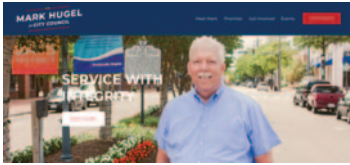


77/78 CLASS NEWS

Portsmouth, VA city council. You learn more about Mark's campaign at MarkHugel.com.



Mark Hugel

Magoo

'78

Life Membership: 81%
Donor Participation: 8.86%

Pres: **Glen Woods**

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**

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This October issue-submission is being written at the end of July (We run about five weeks in advance of the publication date.). The way things have been going in this crazy 2020 I won't even *begin* to guess what we'll be doing as this reaches your households. Watching

Navy football; back to work and socializing; sending our kids off to school; walking around not looking like a member of a surgical team or germaphobe? Who the heck knows?! If I were prescient, I *never* would have selected my *first* major as Aero and sucked it up and bought that house on Maryland Avenue as a Lieutenant! **WHAT-EVER** is happening, I hope one that at the very least you and your families are safe and healthy. In the last few weeks, we have already seen our first reported COVID related class death, **Kevin Carmody** (15th Co.) and the loss of another spouse, **Kathy Lynch** (Kevin "Grinch" Lynch

26th Co), I'll not repeat what we wrote about them in what we sent to the class in personal e-mails. Suffice it to say, they are greatly missed. Their legacy is in their family, the lives they touched and in each one of us who knew them. I urge you go to our class website and reread about their lives and wishes for remembrance. You'll find it on the second page of the "Class News" tab. I also encourage you to do as Kathy had asked and "perform a 'Selfless Act of Kindness'". That is something especially needed in these trying times.

Speaking of the Class website, a new feature is a "**Class Authors**" page. It has been added under the "**Classmates**" section, just below the "**Professional Writings**" page. If you have authored or co-authored an op-ed – and you let us know about it – you'll find yourself and a link to your article on the **Professional Writings** page. If you have authored or co-authored a book, you'll appear on the new **Class Authors** page. If you are the subject of a news story, that'll likely be included in the **Class News** section which links it to your profile page. The key to all of it is – **if we know about it!** So, drop me or our webmaster, **Matt Elias** (11th Co), a line about your writings or news and we will post them. Look at the pages. You'll be amazed at the number and variety of writings classmates have done.

I often have a lot of you asking for contact information for someone. I am not sure if I want to pass the gouge on finding someone as your request is often the only time, I hear from some of you. But, alas, I have a responsibility to keep you aware, so here goes: To try and find a classmate's contact info, go to our class website and the "Class Directory" tab. There you can look up their info (if they updated their profile). There is also a directory on the Alumni Association's website (www.usna.com). First, log into your USNA Account. (You can email onlinecommunity@usna.com if you need to confirm your login information. **DO NOT CREATE A NEW REGISTRATION.**) Once in, go

to the "Find & Connect" tab and scroll down to the "Alumni Directory" tab. Accept the terms of the users agreement to get to the search page. There you can search for almost any alumnus/alumna (provided they are a member of the Alumni Association, have allowed their information to be public or viewable and have their profile current.) You'll notice that the common denominator between the two sites is that a profile has got to be updated. In the case of the Alumni Association's site, you also need to be a member. Currently 81% of the Class are Life Members which means about 19% of you are either annual members or non-members. (Some have been paying annual membership since we graduated!). I'll step down from the soap box before I get a nosebleed, but not before I encourage you to go to both sites; update your profiles and add some news to our Class site. Lastly, I'll ask the 19% to become a lifetime member of the Alumni Association – or an annual member if you aren't already. Okay, I am getting light-headed, so I am jumping off the box.

I'll be glad when the lockdowns are over so you guys can finally write about some things you are doing, places to where you are going and friends you have visited. The mailbox is a little lean. That said, you know it's either a REAL slow news day or just another indication of the quality of investigative journalism of the *New York Times* when they write about **Harry Harris** (15th Co) [oops, *Ambassador* Harry Harris] shaving of his moustache. Seriously, it seems the hair on his upper lip has been an issue of international concern. According to the *Times*, some in South Korea reportedly viewed it "as a distasteful reminder of those worn by the colonial Japanese governors who ruled Korea from 1910 to 1945..." They added that Harry would remind people he is the "*American* ambassador to South Korea" not the "*Japanese-American* Ambassador". [That's a great perspective we should emulate, Harry!]. Moreover, he has always said his mustache "reflected his new life as a diplomat

after a four-decade career in the Navy that required him to be clean-shaven at most times." That makes sense to me and I know you guys get it. Remember how the first thing many of us did after graduation was to grow a 'stache since we couldn't have one as Mids? Well, here is a before and after. It was a good 'stache.



Harry, before and after

Janet and **Fred Butterfield** (22nd Co) had a delightful dinner at their Chesapeake, VA home with Holly and **Mark Honeck** (26th Co.) and the Honeck's lovely daughter, McKenna. Fred mentioned they rarely get to see these great friends (since the Honecks live just outside of Orlando, FL).



Mark, Holly and McKenna Honeck

Bravo Zulu to my good friend, **John Semcken** (2nd Co) for remembering our men and women in blue. John went online to find out what in what Los Angeles police precinct he lived. He e-mailed the Captain and told him he wanted to buy lunch for his officers. The Captain loved the idea and assigned Sgt. Ventura to work with John to make it happen. John had Chick-fil-A catering make 60 box lunches (40 regular and 20 spicy) along with fries and cookie. John said all he "had to do was pay and deliver!" Of course, the *first* thing he had to do was to *remember* those officers and give them a "pick-me-up", not just food.

