

# '79

**Life Membership: 91%**  
**Donor Participation: 17.64%**

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Facebook Group: **USNA Class of 1979**

Website: [www.usna79.com](http://www.usna79.com)

Greetings, 79ers!

Happy 2017! By now you're all rested from your holiday break and ready to face the Dark Ages head-on! So, let's get straight to the bold print.

Valerie Gerheiser coordinated a 79er visit to New Orleans and the French Quarter for the Navy-Tulane game on 17 September. The group included Janet & **Sean Cate**, MaryEllen & **Mike Doyle**, Valerie & **Fred Gerheiser**, Tami & **Craig Grabrowsky**, Debbie & **Nat Green**, B-J & **Bill Jones**, Kathy & **Tom McLernon**, Sherrill & **Kirk Michealson**, and Leanore & **Pete Parsons**. Thursday night before the game, several of the group visited Pat O'Brien's for Hurricanes. Friday night Valerie coordinated a group dinner at Nola Restaurant, one of Emeril Lagasse's. After dinner, everyone went back down to Bourbon Street for hand grenades, horny gators, chocolate martinis, and wine.

**Tom Strader** joined the group Saturday afternoon at the Navy tailgate for some jambalaya and crawfish pie. They also ran into **Mike Finley** - wearing Tulane colors (his kid goes to Tulane, so he's forgiven). The Superintendent made some remarks during the tailgate. Afterwards Tom approached the Supe - he was one of Tom's plebes when we were second class. Tom asked if he remembered him, and the Supe said yes - "You were easy." Tom vehemently disagreed! (Note: Tom McLernon posted many photos of these events on Facebook - unfortunately the low resolution precluded publication here.)

A few months back I reported that Kate and **Ralph Quarles** had

25 years ago. She chose to use her teaching degree to homeschool all five of her children. In lieu of flowers, the family requested memorials be made in Debbie's name to Greenwood Presbyterian Church, 1414 Calhoun Rd, Greenwood, SC 29649.

In December, **John** lost his mother to Alzheimer's. We ask that you remember them in your prayers and all others for whom 2016 was a year of saying goodbye to someone they loved.

Had just one e-mail and it was from **Ed Henkler**. He had the pleasure of connecting with Cassie and **Don Hamblen** at the beginning of November as they contemplated next places to live. They squeezed in some play time on the lake in between their house hunting trips. Although it appears their eventual destination will be a bit further south, Ed and the Hamblens had fun sharing sea stories and might have even have found an opportunity to work together at COSY (cosyrobo.com). They didn't have time to squeeze in any golf but checked most of the other "boxes". As Ed said the Hamblen Hacienda is open for visitors.



Visiting the Hamblen Hacienda

I'll go back through a bunch of in-boxes to see if I missed anything. If I did, I will use it to tee up the next column. Apologies for the delay if I missed something- but I KNOW you'll tell me if I did! Until then-Launchin' Spot Four with hope for a much better year in 2017.

## MERCHANDISE

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Melinda & Joe With Grandsons



Kelly & Latonick

So in closing, congratulations to Tug on his daughter's marriage, Melinda and Joe on the birth of their twin grandsons and Messrs. Feeney, Kelly and Latonick on their laudable links prowess!

—Magoo

# '78

**Life Membership: 79%**  
**Donor Participation: 26.32%**

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Did someone blink? I could have sworn that 2016 was just here. In retrospect I suppose it's a good thing that it went so quickly. A lot of people reported it was a rough year- especially with the loss of family and loved one. Our condolences and prayers for consolation go out to **Andy Funke** and **John Rudder**. On Nov 16th, Andy lost his bride of 37 years, Deborah [Debbie]. She passed peacefully in Andy's arms at their home in Abbeville, SC, with all their five children at her side (Kara, Jenna, Laura, Luke and Mark). An Annapolis native, Debbie and Andy met during Youngster year and married in 1979. They met, fittingly, in church and since then their faith has always been a centerpiece of their relationship and at the heart of their family. It is their strong faith that sustained them through her illness and continues to minister them in her loss. Debbie was a gracious Navy wife, moving five times in five years before Andy entered medical school. They settled down in Abbeville



Melinda & Twins

Last but not least, '77 was well-represented in the recent Navy Homecoming golf tournament, as the fearsome foursome of **Chris Feeney (11th Co.)**, **Jim Kelly (11th Co.)**, former 32nd Company officer /Class of '69 **Eric Utegaard** and **Leo Latonick (26th Co.)** (featured below with Navy golf coach Pat Owen) took 1st place in the Thursday scramble...



Winning '77 Team

...while Leo and Jim upheld '77's tradition for excellence by placing 1st and 2nd place respectively in the low-net division of the championship flight:

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