



Tim Farrell joined by USNA alumni in PA

Lee and **Bob Hammond** (1st Co.) were at the U.S. Navy Band Cruisers Concert on June 3rd in Vienna, VA:

✉ After two years of crazy, it was fun to gather and see little kids (not ours) playing and dancing! Lee and Bob spend half their time at their Oakton, Virginia home with their youngest son, and half in Alabama with Bob's Dad, oldest son, daughter-in-law and two grandkids. Not sure we have as many road miles as Eileen and Rich O'Hanlon in their RV, but we get better gas mileage.



Bob and Lee Hammond enjoying the Navy Band concert in Vienna, VA

**Milt Mays** has published a short story, non-fiction about the Academy some might enjoy. Here's the link. <https://militaryexperience.org/as-you-were-the-military-review-vol-16/i-will-try-harder-sir/>

That just about does it. I can feel the excitement in the air as another Navy Football season is about to begin (I am glad Barb and I have season tickets again!).

# '77

**Life Membership: 74%**  
**Donor Participation: 16.21%**

Pres: **John F. Vuolo**  
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Sec'y: **Thom McKee**  
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# '78

**Life Membership: 81%**  
**Donor Participation: 42.43%**

Pres: **Glen Woods**  
Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**  
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**Dennis Otoshi** (33rd Co) is still doing the "Lord's work" with the Red Cross efforts Ukraine. His last update in May was:

✉ "...I am back in Kyiv after being forward deployed over Easter to the Donbas region. Will go back there in a week. We have three teams that will rotate to the front. Orthodox Easter is the holiest day in their calendar, but the Russians would not agree to a truce, so we all worked. Enough said about how the orcs think. Day after returning, there were two missile attacks on Kyiv. It was a wakeup call to the locals that the war is still ongoing.

Spent most of the time evacuating people to hospitals and giving medical aid to refugees in bomb shelters. Other times, it was having to detour around the fighting. Comms are spotty and we had to go to three different hospitals before we could find one that was open. The situation is so fluid that many staff have evacuated.

I slept within a few meters of the bomb shelter entrance. My sleeping bag was placed so that my head was under a desk, just in case. Helmet and body armor next to me and all I had to do was don the protective gear, grab a flashlight, and jump out a ground level window.

I am supposed to be enjoying retired life, but this is better. Every sip of water tastes

better because so many people are without. There is still sorrow, but it is tinged with optimism that the Russians can be beaten. Many children have not seen the light of day in months, so I take drawing paper and markers to the kids in the bomb shelters, because imagination can be the best toy.

Still keeping my head down,  
Respectfully,  
your classmate Dennis"

A lot of you have stayed connected or reconnected with your Naval sailing roots. **Jim Butler** (23rd Co) once again crewed a transatlantic sail onboard ICEBEAR. He wrote of the last leg of the journey- a 2,100 nautical mile passage from Horta, Azores to the charming town of Bergen, Norway. He wrote that he was so far north, the sun sets at 11:11 pm and rises at 4:00 am. In between, the sky remains light. While he was glad to be back on land, he also was sad to say farewell to the boat and her amazing crew. My roommate, **Tom Crowley** (11th Co) has been traversing up and down the coast with Midshipmen. Tom volunteers with the sailing program and its Offshore Sailing Training. The USNA summer sailing program uses their 44-foot sail boats to train midshipmen in seamanship and strengthen their knowledge of the maritime environment. It's a revelation for Mids who may think it "nice" and "fun" to sail up the coast to Newport or Boston. They work their tails off but really get an understanding of being a "real" sailor. Some classmates have gotten back into competitive small boat sailing, like **James Bland** (19th Co). He's been racing Finn dinghies. James is also the Executive Secretary at US OK Dinghy Racing Association and is building his own boat. Some just love sailing their boats like **Marty Drake** (11th Co). It took 44 years since we graduated but Marty and his roommates, **Prentiss Hall** and **Rusty Cone** finally made a sailing trip. They ventured to the British Virgin Islands. They departed Great Harbor, Jost van Dyke and were under sail headed to snatch a mooring ball off Bitter End Yacht Club in North Sound, Virgin Gorda. They took a clockwise trip around to the various islands and miraculously made it back in one piece. Marty wrote that Prentiss and Rusty had remembered a thing or two from Plebe Summer Knockabout training. He said there were only a few mutinous threats along the way; but they were quickly quelled



'78:

## 78/80 CLASS NEWS

with the promise of cold beer and a big screen tv to watch the NBA finals at a bar in the next port of call.