Bill Martin (36th Co) says he plans on retiring down to Lake Toho

STAY CONNECTED

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usna.com/FindAChapter



'78: John delivering Chick-fil-A



Captain Dave Balestrieri

in Kissimmee late next year. He says that he wants to be near his son and daughter-in-law in his "golden years". Speaking of retiring, congrats

to **Dave Balestrieri** (4th Co) on his retirement as a Captain with American Airlines.

Paula Jensen (Herb Jensen 17th Co) dropped me a nice note. Her daughter, Kirsten got married on November 9th and was "a beautiful bride". Son, Bryan, gave her away. [But I am sure Herb's presence was felt. Paula added that "Bryan is getting married on January 16th or sooner (with COVID19 they are just going to get married and not have a big wedding)." She hopes to make the next Reunion but added the condition, "As my mom would have said 'God willing, and the creek don't rise'." Paula had made a trip from Georgia to Maryland for a wedding shower for Bryan and his fiancée, Mariah. While here, she spent a week in Sunderland with cousins. She admits to sometimes missing living in the area- then remembers the snow which quickly

changed her regret. Ha, ha. Nice to hear from you, Paula. See you at our 45th!

Scott Pihlaja (31st Co) was one of those who came up on the scope when he asked for Grinch's contact info. He came back with a little update. Scott and Mary Jo are what I thought was a rarity among long-time married couples but instead have found more common among USNA grads. They were high school sweethearts. In fact, Scott thought he asked Mary Jo to marry him when they were *JUNIORS* in high school. At the time he rationalized that with an appointment to USNA (for which he hoped- or *anywhere* "that would take [him], if any", that "would mean another 5 1/2 years before [they] could actually get married." Well they BOTH survived the Academy and were married. Scott retired from the Robert Bosch Tool Corporation in December 2019. They relocated to the Knoxville, TN area at that time in search of mild/no winters and affordable cost of living, among other things. They have adult children in Birmingham, England, Lubbock, TX, and southern MN with the current grandchild count at nine and one more on the way. Like a lot of us at this stage in our life, they are busy

getting their healthcare team assembled; knocking off household projects one by one; and meeting new friends. Scott added that "The motorcycle riding in eastern TN is pretty good." Having driven through and around Tennessee while on business, I can agree with that comment. Thanks for the update, Scott!

That's it for now. Get those profiles updated on our website and the Alumni Association. Send those "cards and letters" in to let our Webmaster and me know about your writings, retirements and updates. Take care of yourselves and one another.

Launchin' Spot Four.

'79

Life Membership: 91%
Donor Participation: 6.88%

Pres: **CAPT Dave Jackson, USN (Ret.)**
e: djackson@usna.edu

Sec'y: **LCDR John "Wiz" Withers, USN (Ret.)**
42498 Regal Wood Dr., Ashburn, VA 20148
p: 240-556-0637; e: JDWithers@1979.usna.com

Social Network Links:
<http://www.linkedin.com/in/wizwithers>

Facebook Group: **USNA Class of 1979**

Website: www.usna79.com

Greetings, 79ers!

While a lot has been happening in the world these days, it's been pretty quiet on the classmate news front. I know that virtual gatherings are still happening: the tailgate club still meets up online on a semi-regular basis, and I have reports of company Zoom calls occurring here and there (although we may need to refer to them by something else, as that name evokes images of that country club in Colorado Springs).

If there are any positives to come from this whole shutdown experience, we all are now familiar with technology to keep touch virtually. We should be able to use this new experience to stay connected more frequently than just at our every-five-year reunions.

I do have a couple of things to pass on. **Bob Klocek** emailed to say he decided to finally close the book on his 40+ year military/civil service career:

✉ Forty-five years after our first oath of office in July 1975, I finally retired from the Navy on 31 July 2020. After graduation, I spent nine years as a SWO, then almost fourteen years as an Engineering Duty Officer (ED). Since leaving active duty, I've spent the next eighteen-plus years as a civilian employee of the Navy, working for the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) as the *de facto* ED Community Manager.

The current NAVSEA Commander, **VADM Bill Galinis '83** hosted my retirement ceremony, and the previous COMNAVSEA, **VADM Tom Moore '81**, was the guest speaker. In spite of attendance restrictions due to COVID 19, there were several other alumni present: **Paul Sullivan '74**, a former COMNAVSEA; **Mark Hugel '77**; and Charlie Behrle '80. Unfortunately, my brothers **Joe Klocek '65** and **Tom Klocek '69** and close friend and classmate **Chris Cable** were unable to come.

My wife, Shirley, and I live in Fairfax Station, VA; she retired last year, and now it's my turn. Our daughter and her husband live about 20 minutes away, in Clifton, so we're staying in the area. We plan to move a little farther west where it's a little less crowded, but still close enough to DC to use my share of Washington Nationals season tickets (if they ever allow fans back in the stadium!).

Shirley is an Ohio State alum - we've been to both Ohio State-Navy football games, in 2009 and 2014, and I had to explain to some classmates (that would be you, **Chuck Dixon**) why I was bringing someone wearing Scarlet & Gray to the games, instead of Blue & Gold. After the 2009 game in Columbus (in which we gave up our Ohio State seats and I made her sit in the Navy/Visitor section), someone accused me of wearing Maize & Blue, until I explained to them what the N-A-V-Y on the front of my jersey stood for! Navy football acquitted themselves well in both of those games, almost winning the game in Columbus at the end, and leading at the start of the fourth quarter in 2014 until they were worn down.