

## U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY, CLASS OF 1975, SHIPMATE COLUMN

### JUNE-JULY 2017

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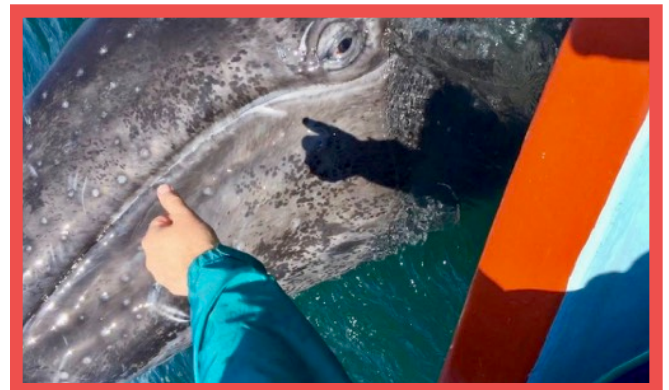
Dear 'mates: "Are you out there SEVUNTEEFIFE??" Forty-six years ago we were out there every morning for a PEP wake up session. Turns out that '75 is still out there — still out there and doing some amazing things. Many are retiring, but not slowing down. Many are still working, and accomplishing some life-changing and world-changing achievements.

**Brian Flannery** went on a six day motor-



cycle trip to Baja California. He and his friends stayed in the little town of San Ignacio, which is about two-thirds of the way down the peninsula to Cabo San Lucas. The main destination for this road trip was to see the California gray whales in the lagoon and bay. The gray whales come to this area from the Arctic every year to breed and have their young. The boats on this regulated, eco-friendly tour drive out to the lagoon and just drift. The moms bring their calves up to the boats. Brian guesses it's primarily to show them off, as proud mothers will. They allow you to touch them as they swim by. Way beyond cool!!!

<photos 75#1, 75#2, and 75#3: "Road trip! California gray whales in Baja">





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Members of the USNA '75 Facebook group had a chance to see Curt Coy in an Eyewitness News report from Bakersfield, CA. Curt is the deputy under secretary for economic opportunity at the Veterans Benefits Administration. It's very nice interview in which Curt shares how veterans can make the most of available benefits. A recent report shows that veterans are using earned benefits at record rates.

It's time to hand out another Coveted Scribe's Award. *[As always, the prize is all the Abita beer you can drink when you visit us in Florida. Air fare not included.]* This issue's award goes to **Dave Gray**—regular correspondent and world traveler. Mary and Dave traveled to Greece in April. Here is Dave's report.



"Thought I would check in and send an update. After retiring from Lockheed Martin, I decided to start my own consulting company (DPG Consulting, Inc.). I have been keeping busy, like what I do, and have the flexibility for golf and travel. Our most recent trip took Mary and me to Greece to celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary. Athens was like a second home to me from 1977-1980 while stationed in VQ-2 in Rota, Spain. We regularly deployed out of Hellinikon AFB. After 37 years, the changes were many but the people were just as friendly as I remembered and the food was still amazing. And, of course the monuments are unmatched. We were happy to see the Acropolis being restored.

(On our last visit 37 years ago you could walk all through it.) Every night we enjoyed the view from the rooftop bar at our hotel. We drove to Meteora for two days to see the monasteries on the cliffs and hired a private driver/tour guide for two days to see Delphi, Epidauros, Mycenae, Corinth, and Nafpoli. No trip to Greece would be complete without going to a few islands. This trip we went to Hydra, Poros, and Agenia. We were there during the Greek Orthodox Easter. On Good Friday, each church has a candle-lit procession in the streets, and on Easter day at midnight they have their mass. All the bells in the city go off, everyone has a candle and each person lights their candle from one another and fireworks are exploding. It was a very moving experience. I would be glad to share travel information if anyone is interested. (Contact Dave at [dvdgray75@gmail.com](mailto:dvdgray75@gmail.com)). Greece is having such hard financial times—it needs the tourists.





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When not traveling, we catch up with classmates at the Navy football games in Annapolis. The tailgate regulars are Nancy and **Steve Laabs** (who do a great job hosting the tailgate), **Steve Hubbard**, **Steve Curlee**, Diane and **Chris Cikanovich**, Elizabeth and **Mark Milliken**, and **Ed Seibel**. This year we attended the Navy-Notre-Dame game in Florida and enjoyed our stay with Denise and **Tom Cihlar**. The Army-Navy Game was a sad loss for Navy. However, it was fun being there and seeing Army win after 14 years. The noise was unbelievable. Time to start a new winning streak!

Family life is good. We still live in Clifton, VA. Our oldest daughter Corey is working for Deloitte and enjoying her life living in DC. Our

youngest, Chelsea, is working on her Masters in Environmental Science and Policies at George Mason University. She was awarded a teaching assistant position where she teaches two labs. Mary is still working as a Manager for The Clay Minerals Society and said she won't retire until after the 2019 meeting in Paris. This is fine with me because I go as a "kept man" to the meetings. That's all for now. Go Navy, Beat Army!"

**<photos 75#4, 75#5, 75#6, and 75#7: "The Grays in Greece—Acropolis, Meteora, Epidaurus, and Corinth">**

The March 2017 issue of SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN has a paper by **Carl June** and colleagues entitled **A New Model for Defeating Cancer: CAR T Cells**. Carl *et al.* report how some advanced cancers can now be successfully treated by synthetic immune cells that are more powerful and longer-lasting than any found in the body. And again we say BRAVO ZULU Dr. June!

**<photo 75#8: "Harry Selsor's latest award-winning photograph">** (Plebe ho!)

**Harry Selsor** enjoys his retirement and his hobby/avocation of wildlife photographer, specializing in the bird life near his and Shirley's home on the Broward River (Jacksonville). His photographs are regularly picked for publication. The above photo of a roseate spoonbill on final for landing was chosen by the Wildlife Conservation Society's *Wild View* blog. Check out Harry's photoblog at [www.reflections-on-broward.com](http://www.reflections-on-broward.com).



'75 Sir! Larry