



'72 from the sidelines as '22 climbs Herndon

member of the graduating class; it's over and done pretty quickly. However, the significance of what we do...emphasizing the difference between putting one's life on the line for the principles contained in our Constitution vs. the "King and Country" focus of other societies... is as important and relevant to these young men and women today as it has ever been. Thanks to Tal and to those Classmates who stepped up to assist.

One final event goes without saying: As far as our ALITC Class is concerned, "There ain't no mo' Plebes."



The '72/'22 ALITC Honor Coin logo proudly on display

Fred Cohrs was there in the crowd and caught the action.

✉ "Here's MIDN Christian Schwien, USNA '22, from Fairfax, VA . . . the guy who placed the combo cap atop Herndon on Monday afternoon, May 20.

"To every plebe I spoke to after the climbing, I said, "It is a remarkably short trip from climbing Herndon to being 50 years down the road where my class now is; make the most of your time. It goes much faster than you can imagine."

It was a lot of fun to greet so many plebes who are our Links in the Chain. They all know what it means and they seem enthusiastic about the tie to our class."



Fred Cohrs and MIDN Schwein

(Carry-on question: Name our Classmate that put the combo cap on Herndon back in June 1969. Hint: 4th Batt.)

Great stuff, and thanks to all of you who attended or were involved in these events back in May. ALITC events abate somewhat during their Youngster year, but stay tuned to The Gouge, and the Class web and Facebook sites for further information.

Writers 'R Us Dept. For the past two years, **Tom Schuler** has been writing a book that was published in early April entitled *Metamorphix: Embracing Life Experience, Life Change and Life Purpose*. I understand that a number of classmates have already grabbed a hold of it and reader reviews have been very encouraging. You can find additional

information about Tom's book at www.Metamorphix.com, which can also be obtained through Amazon, Barnes & Noble and iTunes. Reach out to Tom at Tom.Schuler@Metamorphix.com.

Well, let's see... Empty mailbag = we B done. Drop me a line and let me know how your summer is going (it makes for great copy...!) Have a wonderful summer!

More to come. D. O.

Tried and True with '72.

'73

Life Membership: 65%

Donor Participation: 10.91%

Pres: **Mr. Dirk P. D. Mosis III**

Sec'y: **CAPT James H. Chapman, USN (Ret.)**
769 Largo Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23464-2417
p: 757-462-0344; e: chap769@yahoo.com

Hello everyone, I hope you are having a Great summer! I have a lot of news and some great pictures to pass on so let's get to it!

The first input is from **John Benjamin** who passed on a story of **Bob Willard**.

✉ "Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I am John Benjamin, the classmate who nominated Bob for the Distinguished Graduate Award (DGA) and drafted his nomination package. I would like to introduce Admiral Willard by telling the story about why I remembered him from our Academy days. This story is about an unintended lesson well learned.

Here is the story. Bob and I were not buddies at the Naval Academy. We did not go over the wall together, we were not each other's wing man while seeking the companionship of the young ladies of Annapolis, we did not paint Tecumseh together, or plan any pranks together. To be honest, I don't think I could have called him by name had we passed each other in the Yard. The only reason I knew he existed was because he played defense for the Navy football team and I was a student manager for the team (think water boy).

That changed during second class summer in 1971 (the summer between sophomore and junior

year). During that summer, the rising second class midshipmen got to spend four or five weeks at the Academy taking Emily Post finishing school type courses for which there was no time during the regular academic year. One of these finishing school opportunities was after dinner speaking, also known as extemporaneous speaking. A few of us midshipmen at a time got to attend an evening meal with senior officers in a much smaller dining room than the Naval Academy mess hall (King Hall). After the meal, we were to be asked a question, or given a topic about which to speak for three minutes, or so. We were not given any advanced information about what our topics were. The point was to give us some experience in a ship's wardroom situation when we might get asked about our opinions on pretty much anything. We midshipmen were interspersed with the senior officers. We could not even kibitz among ourselves during the meal to provide each other with moral support.

