

and the entire reunion Committee. We are blessed to have such dedicated Classmates and Spouses that cover all of the bases to have a GRAND REUNION. Thanks for all you do as well! ■

Here's an input from **Dave Fleischman**:

■ I had a busy 5 days in mid-August and would like to share some pictures with Shipmate. I realize that you have lots of material that needs to go in the vast column so my feelings won't be hurt if you can't use my material!

On Sat 13 Aug, my son David graduated from the Platoon Leaders Class Seniors at Quantico. He is now a "Marine Officer awaiting commissioning" - that will happen when he graduates from California Maritime Academy.

Four days later I climbed Mt Whitney, at 14505 ft., the highest point in the continental United States. And then the next day, as a member of the San Diego Chargers' chain crew, I met Chargers rookie running back **Chris Swain '16**. He is an awesome young man!

I still teach high school physics here in San Diego for at least this school year. ■

**Jim "Doc" Doherty** had a chance airport encounter with **Jim Stavridis**:

■ Last Wednesday, September 28th, I was weaving my way through Boston's Logan Airport, on my way to Denver for the Navy - Air Force game, when I spotted a familiar face at one of the ticket kiosks. It took me a few seconds but when my brain, searching for a clue as to how I know this guy, removed from his hand his carry-on luggage and replaced it with a squash racket, it became instantly clear to me who he was—it was our old classmate, Jim Stavridis! I shouted out "Jim" and, his brain searching for a clue, too, probably replacing my penny loafers with some running shoes, he shouted back, "Doc"! It had been forty years since we'd seen each other. We quickly discerned that we were on the same flight to Denver and, given the typical frantic rush through security and subsequent madness of the boarding process, we agreed to meet in Denver and catch up there. That plan worked and we spent the better part of an hour sitting at an airport bar mostly doing a lot of laughing and backslapping! Ten minutes into our little get-together, we were joined by my friend, Chris Staszak (the other guy in the picture) who was flying up from Dallas and with whom I had pre-arranged to meet at the Denver airport. Chris was commissioned out of

Boston University and did a Division Officer tour with **Jerry Willett** on the USS Glover. Jerry, who we would meet up with later, Chris and I were heading to the game in Colorado Springs together. Anyway, Jim, Chris and I jabbered away telling our stories and sharing with each other what we've been doing for the past forty years. A lot of what Jim's been up to, as we know, is in the public domain, but, I have to say it was fascinating hearing the nuances surrounding some of his adventures and achievements. For instance, it's not every day that one of us is vetted to be a Vice Presidential running mate by a candidate running for the office of President of the United States. Hmm... Jim's come a long way. I can report that Jim is healthy, happy, handsome as ever in an Errol Flynn-sort-of-way, and very busy! As we were saying our farewells, I went out on a limb and told Jim that we, the Class of '76, were proud of him, are always behind him, and I urged him to keep up the good fight. It was, truly, great to see him. ■



Chris Staszak, Jim Stavridis, and Doc Doherty meet at Denver Int'l Airport

I have to end this column with somber news of another Classmate's passing. **Glen Davis** (20th Co.) passed away in early September. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Glen - may he rest in peace.

**77** ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 2%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 73%

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**78** ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 1%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 79%

PRES: **Glen Woods**  
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Mea Culpa! Sorry for the blank column space in the last edition- NO EXCUSE, SIRSI!

That being said- here's the latest (or what is now very belated) news.

In some *very* stale news from **John Huesman** (27th Co) (thanks for refreshing my memory, John) about this time last year he was telling me about a very special Navy Cheerleader. This young lady had been leading the St. Louis Chapter Alumni in cheers at the local Navy vs Notre Dame game watch. Her name was Alice. My bet is she is probably doing the same this year since Alice is John's granddaughter (the daughter of his oldest daughter, Heidi). John noted that they refer to Heidi as their "Navy Baby," as she was born in Balboa Naval Hospital. Granddaughter Alice is now a certified Navy fan! John also provided a pic of him and **Jim Lippard** (14th Co) at last year's Memphis game. John, **Rick Roustio** (19th Co), and their wives had driven down from St. Louis and were vectored by **Doug Meyer** to the 14th Co tailgate.