In June, **Duane LaFont** (15th Co) wrote of a get-together of some of 15th Company at **Aaron Watts'** house in Virginia for a crab boil over Memorial Day weekend. It was a pretty good turnout. "Dino" sent the below pic that shows the gang. You'll note, in the back row left to right: **Ray Miskowski**, **Miguel Becerril**, **Case Runolfson**, **Aaron Watts**, and **Duane LaFont**; in the front row, left to right, are: **Rob Romaine**, **Tim McGee**, and **Larry Galvin**. Duane added that it was "Lots of fun! Aaron played his guitar, Case cooked, Larry told stories, and the rest of us simply enjoyed each other's company." On a personal note, Duane is now "fully retired and living the dream in Tampa, FL. Six grandkids and counting!"



Debbie and **Glen Woods** (13th Co) were on a Viking Cruise in the Med. During the cruise he got to have lunch with his company-mate, **Dave Bruce**. Debbie and Glen took a tour to Avignon and Dave drove over to meet them. They hadn't seen each other since graduation.



In early July, **Dave Brown** (7th Co) posted on social media that "**Ed Henkler** (20th Co) and family made the trip down from LA to San Diego to see Dave's kids and their Flying Royals trapeze act perform in the San Diego County fair. The grands were tuckered out after a beach day Monday and fireworks on the 4th of July.



Early June saw an informal Hampton Roads '78 lunch at "Harpoon Larry's" in Newport News, VA with: **John Weidner** (33rd Co) **Spence Witten** (7th Co), **Rick Yasky** (2nd Co) and **Fred Butterfield** (22nd Co). All four live nearby - John in Deltaville, Spence in Williamsburg, Rick in Seaford and Fred in Chesapeake. Fred reported it was "Great times — and Rick sprung for the peck (two dozen or so — who knew?) of oysters."



**Bill "If" Fell** (34th Co) was in Annapolis the last week of June. Bill is the Deputy Athletic Director at the Merchant Marine Academy. Though he was in town to teach a youth Tennis Camp as part of the Naval Academy summer athletic camps, he was also here to try and nab some potential future USMMA Mid Tennis Players (but from the older tennis camps not his little "Billy Goats"). Of course, we also were able to have little mini-gatherings with him—dinner at McGarvey's with me and **Eddie Reid** (21st Co); then a happy hour at the O'Club in the Yard, with Mary and **Bob Novak** (34th Co) joining us.



In closing- **Save the Date! One year from this month we will be holding our 45th Reunion.** It is the weekend of the Air Force game, Oct 19-22. More info to follow.

**Launchin' Spot Four.**

## '79

**Life Membership: 91%**  
**Donor Participation: 16.17%**

Pres: **CAPT Dave Jackson, USN (Ret.)**  
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Sec'y: **LCDR John "Wiz" Withers, USN (Ret.)**  
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Social Network Links:  
**http://www.linkedin.com/in/wizwithers**

Facebook Group: **USNA Class of 1979**

Website: **www.usna79.com**

Greetings 79ers!

This is one of those rare times where I don't have any classmate inputs to share. I know you are all out wrapping up the summer and getting back into the groove. Stay safe out there, and drop me a line when you can.

See you next month.

Wiz...

## '80

**Life Membership: 96%**  
**Donor Participation: 17.77%**

Pres: **LtCol Tony Verducci USMC (Ret.)**  
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Sec'y: **CAPT Joseph A. Grace Jr., USN (Ret.)**  
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Website: **http://1980.usnaclasses.net**

Greetings Classmates,

The 4th of July has just been celebrated, today is the 46th Anniversary of our (I-Day), a new Plebe Class has started their journey, a new Class of Alumni has hit the fleet and summer is in full swing! Remember that heat in Bancroft Hall those hot July nights? I bet you can...just close your eyes and feel the sweat... It was great to hear from many Classmates who shared their I-Day experiences and even sent some photos. If you have any pictures or memories of that day - please send them to me. We will make a collage of before and after - could be a great image! On to the mail bag!

This month we added several Classmates to our Class Council as directed by our new Bylaws. In addition to our Elected Officers (**Tony Verducci** - President, **Janie Mines** - Vice President, **Barb Geraghty**, Treasurer, and me - Class Secretary, we added four Appointed Members of the Council. They are **Beth Gordon**, go.navy.lady@gmail.com, **Dale Lumme**, kid.lumme@1980.usna.com, **Tom O'Keefe**, thomasookeefe@verizon.net, and