I arrived at the appointed time and took my assigned seat. We enjoyed a good meal except for the added stress of carefully minding our P's & Q's due to the presence of the senior officers. I looked around the room while eating to see if I recognized any of the other midshipmen present. I saw this other midshipman across the room that I thought I recognized, then realized he was a football player.

I started thinking about how much time the players invested in the game in addition to the practices. The players had to study play books, watch films of the upcoming opponents, and go to team meetings on top of attending class and completing home work. I thought; "when is he going to have had time to know about anything other than football. I hope he does OK with his speaking topic."

My hope the football player would do OK was really what I was thinking. However, the negative spin on that is that I was sitting there thinking he was just a dumb jock.

The football player's turn to speak came. Midshipman Robert Willard was introduced and given

his question. Bob stood up and began speaking. I don't remember what his topic was, but I do remember that Bob was positively eloquent. His short speech had an introduction, a body and a summary with complete mastery of the topic. He spoke clearly with no stuttering, no stammering, no um's or ah's, no hand ringing or fidgeting, or any other sign of nervousness. While working to keep my mouth shut in my complete surprise at his amazing performance, I remember thinking; "He is going to do very well in this profession." That prediction came true.

Bob, I'd like to apologize for thinking you were just a dumb jock, but thank you for unknowingly taking my mind off my own nerves that evening almost 48 years ago. Thank you, also, for the unintended, but well-remembered lesson to not make assumptions about people. Thank you for your exemplary service to the United States during your Naval career, and your continued service to the commercial nuclear power industry through the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations and the World Association of Nuclear Operators.

Congratulations on being selected as a Distinguished Graduate of the United States Naval Academy. You have earned it.



Bob Willard receiving the Distinguished Graduation Award

I asked John for a picture and personal update and received back;

✉ "I retired at the end of November 2017 from a 44 plus year career in the trenches of nuclear power. Five and a half years were with Admiral Rickover's nuclear navy (submarine service), and the rest was helping generate electricity from nuclear energy at several different nuclear power plants. I have been a direct employee of a utility and one of those darn consultants. I am now

enjoying riding road bikes with some friends two or three days a week, exercising at the gym with my son and daughter, miscellaneous yard projects, working on civic projects with the local American Legion Post and the Kiwanis Club of Hartsville, writing down some well remembered submarine stories for posterity (or maybe just to get them out of my head), and some just plain goofing off sprinkled in there. I may even inflict a try at public speaking on my Kiwanis Club. The topic will be "Fun Facts about Nuclear Energy." Hopefully, I won't get kicked out of the club."



John and Robyn Benjamin

John, Thanks for the great story, life lesson and picture.

The next input is from **Leif Hendrickson**.

✉ Jim, Every spring I go south for a week to watch Pirate Baseball with old friends from Little League days (1957 - 1961). This year I had an extra special surprise during the pre-game with the Phillies when I unexpectedly ran into 3 convicts from the Class of 73 persuasion. It made a good day a GREAT DAY



'73 at the Ball Park; Jim Boland, Scott Krajnik, Tom Storch and Leif Hendrickson.

I am starting to get space limited. I received several great stories about our I Day and I wanted to pass at least one on. I will pass on more over the upcoming editions. Its great to have so much "Good Stuff" to work with. This is from **Jim Canter** who wrote;

