

U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY, CLASS OF 1975, SHIPMATE COLUMN
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2018

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Dear 'mates: Welcome to the Dark Ages (2018 version). Somehow, the winter in Pensacola is a whole lot brighter than February days in Annapolis 46 years ago!

Tina and **Andy Howard** report some great news. After a very extended stay in an apartment near the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville FL, they weighed anchor in November and set sail west for their home in Houston. Andy's liver transplant is a success, but he remains in the recovery phase. He also graduated from the cardiac rehab unit at Mayo. Andy says that this event (complete with a hurricane evacuation) made the kidney transplant adventure of 17 years ago seem tame by comparison. Tina actually resumed her role as liver transplant care-giver during the Howards' last weeks in Jacksonville. She stepped in to handle things for a woman they met in the Mayo Clinic transplant support group until that patient's reinforcements could get to town. Well done, Tina!

Dr. **Gordon Roesler** and the DARPA team he leads were nominated for a nice award for excellence in innovation by *SpaceNews*. They are nominated in the category of "Government Leader of the Year / Military." Congratulations on the well-deserved recognition, Gordie!

As always, football season brings us chances to get together with classmates and friends. The 14th Company gathered for a mini-reunion on the weekend of 22-24 September. They enjoyed a Friday evening dinner at **Mark Harper's** home, a great Navy victory over Cincinnati which was followed by a gathering afterwards at **Jon Greenert's** home, and a Sunday brunch at **Mike Cecere's** home. Of the 21 remaining graduates, 14th had an amazing 17 attending!—**Nyles Christensen, Duke Snyder, Jim Gabor, Tom Brasco, Ken Hart, Al Eaton, Shaw Cohe, John Ginn, Mark Harper, Dan Vilotti, Dennis DiAntonio, Mike Cecere, Brian DiAntonio** (Honorary 14th company member), **Jack Moore, Jon Greenert, Tom Madre, Jesse Arildsen, and Randy Jencks**. 14th is hoping to continue to get together on a more frequent basis than the usual five-year intervals. They are entertaining plans to meet in places other than Annapolis. It's so nice to see classmates, to share old memories, and make new ones too!

<photo 75#1: "A great turnout from 14th Company!">



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<photo 75#2: “And the better half of 14th”>

Our class members who also share membership in the Navy Football Brotherhood gathered for their annual reunion over Veterans Day weekend in Annapolis. Organized by **Tim Harden**, they cheered Navy to victory over SMU and enjoyed a great evening at the Chart House.

<photo 75#3: “Flower Children of the Brotherhood”>

After guaranteeing eligibility for a 2017 Bowl Game, Navy traveled to South Bend for the annual battle with Notre Dame. Debbie and **Pat Sloan** live near-enough-by ND to host a nice gathering from 35th company — plus a few hangers-on. In addition to the Sloans, the group included Elizabeth and **Mark Milliken**, Annie and **Chris**



Benigno, Debbie and **Phil Troy**, Jeanine and **Rod Repka**, Merry Frey (flying solo without Tom that weekend), 1st company’s **Mike McDermott**, and the Repkas’ son Lucas and daughter-in-law Kelly.

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<photo 75#4: "On a wet and cold day in Indiana ... Go NAVY!">

I'm sure many of you who have traveled to Pensacola in the last 20 years have visited our outstanding National Museum of Naval Aviation onboard NAS Pensacola. Some of you are probably members of the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation. They put a slick quarterly magazine (cleverly entitled *Foundation*). Each issue features a past leader of Naval aviation, complete with a spread of pictures on the inside front and back covers. The Fall 2017 issue highlights our own Tammy and **Gary Jones**. Sure was nice to see one of the "young guys" getting recognized! [*Foundation is your Scribe's two-year old grandson's favorite, since it has lots of pictures of "airp'anes, helicopters, and ships!"*]

Well what do you know? Here I sit with a half-full column and I'm all out of things to steal ... err, umm ... better make that "cut-and-paste" ... from our Facebook page. So, you leave me no choice. You will have to come on over, settle in, and listen politely while I tell you about our trip to Hawai'i. Charlie and **Ty Aldinger '74** retired on Oahu after he completed tours as CO of the Joint Typhoon Warning Center and at CINCPAC. Charlie was the driving force behind an informal reunion of folks who studied Oceanography and Meteorology at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey in the late 70s. Nancy and I went four days early to spend some time at the Aldingers' beautiful Manoa Valley home. Then we all moved to the Hale Koa to spend five days enjoying old friends and insiders' tours around Ford Island and Honolulu. It was great to see Becky and **Don Nestor '72** once again (only 37years between chats). Ty and Charlie capped off the week with a terrific Halloween party at their home. Of all the great memories of the trip, the one that I will never, ever forget is an absolutely stunningly perfect "green flash" at sunset on Sans Souci Beach. No photographic evidence, but trust me, it was a split-second of the most amazing emerald green you can imagine on the Pacific horizon.

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<photo 75#5: "Ty and I found Karen Sabog, President of the Honolulu Parents club, at the Manoa Heritage Center. Her son, Lucas Tom is class of '18.">

<photo 75#6: "Retired Navy and NOAA oceanographers on the Surrender Deck of the USS MISSOURI">

OK. I promise. No more slide shows from the Scribe ... as long as you keep my in box full of cool stuff. But when the Gouge Locker runs empty? If you can't dazzle them brilliance, then baffle them with ...

'75 Sir! Larry

