

**U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY, CLASS OF 1975, SHIPMATE COLUMN**  
**JAN - FEB 2017**

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Dear 'mates: Happy 2017 Flower Children! Have you noticed how close we've crawled toward the front of *Shipmate*? Rather frightening at first glance ... but then again ... it was inevitable. So for those of us who've managed to make sunsets continue to equal sunrises ... it sure beats the alternative!

The Lovely Nurse Nancy and I were treated to some of the most fabulous sunsets we've ever seen when we joined the '75 Pirates in their 2016 Invasion of the Caribbean island of St. Lucia. After regretfully turning down several previous invitations, we were finally able to join a gang of classmates at the marvelous BodyHoliday resort. The scenery, the beach, the food, the wonderful staff, and the awesome spa treatments made it a superb vacation. But it was the life-long friendships that made the week truly special and memorable. Led by the ever-energetic **Chuck "GQ" Geyer** and his beautiful wife Rhonda, the scurvy crew included Debbie and **Phil Troy**, Elizabeth and **Mark Milliken**, Jeannine and **Rod Repka**, Debbie and **Pat Sloan**, Denise and **Bob Meisner**, Merry and **Tom Frey**, and **Mike Maynard**. Liane and **Ron Nicol** were on the original manifest, but there was this thing happening at home called an election, and Ron's talents were in demand during the last week of October. (See note later in the column.)



<Photo 75#1: "75 Pirates sing Navy Blue and Gold at the Piano Bar">

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<Photo 75#2: “Santa needed a vacation before his busy season (Phil Troy with Nancy and Scribe)”>

Regular contributor and 12th Company rep **JJ Cuff** sent this note about our classmate, and his company mate, **Gordon Roesler**.

“Gordy is staying busy and looks even younger than when we were at USNA. Maybe that is how he is able to do all the things that he does at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), where he is the Program Manager in the Tactical Technology Office (TTO). The 2016 SATELLITE Conference, one of the largest and most influential satellite and space industry events of the year was hosted at the Gaylord National Convention Center in National Harbor, MD. It brought together industry leaders, satellite experts and government decision makers to discuss the future of the industry, new and emerging satellite technologies and the trends that will shape the way SATCOM is utilized across the government and private industry today and into the future.

During a Q&A session with the panel on hosted payloads, Gordy talked about the work he is doing with his branch at DARPA. Quickly getting the attention of everyone at the session, Dr. Roesler stood up and addressed the panelists about the need to change payloads and otherwise service spacecraft in orbit. He introduced a new DARPA program that would utilize robotics to do just that. Gordy's program is called Robotic Servicing of Geosynchronous Satellites (RSGS). The goal of the program is to create a dexterous robotic operational capability in Geosynchronous Orbit (GEO) that can provide increased resilience for the current US space infrastructure. It would be the first concrete step toward a transformed space architecture with revolutionary capabilities. (Lots of big words for this Marine, so to cut to the quick ... he has developed a capability for all satellites that are placed in orbit with no plans to be updated or inspected, to do just that for them.)

All these satellites are developed with long lifetimes, but after a while the technology on them becomes obsolete, and they cannot keep up with changes on the ground. So one reason for his program is to change this mindset. You can provide those services just like the armed services do for high-value assets like aircraft, ships, and comm systems. Gordy's program shows that robotics can provide this capability. (Hope I put that correctly. Remember I am a Marine.)”



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<Photo 75#3: "Hampton Roads classmates enjoy lunch">



In September, a bunch of Hampton Road '75ers gathered for an informal lunch. The above photo captures the good looking group. For some reason **Roy Chesson** is not the pic, and yes, that is our own "Salty Sam" (aka **Pete Squicciarini**) at the end of the table. During the conversation, a discussion about the 45<sup>th</sup> Reunion came up. **Gary Jones**, **Craig Quigley**, and **Dave Duffie** shared some of the challenges our officers and reunion committee will face in planning the 45th. Now that we are in the American Athletic Conference for football, long range football schedules aren't fixed. Additionally, each year brings yet another class of young graduates who want to gather to relive their "four years together by the bay."

Gary attended the Council of Class Presidents meeting last spring where the USNAAA reported that a few classes are holding reunions at other times of the year than football season ... or even in other locations in the country. The consensus opinion was that we should conduct a class-wide survey as an early step in planning the reunion in 2020. Thanks for the report, Gary and Duff!



Online news sites (trustworthy ones, in this case), report that **Ron Nicol**, in his position as Senior Advisor at the Boston Consulting Group, played an important role in the Trump administration's transition by leading the team focused on key federal agencies.

**Al Eaton** is the president of the Southern Tier Veterans Support Group in New York State. Al's group contributed a substantial amount of funding to purchase washers and driers for a new ten-unit homeless veterans housing project in Binghamton, NY. It is part of Binghamton's effort to be the first city to end homelessness among veterans. BZ Al!

<Photo 75#4: "Bill Squires and Admiral Moran on the field at MetLife Stadium">

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**Bill Squires** sent a quick note and picture.

"I had the terrific opportunity of hosting my good friend Admiral Bill Moran (USNA '81), Vice Chief of Naval Operations, when the New York Football Giants hosted and defeated the Philadelphia Eagles on "Salute to Service" day at MetLife Stadium on Sunday, November 6th. The National Football League's "Salute to Service" recognizes the members of the armed services both past and present who served our great country. It was a great Navy day with Bill participating in the coin toss, a three plane F-18 flyover and the Navy Band performing at halftime. And it was capped off with an exciting game with the red, white and blue-clad Giants beating their division rival."

Speaking of football, what a year for the Big Blue! As of this deadline, Coach Ken and the team still have three games to play—American Conference Championship versus Temple in Annapolis, Army in Baltimore, and a bowl game TBD. If they play those games anywhere near as well as they have played in November, 2016 will be (another) year to remember! In case you missed it, Navy went 4-0 in November, scored 211 points, and punted exactly twice ... in four games!

Many classmates joined the Navy fans in Annapolis and at every away game this year. Reliable sources say that by midway through the fourth quarter of Navy's 75-31 beat down of SMU, Navy fans outnumbered the remaining Mustang fans. Props to the Navy fans for their *a cappella* rendition of Navy Blue and Gold after the game. Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, there were few members of the official party in Dallas — no mids, no D&B, no band — just the team, the coaches, and the great Navy fans!



<Photo 75#5: "Walt Flippin, his brother, and their wives wear the blue and gold in the sea of purple at ECU">

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**Walt Flippin**, along with his wife Jane and Walt's brother Robert and sister-in-law Tatyana, enjoyed the Navy victory over East Carolina in Greenville. Robert and Tatyana are just back in country from Malaysia. They are looking at homes in NC, much to Flipp's liking.

How about a New Year's Resolution? *I will send an update to the dearest friends of my youth through **Shipmate**. Want another one? I will check the list of company reps on the web site and I will fill the vacancy in my company (if applicable).* '75 Sir! Larry