

'77

Life Membership: 75%
Donor Participation: 26.13%

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'78

Life Membership: 81%
Donor Participation: 44.73%

Pres: **Glen Woods**
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Where has the time gone?! As this heads out the proverbial "internet-door" to our very understanding *Shipmate* editor, the month of January is just about over. If I thought 2023 was a busy year, this one looks to be even more so. That said, let's get on with some late news.

Ray Kempisty (13th Co) wrote in December about his "favorite subject"- his son, **Mitch ('14)**. He's currently OPS on USS MASON operating in the Red Sea. (As you know, the MASON and been in the news a lot lately.) Mitch has been selected for early command and O-4 sometime this year and will hopefully take command of an MCM in either Bahrain or Sasebo. By the way, Mitch used to be a Professional bull rider (PBR). Ray had sent me a link to a Johnstown, PA internet newspaper article on a PBR competition. Mitch's aunt, Judy Kempisty, was quoted in the article and mentioned Mitch's riding days. Cool!

In January, **Kevin Liddy** (17th Co) wrote that **Drew Neinhaus** (36th Co) had been in St. Louis. He came up from Texas for the funeral of his mom, Shirley Nienhaus. She passed away the day after Christmas at the age of 97. Sorry for your loss, Drew. Her obituary told the great story of what a wonderful woman she was. Kevin also noted that he, **John Hueseman** (19th Co), and **Rick Roustio** (27th Co) reunited at the wake. Afterward, the three of them went out to dinner and shared stories with their meal. By the way, Kevin is one of our classmates who was an elected official. He currently sits on the Board of Election Commissioners. Over the years, he has run for public office five times and won three of those times. When he lived in Connecticut he served on the Milford, CT Planning & Zoning Board for 10 years. I know there are more of you who are or have been elected officials- or have run for public office. We would sure like to know. Drop me a line if you fall into those categories. (We would also like to know who among you have served as a Senior Executive Service (SES) and where.)



Roustio, Liddy and Hueseman

Matt Leavitt (23rd Co) also sent an update in January. Matt retired from the CIA at the very end of 2023. As he put it, he is now "officially a pensioner." Though retired- like many of us- that doesn't mean he isn't busy. He and his wife, Maria, are in the St. Luke's Choir and are both board members of a couple of non-profits. Matt's also the "Country Contact" for the Rotary Club between Spain and the organizations that coordinate placements on the U.S. East Coast (Eastern States Student Exchange). He remains active with Rotary and the men's group at his Church, and the "honey-do list" at home keeps him busy too. At the beginning of January, he was out in Hawaii, to see his daughter, Liz, get promoted to captain, U.S. Public Health Service. Liz is the CDC Rep at the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM). Other family transitions include son, **Matt ('04)**, moving to a different company providing high-end Cyber support to the U.S. Government and son, **Joe ('06)**, finishing up his Russian language training and the Defense Attaché school. This year Joe will PCS to Baku, Azerbaijan, as the Naval Attaché. Maria is going to continue to work for at least another year or so, which means he will primarily be in the DC area for the near to medium term, with occasional trips to Spain etc. (They live in McLean (close-in Northern VA suburbs to DC)). Maria is with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). As Matt wrote, "Due to seniority, she got an early pick of office when the USPTO consolidated and now has a beautiful view of the Potomac from a tenth floor vista - pretty nice! She still enjoys participating in the classical guitar / flamenco world as a Board member with the non-profit 'TorcuArt' and has had a major hand in putting on a series of delightful events, most recently a great Christmas concert and sing-along of the traditional Christmas Carols of Spain. Check out www.torcuart.com to see some of the events!" Thanks for the update, Matt. Hope to see you around town.

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Celebrating a Leavitt Promotion

As I close up this brief column, the Class has already started engaging in our Another Link in the Chain (ALITC) with the Class of 2028- yes, we **are** now that senior. The Class received an invitation from the commanding officer of NAPS for 10 participants and a guest speaker to attend the NAPS Dining In. We are sending a contingent. There will be more about it in the next column. For now, our volunteers were: **Charlie Hautau** (15th Co), NAPster classmates **"Jock" Maloney** (16th Co), **Ken Colby** (4th Co), and **Ken Law** (34th Co), along with **John Young** (4th Co), **Tom Crowley** (11th Co), **Carlos Sotomayor** (16th Co), **Brett Ayotte** (29th Co), **Kevin "Grinch" Lynch** (26th Co), **Tony Quatroche** (31st Co), and yours truly. As a former NAPS Commanding Officer, Charlie will be the Guest of Honor and provide a few remarks. On a couple of interesting notes, the NAPS CO, CAPT Tom Clarity, is a former CO of the VAQ-131 "Lancers". Carlos had also once commanded that squadron. The other "six degrees of Kevin Bacon" with our class is the fact that the current NAPS XO, Major **Mike Magyar** ('11), was a midshipman candidate at NAPS when Charlie Hautau was CO. (Mike is also a "Mustang", former Navy Corpsman, and classmate to seven of our '78 sons and a daughter USNA Grads). There'll be more about the dinner in the next column.

This year there will be more will be some key ALITC activities as the Class of '28 enters the Academy. There will be opportunities for many of you to be involved. Among this year's key activities are some local alumni chapters "Welcome Aboard" sessions with appointees who have accepted their appointments, I-day (27 June 2024), Honor Coin presentation and Plebe Parent's weekend (approximately 8-11 Aug 2024). We will be getting the gouge out separately about all our activities in advance and of the need for any volunteers. Some of the events will have limited numbers for *direct* participation because of space and schedule limitations in the Yard, but there will be more ways for you to help. Thank you to those who have already volunteered to help - and thank you in advance for all those who *will* be volunteering in the future.

That's it for now. Until the next time,

Launchin' Spot Four