

It is also with regret that I report the passing of Patricia "Patty" Brandmaier, wife of **Mike LeFever** (20th Co.). She succumbed to pancreatic cancer on March 24th. Our deepest sympathies go out to Mike, his children, and the extended family.

'77

Life Membership: 75%
Donor Participation: 14.80%

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"Events of October 1962 indicated, as they had all through history, that control of the sea means security. Control of the seas can mean peace. Control of the seas can mean victory. The United States must control the seas if it is to protect your security." – John F. Kennedy

Shipmates, what this edition lacks in length it certainly makes up in quality of submissions. So, without further ado, attention to brief!

First, **Dave Koss** (6th Co.) (Coss, it's a joke: "Koss"... "Ko"... **get it!?**) tells us on 15 April, wife Gina and he were joined by **Marc Troiani** (4th Co.) in Baltimore to witness the Loyola University Lady Greyhound lacrosse team administer a thorough 19-5 thrashing to Army. Were the contest not called on account of rain with 9 minutes remaining, the thumping would have been even more severe. Gina and Dave's oldest daughter, Daryl Ann, is a graduate student at Loyola and an outstanding defender. She'll graduate this year after earning her MBA, and despite having another year of eligibility, she'll be hanging up her stick. Shown below at the game are Messrs. Coss and Troiani:



Coss & Troiani at Loyola

In an update to the story, Loyola went on to beat Navy 15-7 in Annapolis on 28 April for their 9th consecutive Patriot League title before finally falling to eventual NCAA women's champion Northwestern in the tournament semifinals 16-6.

Gina and Dave live in Virginia Beach, where traveling to lacrosse games has become somewhat of a full-time hobby. Their younger daughter, Kendall, is a freshman lax player at Liberty University, where she scored her first collegiate goal in a victory over Stetson, though, unfortunately, Mrs. And Mr. Coss had to catch it on video. While Troiani tells us Dave's grasp of the game is a bit suspect, Gina knows her stuff, as she's a certified USILA referee.

Congrats to Gina and Dave on Daryl Ann's graduation and Kendall's first of what we hope will be many more goals to come.

Second, **Henry Gonzalez** (15th Co.) informed us Robin and **Bob Julian** (8th Co.) joined Henry and his wife June for two-week vacation on Oahu in April. The couples stayed at the Bel-lows AFX beach cottages, which served as the base from which they took in all the major sites on the island. Henry, June, Robin and Rob are shown below left to right after the obligatory Mai Tais at The Royal Hawaiian:



Henry, June, Robin & Bob

Setting foot on Oahu was quite the milestone for Robin, as Hawaii marked the final leg in her quest to visit all 50 states. BZ, Robin!

Later in April, Henry attended a NAMA-sponsored leadership symposium at the Academy. He's shown below with classmates **Julius Caesar** (17th Co.) and **John Bird** (27th Co.). John was representing USAA, a major sponsor of the event.



Henry, J.C. & John

The symposium gave Henry the chance to meet the new Supe, Yvette Davids (USNA '89), as well as one Will Morales (USNA '82).



Will, Yvette & Henry

Turns out Will was inspired to attend Boat School by a young Henry during one of his Ops Info visits to their shared hometown of El Paso. Which just goes to show you never know the impact your efforts and conduct may have on the lives of others.

Finally, Henry had the pleasure of seeing an old friend from his active-duty years, one Carlos del Toro (USNA '83), the current SEC NAV, who was the guest speaker at the symposium dinner in Hopper Hall.



Henry & Carlos

Were we Henry, we'd need most of May to recover from April.