About now 1st Company will have had their 12th Annual Fallfest in Sandbridge, VA. Earlier this year - in winter - they held a "Winterfest". It was "Fun One's" Fifth event and held in February at

Donna and **Bruce Carter's** home in Nashua, NH! It was the largest attendance yet as they had 9 total classmates there at various times: **Bruce Carter, Ken Heffernan, Doug Grau, Jack McCourt, Bill McAlpine, Warren Krull, Bill Landay, Peter Bannon,** and **Bob Schwaneke.** Bruce and Donna were the ultimate host and hostess! Her dinner menus included prime rib, lobster, scallops in pasta sauce, and spaghetti which it was reported were all cooked to perfection! (I am impressed by the seafood in New Hampshire in wintertime!) Bruce's specialty was breakfast with the coffee flowed freely in the mornings. Among Fun One's activities were an aggressive afternoon aggressive 3-4 mile hike in the woods; visiting a ski lodge (a late arrival precluded actual skiing) and Saturday- for those who could make it - 2-3 miles of cross-country skiing - not to mention visiting a couple of local pubs.



'78: Marilyn and Tom Grodek with their grandkids



Toward the end of summer **Tom Dudley** (12th Co) dropped a line to say he was looking forward to the fall. Still the runner, he was planning on running a few fall road races so it will be tough for him to get to games this year. Tom has usually run into classmates at airports but passed on a random encounter that occurred during a three-day hike in the White Mountains. The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) runs a hut system in NH for Appalachian Trail thru-hikers or casual hikers like Tom. Basically you get dinner, breakfast and a bunk. In a conversation during dinner with a thru-hiker next to me, Tom asked the hiker what is trail

name. He passed along that his trail name was "Snake," the same as his call sign as an S-3 pilot. Well it turns out that Snake was classmate, **Don Aiken** (3rd Co). Tom said Don is in great shape now and it is amazing that he is able to tackle the *entire* Appalachian Trail (AT) with 60-year old knees. After 27 years in the Navy, Don just retired from his second career at NOAA. Don's been hiking since March. By now he has already completed the trail and is back in Florida. As for Tom, he's in his ninth year at Boston University. He runs a business incubator with a focus on corporate sponsored research and manages some of the larger research projects in photonics. He's not sure how much longer he'll stick around. Regardless, he confesses it will be his last job. He admits that while we may knock Millennials quite a bit, the kids doing research at BU are certainly a lot smarter than he is. Tom admits he sure is glad he's not competing to get into USNA or any college right now. I hear you Tom!



Hikers Don Aiken and Tom Dudley

Marilyn and **Tom Grodek** (6th Co) appreciated all the condolences and prayers they received upon the passing of their daughter Maureen, or Moey. Moey was their "special child" with profound intellectual disabilities. As Tom wrote:

■ "She lived at home with us all of her 35 years, and taught us God's love as we cared for her. We still grieve our loss, but life brings much joy too, of course. Here is a photo of Marilyn and me with all 10 of our beautiful grandchildren on my 60th birthday. (I don't know if 10 is a competitive number among my classmates, but I ain't bragging or anything...) Six belong to Moey's older sister Bridget and her husband Jim, and two each to younger brothers Tom and Steve and their wives Diane and Christine, respectively. (Note: Steve was a Marine infantry officer for seven years - funny to pick on Marines all your life and then become a Marine family. You gotta love Marines.) Finally, after five years in formation, if the Lord is willing I will be ordained a Permanent Deacon in the Catholic Church this coming January 2017. In all things and in all ways, God is good. Peace and Blessings to all in '78. Tom" ■

Best to you and all the Grodeks, Reverend Tom.

**Bravo Zulus:**

A BZ goes to **Bart Buechner** (11th Co) on the publishing of his book *Veteran and Family Reintegration: Identity, Healing and Reconciliation*. The book exposes the

often “unseen injuries” suffered by veterans and their families, including the concept of moral injury, the stress of family integration, and the loss of one’s identity as a result of physical trauma. It is based on seven groundbreaking doctoral studies conducted by Bart and six of his fellow Fielding Graduate University classmates using a broad cross-section of American veterans, their spouses and their family members.

BZ to **Chris Nichols** (15th Co) on his job as a counselor at the University of Mary Washington’s student mental health center, the Talley Center for Counseling Services in Fredericksburg, VA. That is where Chris had done his



Chris Nichols  
Graduation Day

counseling internship counseling 18 to 22-year-old college students. In many ways it was kind of like being in the Navy and around our young sailors. Chris had graduated 16 July from Walden University with an MS degree in Marriage, Family, and Couples Counseling. Leslie, Chris and the kids moved to Fredericksburg, VA from Annapolis last year. They love it.

