

**U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY, CLASS OF 1975, SHIPMATE COLUMN
JULY-AUGUST 2018**

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Dear 'mates: Let's kick off this column with congratulations to **Dan Elins**. On 24 May, Navy Strategic Systems Programs (SSP) Director VADM Johnny Wolfe presented the SSP Director's Award to Dan. It was only the 32nd time the award has been presented in the 62-year history of SSP. At the pre-award continental breakfast, Admiral Wolfe asked Ruth, "Do you know what a REALLY BIG DEAL this is?" If Dan's co-workers can not solve a problem, they go visit "The Professor." Hopefully, pictures from the official Navy photographer will follow in a future *Shipmate*. (Not surprisingly, cameras and cell phones are not allowed in SSP spaces.)

On a much less happy note—we lost two members of the '75 family in recent months. **Steve DeWolf** perished in a crash while flying his vintage AT-6 Texan. According to Steve's son Jake, "He was the best damn father in the whole world. He died doing what he loved which was flying that yellow T-6 Texan."

<photo 75#1: "Jake and Steve and the yellow Texan">



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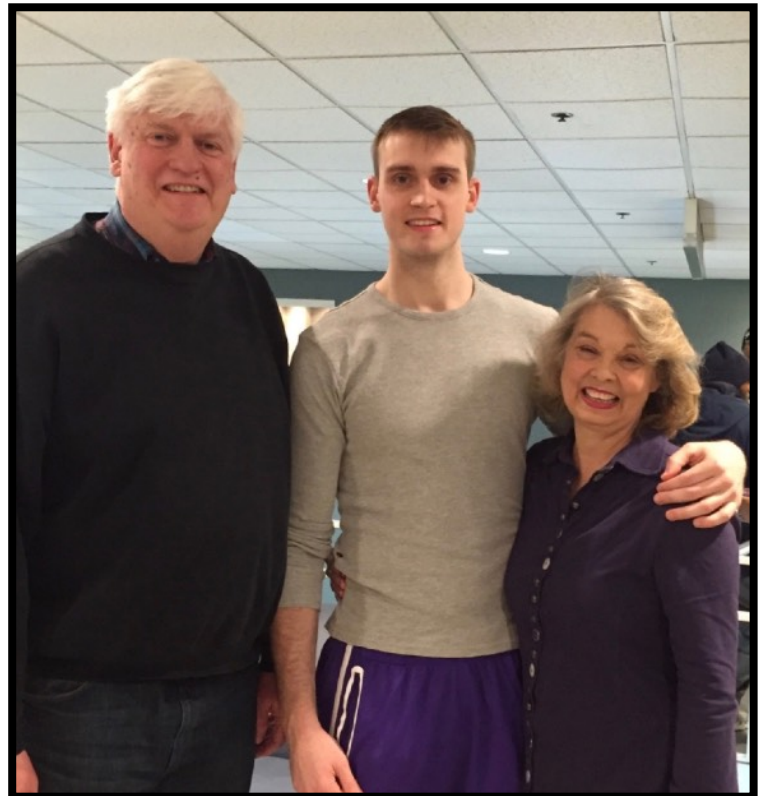
Zack Wilhoit sent the following:

"Kristi and **Bob Burns**' youngest son, Patrick (24), was tragically killed in a car accident on 6 May near their home in Lexington, MA. Some of you may remember that Bob and Kristi previously lost their oldest son to a car accident while he was in college within a few days of the 9/11 attacks. **Dave Gove** and I were able to attend Patrick's funeral and were treated like family by the entire Burns clan. I just have to say that Bob and Kristi are the two bravest and most faithful people I have ever met. Bob delivered a stunning, thoughtful eulogy for his son. I was fortunate to have met Patrick a couple of times when I attended his NYU basketball games where he was a star player. That said, I felt everyone in attendance really knew Patrick after Bob poignantly, and at times, humorously described his and Kristi's son's life, goals, successes, and challenges. It was a masterful tribute delivered under incredibly difficult circumstances. Patrick was buried near Charlotte, NC near his oldest brother. Jean and **Steve Stanley** and Lynda and **Bill Schenzel** attended the burial, representing '75 in support of the family. The Burns have two beloved adult sons whose leadership roles have been an incredible help throughout this terrible process."

<photo 75#2: "Bob and Kristi with Patrick">

It's always nice to hear from **Gary Lundeen**. Here's his report on a visit with Kate and **Craig Galloway**.