✉ Here's my story - no pics unfortunately. My Mom & Sisters saw me off at the boarding gate for my United Airlines flight from LAX to Baltimore Friendship. Dad was stationed in Great Lakes as the Sgt Major of the Great Lakes Naval District for the Marines. It was both unsettling and exciting to be on my way with the full knowledge this event was my departure from family and home. **Jim Brill**, a high school classmate of mine from Pasadena High School was on that flight. We talked on the plane. I believe it was his aunt, a flight attendant, was going to drive him down to USNA from Baltimore Friendship - in a Mustang convertible. Jim and she offered me and another classmate-to-be a ride to USNA. This was pretty heady, jet-set stuff to me. The four of us headed South to USNA. As we came to the heights of Governor Richie Hwy overlooking the Severn, I saw what looked like a prison with a tall smokestack. The buildings were forbidding and had no color. They sat as dark grey images - almost silhouettes in a distant haze. Jim said, "There it is! The Naval Academy!" I was mortified, and said, "THAT's the Naval Academy!?" His aunt laughed, and Jim said, "Yup! That's it!". What had I done? This blunted my excitement. It was early evening, about 5pm on June 29th 1969, I think. She drove us through the Main Gate and through the yard, with Jim and I sitting on top of the back seat, parade style. I was struck with the beauty and imposing presence of the academic buildings and grounds. We were stopped with a sharp, Drill Instructor like rebuke to sit in our seats properly. This was my first introduction to a member of the class of '71. We shrank into the back seat, left the yard and went to our drag house, bidding farewell to Jim's aunt. From there, we walked

to grab some dinner. I think I would have preferred a reporting time closer to 7:00 am. Instead, I was left with quelling my anxious anticipation until 10:00 as I walked around Main Street. I joined some others from '73 walking through the front gate for the 10:00 am deadline. Our first greeting was from the Stewards hanging out the windows of Ricketts hall, with taunts, of "You'll be sorry!" and "You better go home to Mama!" I think that's when my filters kicked in. Midshipman 2nd Class **Mendenhall** called for those in my group to form up in Mitscher Hall where we were fingerprinted. In reflection, I see now that was the first time I met the guys whom I would come to know more as the next fifty years passed. At that time, they were faceless. Mendenhall had the only face I saw. His was a face that was at the core of survival. I'm moved at my reflection upon this seminal moment. The day dissolved into a flurry of haughtily and harshly clear, directed activities that I followed with an intense sense of rush, lugging laundry bags of uniforms and books, learning cadence, and finally getting scalped in the barber shop. Barbering was perhaps the only scene I had anticipated. I can still remember the floor thick with my predecessors' hair, dispatched to the linoleum in a short few minutes in the chair. That evening we were in new clothes called "White Works." For the first time I donned the famous blue-rimmed sailor hat and was herded with my new classmates to "T" court for our swearing in. This was my transition from me to "we." Thereafter, my life became a blur until I emerged as a "secured" plebe in May of 1970. Regards, Jim Canter

Jim, Thanks for the great story and here is a picture of that day.

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Our Swearing in Ceremony. Look at all those happy faces!

Paul Ryan sends the following update on the 2019 tailgate schedule for home football games.

✉ "As you know, we rotate tailgate sponsoring among 4 warfare communities. If you're coming from out of town please contact your tailgate POC for additional information and to offer help: Aug 31, Holy Cross, Potluck. Sep 14, ECU, Submariners, Paul Ryan is POC. Oct 5, AF, Potluck. Oct 19, USF, Aviators/SWOs, **Tom Kilcline** is POC. Oct 26, Tulane, Staff Corps, **Mike Kalas** is POC. Nov 23, SMU, Marine Corps, **Leif Hendrickson** is POC."

I have several items of sad news to pass on. Major **Matthew Wiegand**, '06, son of Skip and Margret Wiegand and his co-pilot Captain Travis Brannon were killed in a helicopter crash on 30 March 2019.

CDR **William (Bill) Holmes** of Burke, VA passed away on 20 April 2019 at his home due to complications from ALS. Bill is survived by his wife, Karen.

Jim Murray of Six Mile, SC passed away on 3 May 2019 after a long illness. Jim is survived by his wife Barbara of 45 years.

Albert (Al) Mayfield of Pensacola, FL passed away on 2 May 2019. He is survived by his daughter Alexandra L. Mayfield.



Look for more information in Last Call and please keep the families and our classmates in your thoughts and prayers.