Magoo

'78

Life Membership: 81%
Donor Participation: 41.18%

Pres: **Glen Woods**

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Mea culpa, mea culpa...This is very late news that fell out of the queue. It's about my old Naval Justice School, **Mark James** (31st Co.). Mark walked his daughter, Jessica, down the aisle on New Year's Eve in Raleigh, NC. He gave her away to Evan Mann under the watchful eyes of many friends that included Jennifer, Nadilee and **Rich Polek** (31st Co.). As Mark wrote, "Love, affirmation, and smiles were in abundance for the beautiful ceremony and reception!" Connie and Mark continue to own and operate their business in Mechanicsville, VA: Hearth & Home Shoppe. As the Lead Field Engineer for SHINE Medical Technologies,

78/78 CLASS NEWS

Rich is building a first-of-a-kind radioisotope production facility for SHINE in Janesville, WI. Here's a photo of Mark and Rich on that wonderful day, taken by Mark's son, Matt.



Mark and Rich

Bob Engel (36th Co) reported about a golf outing in May that celebrated **Tim Golden's** (35th Co) birthday. **Jeff Knauer** (35th Co) and Tim's son, Tim Jr., rounded out the foursome chasing little white balls around the Broad Run Golf Course in West Chester, PA. Bob reported it was a wonderful day with beautiful weather. Hmmm, were you guys getting in some practice rounds for our Reunion golf game?



Tim Golden's Birthday Golf

Ken Heffernan (1st Co) sent some photos to show their company's recent "Mini-reunion". Not to worry, it was a colder time and place where they gathered so no "topless pool photos" to garner comments. Their "Springfest" was in New England and hosted by Donna and **Bruce Carter**. Among the things they did was visit Hammond Castle in Gloucester, MA. Besides Ken and Bruce, I think I recognize **Bill McAlpine**,



'78: 1st Company "Springfest"

Peter Bannon, Bob Schwaneke, Jack McCourt, Doug Grau, and Warren Krull. See you guys and the rest of the 1st Company gang at our "BIG" Reunion- our 45th.

This column seems to be following the theme of "For whenever two or three shall meet..." So, let's continue. My good buddy and fellow Marine, **Corky Gardner** ('77) picks up on the theme. He and his bride, Becky, met "expat" **Dave Mercer** (4th Co) in Stockholm, Sweden. Dave lives there with his family. Corky hadn't been to Stockholm since he visited as ship's company on BELKNAP in 1982.



Dave Mercer with Corky and Becky Gardner

Marcus Fisk's (9th Co) wife Pam wrote about the fun time they had in Paris with "great friends and classmates of the Naval Academy in Paris sight-seeing." Those friends were Terry and **Jack Fernandez** (9th Co). I had to shake my head and reconcile the "fun-loving" Mids and friends I remember with the accomplished and heroic guys Pam described to her [civilian] friends: Marcus, "... retired as a Navy Captain. He served in Iraq and commanded boat squadrons that landed SEALs in really bad places." Jack "...landed an F-14 that was on fire on an aircraft carrier. At night." Wow! It made me wonder how others perceived us. Of course, to classmates, companymates, and comrades in arms gathering at our 45th- we'll still be chuckle-headed brothers with whom we endured "four years together by the bay". Marcus and Pam, enjoy life in France. Hope to see Jack and Terry sometime in Tampa.



Santé from Marcus and Jack

Joe Leidig (14th Co) posted in May about visiting with roommate **Greg Martin**, and Greg's wife, Catherine, at their home in Washington State! The four of them spent a few days on Bainbridge Island and toured some great wineries.



Leidigs and Martins

My Navy Lightweight Crew Coach - and '73 Class President - **Dirk Mosis**, dropped me a note saying that '78 "Chaplain", **Al "Blues" Baker** (10th Co) preached the sermon at the Protestant Baccalaureate Dirk attended in May. Blues' sermon discussed Matthew 14: 22-33- where Jesus walks on water and Peter and the apostles get a lesson in faith. His homily also focused on the stained-glass window behind him in the Chapel (*Christ Walking on the Water*) and quoted the late **Admiral Stockdale ('47)**. Dirk noted that [he] knows " '78 is proud of their Classmate as he continues to do God's work." We are, Dirk - and we are equally proud of the many other "Padres/Sky Pilots" in our class who preach and inspire their flocks and communities.

