

U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY, CLASS OF 1975, SHIPMATE COLUMN
SEPTEMBER 2018

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President: **Chris Cikanovich**
Sec'y: **CAPT Larry Warrenfeltz, USN (Ret.)**
5732 Tamarack Drive, Pace FL 32571

(chicke975@gmail.com)
(usna75scribe@hotmail.com)
850-525-8727

Web Page: <http://1975.usnaclasses.net>

Dear 'mates: As promised, here's photographic evidence of **Dan "Rudy" Elins'** Director's Award from Strategic Systems Program's VADM Johnny Wolfe, as reported in the July-August issue. Congratulations again, Dan!

<photo 75#1: "Strategic Systems Program Director's Award recipient, Dan Elins">

Andy Howard sent a nice update over Memorial Day weekend.

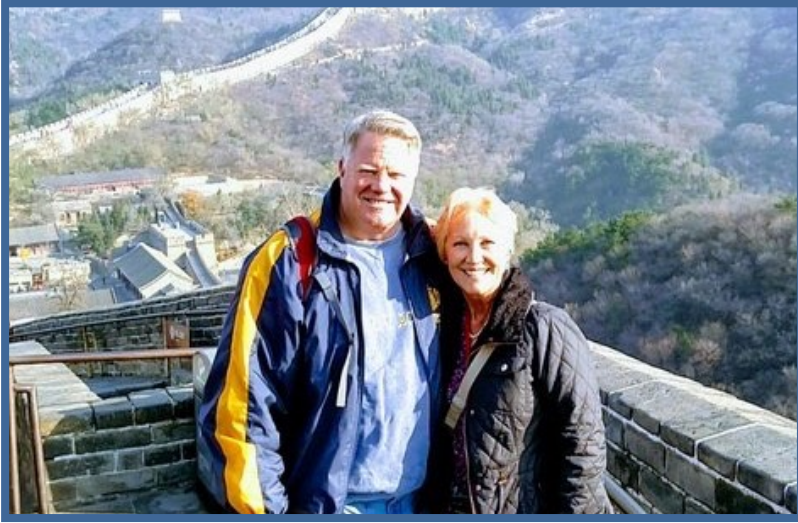
"Howdy all. Here's a long weekend, so I thought I would take some time to type. Oh, wait, I'm retired—every day is a long weekend! This is Memorial Day, time to remember those military people who have died in service. Not that they should be remembered only one day a year—just a day to concentrate your remembrances!



My one-year liver transplant anniversary is approaching on June 7 (it's been 18 years for the kidney). That's a statistical milestone for all transplant programs—measured in a percent of patients transplanted that have survived one year. The non-survivors include all reasons, even traffic accidents and other non-medically-related deaths. One year successfully alive also means I could consider changing to be followed by a different liver transplant program. In any case, happy to have made one year. We are off to JAX to a check-up and to renew friendships with those we met there. Just in time for hurricane season (remember all the ones we attracted while we were there?) In reflecting on one year, we also reflected on ten years of retirement (April Fool's Day). Both time spans have been adventurous. What else would we expect? Glad to be around to keep on going. Tina and I are both hoping things might slow down a bit—but doesn't everybody? As part of the one year evolution, I was also thinking about "the letter" that I would write the liver donor family. Now, that takes some reflecting. They beat us to it, writing us a letter! Tina and I sent separate letters back, figuring the perspective between patient and caregiver would be substantially different. We will see where it goes from here.

We have done some 5 kilometer volksmarches but I won't be climbing any mountains. Lab tests have stabilized pretty much. With positive results from the check up, lab draws can change from bi-weekly to monthly. That will help open travel windows. The best thing has been letting the phone ring! No more waiting for "the call." I registered with NOMOROBO.com and we just sit back and watch the phone ring and gobble up those robot calls."

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<photo 75#2: “Tom and Debbie Donaldson on the Great Wall”>

We received a quick note from **Tom Donaldson** updating us on his 2017-2018 travels.

He certainly logged some sea time during those months. First came seven days in October on the Yangtze River with Debbie during a two-week trip to China. In November he spent six days on the USS NIMITZ, along with son Thomas and daughter Krista. That was during a Tiger Cruise on his son Alex’s ship (returning from deployment). Finally came 19 days in

January-February, with son Thomas on an Antarctica adventure cruise. The Antarctica journey included a polar plunge in 28 degree water, a rough trip through the Drake Passage, and the ship being stuck in pack ice for five days, preventing them from crossing the Antarctic Circle.

<photo 75#3: “On the NIMITZ Tiger Cruise”>



<photo 75#4: “Tom, Thomas, Krista, and Alex”>

Well ‘mates, it’s short and sweet this issue. Close summertime deadlines tend to do that! But hey—I’m on vacation on the Outer Banks with Nancy’s family. It’s our 37th consecutive year, and we are now up to 32 extended family members. And

tonight is fish taco night — so I’m signing off! ’75 Sir! Larry