when we were graduated and commissioned, 37 classmates will retire in a joint ceremony in Memorial Hall. They are: **Tom Abernethy, Art Athens, Tim Arcano, Greg Baur, Walt Brown, Bart Buechner, Martin Bushika, Jim Butler, Dan Cannan, Bob DeStafney, Mike "Duffy" Dyer, Rudy Escher, Marcus Fiske, Dave Guza, Richard Hiel, Marv King, Steve Koronka, Ken Law, Steve "Jock" Maloney, Rick Martinez, Art Mobley, Elmer Nelson, Charlie Pangburn, Brian Roby, Ralph Scaffiddi, Chet Seto, Mike Shinego, Carlos "Charlie" Sotomayor, Tim Stark, Marty Thamm, Maurice Tose, Aaron Watts, Dave Wilson, A.J. Wise, Lee Yarberry,**

**Lon Yeary and Bob Zalaskus.** Please join them if you are in town (and this edition gets to your home in time)

Sadly, on April 14th, **Mike McCaffrey** died at his home in Sutton, MA. Mike was surrounded by his family at the time of his passing- his bride of over 23 years, Patricia, son Ryan and daughter, Meghan. A memorial education fund has been established and contributions can be made to the McCaffrey Educational Fund, c/o Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union, 615 Main Street, Shrewsbury, MA 01545 or to the Dana Farber Marathon Challenge. Our prayers for comfort go out to Patricia, Ryan and Meghan.

Those last two bit of news are an appropriate entre to remind all of you to go to our website for the latest news on our 30th Reunion. It'll be a time to reminisce, regale in sea stories and remember fallen Shipmates.

Until next month- Launchin' Spot Four.

**79** ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 0%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 90%

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

E: Sean.Cate@1979.usna.com

SECY: **LCDR John "Wiz" Withers, USN (Ret.)**

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Greetings, 79ers!

I had a real side-splitting opening for this month's column (which would be a first), but the news is just too big to wait.

Just last month I reported that a number of our flag classmates had been selected for their second stars. Right after that issue had gone to press, we got word that one of them apparently wasn't satisfied with "just" two stars. Therefore, I have the privilege of announcing that **VADM (sel) Bob Harward** has been nominated for appointment to the grade of vice admiral and assignment as deputy commander, US Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, VA. Bob is currently serving as deputy commanding general for operations, Joint Special Operations Command, US Special Operations Command, Ft. Bragg, NC. Congratulations to the first three-star in our class!

Congratulations are also in order for **Dan "Traps" Cloyd**, 4th Co., for receipt of his first star. Dan becomes our 25th USN Flag Officer, and is currently serving as special assistant to the commander, Naval Air Forces, US Atlantic Fleet,

Norfolk, VA. To offer your own congratulations, Dan can be reached at: [dan.cloyd@navy.mil](mailto:dan.cloyd@navy.mil).

Also on the same one-star list is **Peg Klein '81**, wife of our own **Frank Klein**, who becomes the first (and probably only?) spouse of a 79er to achieve Flag rank. She has been doing a great job as USNA Commandant of Midshipmen and we wish the Kleins all the best in the future.

In other Flag news, **RADM John Miller** will soon be taking the reins as commander, Carrier Strike Group Eleven, San Diego, CA. CSG11 is the NIMITZ Strike Group. John is currently serving as deputy director, Plans and Policy, J5B, US Central Command, MacDill Air Force Base, FL. Good luck, John, in your new command!

Also on the move is **RDML Scott Van Buskirk**, who is being assigned as assistant deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information, Plans, and Strategy, N3/N5B, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, DC. Scott has been serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Nine, Everett, WA. Congratulations, Scott, on another successful command tour. Best of luck in your new position!

Is that an impressive list or what? However, as TV-pitch-man Billy Mays always shouts, "But wait! There's more!"

The White House issued a press release recently announcing that President Bush intends to nominate **Sean Stackley** to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition. Sean currently serves as a Professional Staff Member on the Senate Armed Services Committee. Prior to this, he served as Program Manager of the LPD 17 Class Program, and earlier served as the Production Manager for the AEGIS Destroyer Program. As was pointed out when the emails about this were circulating, this is a big deal. Many of us down here at Pax River have had to brief the ASD (RDA) on our projects, and more often than not, the future of those projects directly depended on the caliber of those briefs. Congratulations, Sean, on this significant accomplishment! We're proud to entrust our future weapons programs to your care.

Shifting over to the private sector support for the Department of Defense, *PrimeNewsWire* recently reported that Northrop Grumman Corporation has appointed **Eric Womble** as sector vice president of the Advanced Capabilities