"In early April, while visiting daughter Major Colleen Galloway, USAF, son-in-law Kyle Clark, and precious grandbaby Sydney Frances, Kate and Craig (pronounced "Tex") Galloway took time to gather together with Beth and me at the Camp Verde General Store & Restaurant in Camp Verde, Texas (Pop. 41, Elev. 491). Camp Verde is in the Texas Hill Country west of "San Antone." (You're not at the edge of the world, but you can see it from there.) While buffalo lolled and roamed in the distance, the foursome had a grand time catching-up over light fare and warm camaraderie. New meaning was given to "*when two or three shall meet and old tales be retold*" — and Our Ladies ensured all language remained decent. To their chagrin, Navy and Marine wives are often wont to note that, *you can dress 'em up, but you can't take 'em out*. Craig is recuperating from portside hip surgery with the starboard side scheduled later this year. In fact, Tex and I are a 36-14-03 Bionic Duo and members of the USNA Class of 1975 Steel and Titanium Screws, Plates, Balls, Stems, and Limbs Club."



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<photo 75#3: “Tex, Gary, Kate, and Beth”>



We have some great writers and correspondents in our class. While it may appear that your Scribe is just being lazy by copying and pasting, I can't write it any better than **Peter Damisch's** latest tale.

“Still doing some “interesting expedition work” at sea: It's 0400 on the bridge—pounded by winds and seas from a Madagascar typhoon. We're trying to offload two armed Seychellois after a recent pirate incident. However, we are 1,000+ km from the main islands and can't take their weapons to Tanzania, our next stop. Now comes the “fun part.” Incredibly small, remote Assumption Island has no harbor. It's tricky as three of us jump into a rubber zodiac from the ship's platform, submerging every few seconds. We then load the “guards” and “Finance” to legally clear us. Waves are smashing the rough coral shoreline so our first landing attempt fails. After another hour we find a landing site which isn't safe and looks terrible, but might work. Unfortunately, waves are still breaking onto the fringing reef, then crashing on the beach. We've got to time everything so we can quickly get in and out before being flipped over and stranding ourselves. We make a few practice runs, then fly in on our 19' “surfboard,” slamming onto the beach. The good news: we didn't capsize. The bad news: we have to drag our 1+ ton zodiac, twist it around, then launch back into the surf while jumping on at the last second. We motor out buried in seawater, including one wave so large that we briefly ‘ground out’ our propeller. Another towers above us and one team member throws themselves forward to prevent our fuel tanks from being ejected.

The three of us in the zodiac agree that was one of the craziest things we have ever done but are enthusiastic about doing it again. We discuss options including the possibility that

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we might have to leave 'Finance' behind. Meanwhile, 'Finance' hikes over this desolate island controlled by India military while I come up with emergency signaling equipment from my backpack. Unfortunately, the tide is rising and the small, sandy beaches disappear, replaced by wave smashed, solid coral, leaving no chance to land. However, 'Finance' is a good swimmer. Perhaps we can motor in, have him jump, then throw a line and tow him past the surf. It might work. Finance hikes back overland with no road. Then we discover he also has a box and small, paperwork filled backpack.

We take a few practice runs close and parallel to the fringing reef but perpendicular to the waves. We must escape between one wave set and the next. If we screw up, we flip and its game over. Just after a large wave set passes, we roar in at high speed. The box is tossed and caught, then we throw ourselves down and hold on while the zodiac is caught sideways and almost overturns but we escape. Ok, one run down and two to go. The next pass is for the backpack is better as we just get wet and bounced around. Next we drive in a bit farther than it is safe to go. Finance jumps, swims and grabs a thrown line while we quickly reverse, and haul him into the boat, barely recovering our bow line before it fouls the prop. Now we return to our ship as wet, happy dogs. However, it's only morning and we still have to sail back to try landing at our Aldabra destination, one of the least visited UNESCO World Heritage sites and a tropical wildlife paradise. It's all in a day's work."

<photo 75#4: "Peter Damisch underway off Assumption Island">



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<photo 75#5: "Tidewater Happy Hour">



Several Norfolk-area classmates enjoyed an evening of camaraderie in May. From left to right in the photo: **Mark Klett, Dave Pruitt, Rick Schwarting, Dave Duffié, Craig Quigley, Gary Jones, Gary Yagiello.**

Wherever you find yourselves this summer, take time to enjoy the camaraderie! Type to you again in September! '75 Sir! Larry