Bravo Zulu also to **John Semcken** (2nd Co) for receiving the *Good Character Award* from the Boys Scouts of America, Greater Los Angeles Area Council at their annual gala in downtown Los Angeles on October 12th at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel, downtown Los Angeles. Best wishes to **John Klose** (16th Co) and Angela Kuznetsova (Анжела Кузнецова) on their engagement in September.

We remember **Bart Buechner’s** and my Plebe summer roommate **Ed Bohne** (11th Co) who passed away on June 16th in Florissant, MO. After Ed left the Academy he went on to earn his law degree from Washington University in St. Louis. He retired from the Army reserves as a Major. He was a tanker in the Army and a member of the U.S. Armor Association Honorable Order of St. George, the U.S. Army Brotherhood of Tankers and the Single Action Shooting Society. Please remember Ed’s family in your prayers- his wife of almost 38 years, Christine, and their two daughters Amanda, and Rebecca and her husband and their daughter Margaret. Memorials to Ed were asked to be made to his VFW

Post (#1308) or K9s for Warriors. I’ll always remember my roomie who spoke of wanting to be a Marine and sweated along with us all in that hot, humid Plebe summer of ’74.

Speaking of Marines (and as Tom Grodek earlier wrote, “ya gotta love Marines”!), - Happy Birthday to all my fellow Devil Dogs who have proudly worn the eagle, globe and anchor, stood watch around the world, defended our freedoms and those of others, and remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. As Ronald Reagan said, “Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But, the *Marines* don’t have that problem.” Semper Fidelis.

Since this is a double issue, I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. For me- 2016 was a rough year for which I am grateful to be through. Here’s hoping 2017 is a better – not just for me, but all of you and for our nation.

#### Launchin’ Spot Four.

**79** ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 0%  
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 91%

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Greetings, 79ers!

Fall is on the run, the holidays are rapidly approaching, and classmates are checking in from all over.

**Kirk Michealson** attended the Service Academy Career Conference (SACC) in San Diego last summer as a volunteer/recruiter, and while there he ran into several ’79ers:

■ This past San Diego SACC was good for me personally as I had the opportunity to get together with four classmates: two I knew previously and two I met for the first time. As I was flying to San Diego, I saw a Facebook post from **Bill Meader** that he was back in the states in his home town of San Diego. I hadn’t seen Bill since the last USNA/USMA/USAFA ’79er golf tournament in northern Virginia that I participated in the late 2000’s. He took me out and we had some great Mexican food in Old Town. It was a great time catching up!

After the candidate seminars on Thursday, the San Diego Alumni Chapter hosted a social at the sports bar in the hotel. I had the opportunity to connect with **John Rendine**. John and I hadn’t seen each other since boat school. He had just retired from SAIC and was attending the seminars to see “what if” he is wanting to work more. Again, it was great catching up!

Then on Friday during the job fair I had the chance to meet two classmates for the first time. **Emilio Abordo** was there with his company, first time attending General Atomics. Then Friday afternoon I met **Joseph Padula**, who was attending as a candidate. ■

Thanks Kirk – for the update, and for all you do at the SACCs to help all the alumni.

The Government Contracting News Wire reported that **Bill Toti**, former president of the global defense segment at Cubic Corp., has gone back with a previous employer. Bill re-joined HP, this time as vice president for defense and homeland security for Hewlett Packard Enterprise. He will oversee HPE’s work with the departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice and State.

As I reported in an earlier column, Bill was inducted into Executive Mosaic’s Wash100 for 2016. He previously served as VP and Navy-Marine Corps account executive at Hewlett-Packard’s enterprise services division for three years before he moved to Cubic in June 2014 as corporate vice president and head of mission support services. Prior to HP, Bill worked in VP roles at Raytheon for six years. Congrats, Bill!

In the “There’s a First Time for Everything” Department, my former roommate **Jeff Niner** broke his 37-year vow of silence and submitted his very first contribution to this column:



At the Wichita christening (l-r): Jeff Niner, VADM Joe Mulloy, The Hon. Sean Stackley (Photo credit: Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI))