

77/78 CLASS NEWS

outweighs you by some 40 lbs., and he sh*t's the likes of you after a light breakfast".

Were we ever to be in a fracas, there's no one other than Killer...or our younger brother Jeff...we'd rather have our back.

Magoo

'78

Life Membership: 81%

Donor Participation: 4.95%

Pres: **Glen Woods**

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**

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As this goes to the *Shipmate* editors our nation is undergoing the effects of the COVID-19 virus – among the disruptive effects we are experiencing are social distancing and working remotely (if working at all). We who were accustomed to months of family separations, limited rations and “distanced working” in the vastness of the ocean (above or beneath) and who operated in remote and harsh climates on this earth, are well-qualified to cope. You survivors of the Russian Flu, West Pac, Southeast Asia and Middle East deployments (and you “few” Black N out-of-borders who may have visited The Block in the old days) probably have enough built up anti-bodies to scare any “bug” away. Humor aside, the virus has greatly impacted our nation and our alma mater. Only time will tell how many will get the disease and how many will mortally succumb to it. Only time will tell if the death toll is more than the tens of thousands who annually die of regular flu or if our changed behaviors and drastic measures mitigated even greater loss. Regardless, the effects will be lasting in our national psyche. As for Mother B and the Yard – they are empty. Even the squirrels seem to be socially distancing. As for the Midshipmen, they are distance-learning from their homes; especially those who will soon be expected to lead our sailors and Marines – the members of the Class 2020. Where many of

us retain fond memories of our *last* semester and - in particular- graduation day and the invigoration of three cheers and tossing of our caps, *they* won't. Their final sports competitions, class sessions, capstones, croquet matches, recitals and bar chats have been canceled. They also didn't get to have those late-night bull sessions with roommates and classmates where we all talked one last time about our hopes, perhaps our upcoming post-graduation weddings and what we “would do when we got to the fleet”. Since you don't get this magazine until June, I *hope* I was wrong. I hope they got the chance to return to Mother B *one last time* and have their graduation under the sun at Navy-Marine Corps Stadium. I hope they got to have that one special memory and then hit the fleet *very hard* and will try to show all us old salts that they are just as capable to do their missions as we were. I believe they will try harder than any other class in our history to prove themselves worthy of their ring, their “butter bars” and single-striped shoulder boards and capable of leading. I wish them well.

This month's edition will be another one of “stray rounds and alibis”. Here we go.

At the end of last year, **Mike Shumaker** (13th Co) and his history teacher son, Michael, visited the Naval Academy Museum's exhibit *Philo McGiffin: A Man of Wit and Dash*. Mike said it was prompted by an April 2019 *Shipmate* article. (I am sure the editors will love knowing you guys read the articles too! The team does a great job on them.) Mike said they really enjoyed the museum and found especially interesting the exhibit on Philo's exploits commanding a Chinese Navy ironclad against the Japanese at the Battle of the Yalu River. Mike learned of some of Philo's pranks that were unknown to him and saw his Chinese Navy dress blouse whose stripes were coiled imperial dragons. All the things against which Philo chafed at USNA, he imposed on his students at the Chinese Naval Academy. (Hmmm,



'78 Cruisin' In Style



'78 Wives Cruisin' in Style

some things didn't change from then.) Mike was saddened to learn that today's Mids don't learn about Philo. Me too, Mike. (By the way, I suggest you read *The Return of Philo T. McGiffin* by **David Poyer** ('71). It's about the exploits of a Plebe in the early 80's burdened with Philo's moniker. It's pretty good.) As Michael and his son left the museum, they saw the conclusion of the Chapel wedding Vice President Pence's daughter, Charlotte, to LT **Henry Bond** ('15). Cool! (Sorry the delay in queue of your note, Mike. Mea culpa, mea culpa.)

A few months ago, **Rusty Cone** (11th Co) caught up with company-mate **Phil Winters** at Bourbon's out

at Levi Stadium (where the 49ers play). This trip out, they missed **Ray Luevano** (6th Co) -who was Sick in Room (SIR) at the time and **Prentiss Hall** (11th Co) (who had a work conflict). He and Phil were to next rendezvous next month [May] in Dallas for the Jimmy Buffet concert. Joining them would be another 11th Company-mate, **Matt Elias** and **Andy Cuca** (17th Co). **Dave Buss** (34th Co) and **John Semcken** (2nd Co) met for dinner in Beverly Hills when Dave is now the CEO of OpenDrives, LLC. It's an early growth stage Los Angeles-based tech company that delivers state-of-the-art Network Attached Storage software solutions for large

digital video file workflows. For going on 24 years, John has been the Senior VP and is now active Senior Development Partner with Majestic Realty Company. (He developed the Staples Center and is the co-owner and senior development partner the Pacific Palms Conference Resort in the City of Industry, CA. He's got a great golf course there should you ever get out that way with your "sticks".



Dave Buss and John Semcken

A few of you were able to make the Class Cruise that **Bill Burke** (31st Co) was able to arrange. The cruise originated from Fr. Lauderdale and made ports-of-call to Half Moon Cay Bahamas, Ocho Rios Jamaica, Georgetown Caymans, and Cozumel Mexico. From photos you can find on our class website, it appears a "good time was had by all". Fortunately, the return to CONUS was *just* before things got "dicey" with COVID-19 and they were able to dock and make it home. (At least, I heard no reports otherwise.). Here's who reportedly made the trip. Oh- I apologize in advance for anyone whom I may have left out or whose wife's name is incorrect. The final source was the USNA Directory. If your spouse's name is in error, apologies, and go fix it in your record. Here's who made the "Love Boat": Marla and **Al Baker** (10th Co), Thelma and **George Billy** (11th Co), Mary and **Bill Burke** (31st Co), Carole and **Jim Butler** (23rd Co), Pam and **Bill Dunkin** (3rd Co), Kim and **Jeff Ewin** (29th Co), Jan and **Jim Fiorelli** (2nd Co), Tamre and **Pete Flynn** (5th Co),

Karen and **Lee Gard** (27th Co), Sherry and **Bill Hession** (32nd Co), Carole and **Will Kramer** (2nd Co), Judy and **Tom McLeod** (2nd Co), Pat and **Tim Murphy** (32nd Co), Leslie and **Lloyd Prince** (7th Co), Kathryn and **Doug Ray** (2nd Co), Lynn and **Dana Sales** (27th), Stephanie and **Bill Soer** (32nd Co), Maria and **Doug Swartz** (21st Co), Diane and **John Weidner** (33rd Co), Cathy and **Chuck Wendt** (14th Co), Patti and **Glen Woods** (13th Co), and Jennifer and **Mike Yurina** (5th Co). Whew, I *think* that's it. Now you can match the faces.

In March, **Mark Lindstrom** (35th Co) had breakfast with **Eddie Reid** (21st Co) in Honolulu. Mark wrote that Ed was "good enough to fly over to Hawaii and check on his classmates who are stuck in the middle of the Pacific". He added that they have plenty of canned spam and surf wax but no TP or hand sanitizer. **Al Baker** (10th Co) and **Michael Sears** (36th Co) reported in an end of February siting of **Art Athens** (18th Co) back in the halls of old "domain", The Stockdale Center. Never one to miss out on a photo of a rare occasion, they snapped a pic of the former '78 brain trust of Stockdale: **John Wissler** (21st Co), Art, Al and Michael.



Aloha, Mark and Eddie



The Stockdale Gang

In March, **Jim Bland** (19th Co) wrote that some may have noted his absence or lack of posting in Facebook. He went in for major surgery near the end of February and finally escaped the hospital about mid-March. He had a "Kind of a rocky path" but added that "everything is fine and where it should be..." He had some follow-ups and doctor's appointments but is in great shape and should once again return to frequent postings. By the time this comes to print I am sure you are back to 100%, back to sailing, lifting and painting, Jim.

Well, that does it for now. I hope as this edition hits your doorsteps that you and all your families have remained safe and well; and that we as a nation have started to get back to some semblance of normalcy. I hope too, that like many of you and your family members and friends, that I am back to work. Who knows? With any luck I may be back at the Naval Academy Foundation, where I put in an application. Perhaps it will be elsewhere. Regardless, we most likely have proved again that we classmates and Shipmates should be able to count on one-another in times of need.

Launchin' Spot Four

'79

Life Membership: 91%

Donor Participation: 3.09%

Pres: **CAPT Dave Jackson, USN (Ret.)**
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Facebook Group: **USNA Class of 1979**

Website: www.usna79.com

Greetings, 79ers!

First, I'd like to apologize for missing the last issue - it was a logistics issue on my end. I promised several of you that your inputs would be published then, and I want to assure everyone that I will get all your submissions printed, but perhaps a wee bit later than originally planned.

Secondly, as I write this, we are a mere two weeks into dealing with the life changes brought on by our country's response to the health situation. I know each of you has been impacted, some more deeply than others. As rapidly as things are changing, any comments I have now would be superfluous and OBE by the time this issue is in your hands. I do know we will get through this, and I believe that we will be stronger because of it - because that's how the USA rolls.

So on with the bold print: I received a great photo from **Phil McConkey**. Phil is the president of Academy Securities, a post-9/11 disabled veteran owned investment bank with 9+ offices nationwide. Phil was visiting his New York City office with **Paul Hatch, VADM (Ret.) Bob Harward** and **LtGen (Ret.) Bob Walsh**. Both Bobs are on the firm's advisory board. Thanks, Phil, for the photo!



Paul Hatch, Phil McConkey, Bob Harward and Bob Walsh in NYC.

Avid cyclist **Mark Shell** checked in from Gaithersburg, MD with an update on his annual Ride Allegheny event:

✉ Ride Allegheny '19 is now in the history books. I have been riding this 310-mile bicycle trail trek from Pittsburgh, PA to Gaithersburg, MD and raising money for Operation Second Chance since 2007. My last ride (for a while) was a family event with sons **CDR (sel) Jason Shell '05** and Justin; Therese Shell, my "much better half" driving her pickup truck on the ride support crew; and me.

We completed the ride 3-6 Oct 2019 and raised a lot of money. I am looking into looking into a stand up paddle (SUP) board event as a fund raiser this coming June.

A number of grads have joined us in the ride over the years, take a