As this column goes to press on Memorial Day Weekend, we remembered fallen classmates, comrades, family, and friends who paid the ultimate price to gain and preserve freedom for our nation and the world. Two classmates sent notes on how they paid tribute. **Steve Koronka** (9th Co) went to Arlington National Cemetery. He visited and placed a flower at the grave of his close friend and our classmate, **Al Hammond** (22d Co). (Steve and Al were also teammates on the Varsity pistol team.) Al was among the three whom we lost early in military training or operations. We lost them in aircraft accidents (Al and **Dave Trundy** (26th Co) in helicopter accidents; and **Robbie Wilson** (25th Co) in a Harrier crash). **Dave Bruce** (13th Co) wrote how he was honored to represent American Legion Paris Post 1 for the Memorial Day service at the Rhone American

Cemetery in Draguignan. He placed a wreath at the grave of CAPT Clifford Harmon, USA. We will all have opportunities to remember Al, Dave, Robbie and all our deceased classmates at our reunion in October.



Until next month...**Launchin' Spot Four**

'79

Life Membership: 91%
Donor Participation: 16.44%

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

Website: www.usna79.com

'80

Life Membership: 96%
Donor Participation: 20.00%

Pres: **LtCol Tony Verducci USMC (Ret.)**
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Greetings Classmates,

Forty-Three years ago today we threw our caps into the air and joined the ranks of Graduates of the United States Naval Academy. Where did the time go. Help me Mr. Wizard! A lot of water has flowed under the bridges of our lives. Then we were packing all of our belongings into our Midshipmen cars (many not exactly made for hauling a bunch of stuff), saying goodbye to Classmates, family and friends, and heading to our first assignments. In many cases this was being stashed until we started nuke school, flight school, SWO or Basic. Think of that - everything you owned in your car and completely mobile!

Now, we are packing up our kids, grandkids, our parents, with thousands of pounds of "stuff" (there are other words to cover the description) and getting them settled into their lives. For some of us we're retiring and making the move to our "final home" and I can guarantee everything doesn't fit into that one car! Just a funny observation! On to the mail bag!

Janie Mines wrote in to let me know that they had just launched a mentorship program for boys in Aiken SC. She was supported by **Michael Moore '76**, **Michael Budney '80** and Admiral **Pat Walsh '77**. Here is the photo from the event:



Consistent with my opening paragraph, **Walt Porr** waltporr@comcast.net sent in an update from Florida:

✉ Joe:

Here's my news in a nutshell - Attached is a photo of Susan and me at our second home, the Leaky Cauldron in Diagon Alley at Universal Studios here in Orlando. Susan has just finished her first year teaching at the Christ School in downtown Orlando where she started and is developing a lower school (pre-K to 5) instrumental music program and a middle school (6-8) band. I am working a block away

at a mid-size law firm back in an insurance defense firm after working for 4 years for a fellow grad, Class of '93, rotor head. I am also back in school enrolled at Seminole State College in an evening American Sign Language course. I am looking to transfer to Valencia College in the fall with an eye towards pursuing ASL certification.



Mark Arnold mark_soccerlax@yahoo.com checked in as well.

✉ Joe,

Karen and I are absolutely enjoying beach life in our quiet little town...quiet now that all the snowbirds have returned northward, and the spring break surge is over! I guess that's what we have to tolerate when you live where people go for vacation.

I did want to pass on to our Class a couple of pictures from The Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach "Flags for Service" event. Every year our club honors those who have served in uniform - military, law enforcement, first responders, etc. - with flags and banners in our town's main park, Chief Chic-A-Si Park. Since the last of our Class has now retired, I chose to include us among this year's honorees. As a Class we served on active duty around the globe from 1976-2022, including the Cold War, Gulf Wars, Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, GWOT and more. We all started as MIDN 4th Class and some made it all the way to 4-Star Flag Rank, including our own "Old Goat" Admiral Bill Lescher, VCNO, who retired last fall.

These flags and banners are displayed in the park from Memorial Day through Flag Day (June 14th) each year and the city of Indian Rocks Beach has a Flag Day Ceremony to honor our Nation's flag and those who have served. As a proud member of our Class, I'm happy to share the photo of our "Class of 1980" banner from this year's event.