I am way over my allotted space. Thanks for all the great inputs. As always, Go Navy! and Semper Fi! General

'74

Life Membership: 58%
Donor Participation: 10.37%

Pres: **John Yaeger**

Corr Sec'y: **Roger McEvoy 745677**
p: 559-905-7362; e: usna745677@hotmail.com

It's the first week of August (where you are reading this), and our 45th reunion is about two months away. If you have not already registered, you should do so right away. Your class officers have a lot of work to do leading up to the reunion, and last minute registrations may miss some of the perks that come along with your participation where lead times mandate advanced notice.

And an additional reminder, the football game reunion weekend will be Air Force. So don't forget to go online and purchase your tickets to the game. The reunion tailgate party is included in your class reunion registration. But you can't get into the tailgate without tickets to the game!

It's been two months since our last column. I assume most of you have been enjoying your spring, because I'm not hearing from you. I'm sure that travel and various

other activities are taking priority. But I hope that some of you will get in touch with me to let me know what you've been doing.

I did get a note from **Jay Wells** (16th Co.) last week. Now I see Jay almost every time I travel to San Diego for the Monthly Dose of '74. But this is the first time he sat down and wrote me a note for Shipmate. Maybe one reason for not writing sooner is that so much of Jay's class-associated activities happen right there in SoCal, and we cover most of that at the Monthly Dose. But a series of unrelated events recently came together to inspire a road trip. Jay's Academy roommate, **Jerry Cerney**, (also 16th Co, obviously) lives in Hawaii, but he was coming to the LA area on business. Jerry's son Nick is a chopper pilot stationed at NAS JAX (for you black shoes out there, that stands for Naval Air Station JAX). But he was going to spend some TAD time training at NAS Fallon (again for the sake of our black shoe brethren, Fallon is just outside of Reno, NV.). Jerry had also been in contact with fellow company mate **Jim Jones**, who lives near Sacramento. So Jerry was planning a road trip. Coincidentally, Jay's son, (who also lives in Hawaii and works for ESPN Radio) was coming to Long Beach to broadcast the NCAA Men's National Volleyball Championships. When Jay and Jerry talked they realized they were creating a critical mass. Jerry told Jay about his plans for a road trip north, Jay invited himself along. Fellow 16th Co. mate, **Mark Kokosinski** lives in or near Long Beach, so the trip started with a get-together there. Mark holds a senior management position with a design-based contracting company there in Long Beach, and is doing quite well. Jay and Jerry then made the long drive north, and enjoyed a couple of days at Fallon with Nick before heading back over Donner Pass and down the hill to Davis to spend some time with Jim.

Jim resigned prior to second-class year, and after leaving the Academy he went on to become a Veterinarian. As it turns out, Jim has done some ground-breaking

research into a lung disease that mostly affects ducks (and I'm not making this up!). But his research also has serious ramifications for equines. His research led to an invitation from the horse racing industry in Japan to go there and consult. (I didn't know this before, but horse racing is a huge industry in Japan.) After returning from Japan Jim ended up teaching veterinary science at one of the top Vet schools in the nation, UC Davis. Jim is retired now, and enjoying the slow life in the extended burbs west of Sacramento. Jay said that after spending considerable time in Japan, Jim fully embraced the Japanese culture. When you walk into his house, you are immediately transported into a classical Japanese home, complete with folding silk partitions and low tables you sit at without the benefits of chairs. They had a great mini-reunion, catching up on their diverse experiences. I think it reminds us of the width and range our collective experience as a class encompasses, and that our ties through these friendships enrich us all. Unfortunately, due to unknown technical problems, the photos that were taken on this road trip never made it to me. Jay's still working on that, and maybe we can publish them in the next issue.

One final word about class business: we are still looking for volunteers to run for class office. I have not heard from anyone at this point (late May). If you are interested in serving your class, please call or e-mail me. My contact info is listed at the head of the column.

As my company mate, **Mike Carnes** (8th Co.) just reminded our company earlier today, there are 129 days until the 45th Reunion. For you reading this, it is probably less than 60 days. I can hardly believe it's been more than 4 ½ years since our 40th. Time, Tide and Reunion gatherings wait for no man. Do miss it.

See ya'll in October.
Roger