

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

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<photo 75#1: "Arctic Circle—Wassels, Cihlars, and Grays">

Dear 'mates: Welcome to the 2018 football season. By the time you read this, we will have a good idea how the Malcom Perry-led Navy offense will do. Here in July, I can only look forward hopefully to a good season. Perusing Army's schedule, it seems like it's time to resurrect and update our early '70s "fight song." Sing it with me now: *"We don't play Notre Dame. We don't play Tulane. We just play Lafayette, 'Cause that's the fearless Army way."* (Not to mention Colgate and Liberty.) Personally, I hope Army goes 11-1 and wins a bowl game.

Let's kick off this column with a great travel note from **Dave Gray**:

Mary and I met up with 33rd company-mates, **Tom Cihlar** and **Ray Wassel** and their wives (Denise and Mary Lou) in Alaska for a fantastic two-and-a-half-week land/cruise vacation. We started the adventure in Fairbanks, where we traveled up to the Arctic Circle via the Dalton Highway (the road built for the Alaskan oil Pipeline). There we put in a plug for Navy as you can

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see in the picture. In Fairbanks we found a great museum at the university, an antique car museum that not only had cars, but also fashion displays to the delight of the girls, and we went on a riverboat cruise. The next stop was Denali to view the unbelievable scenery and wildlife. It did not disappoint—everywhere you looked it was majestic and stunning. We then traveled by dome train to Anchorage. The 8-hour train ride really brought home the wilderness and vastness of Alaska (Alaskans call Texas their little sister). It truly is “the last frontier.” We boarded our cruise ship—the WESTERDAM—in Seward. We sailed down the inside passage to Vancouver with a few stops along the way in Glacier Bay, Haines/Skagway, Juneau, and Ketchikan. The towns and their histories were enjoyable along with a few side adventures to White Horse Pass by train, whale watching, and dog mushing. Our last two days were spent visiting Victoria on Vancouver Island (Butchart Gardens were beautiful) and Vancouver itself. We all agreed that this trip was everything we expected and much more. Alaska should be a must on anyone’s bucket list. Hopefully the WESTERDAM did not have to spend an extended time in port replenishing the bars after our stay.



Ray and Mary Lou Wassel live near Richmond, VA. They are both retired and spend their time golfing, volunteering with MOAA, and visiting their four grandchildren. Ray participates in the Senior Games and just qualified for the Nationals next summer in Albuquerque. Tom and Denise Cihlar are in Jacksonville, FL. Tom retired in May and is adjusting nicely with rounds of golf, hunting, fishing and catching up around the house. Denise will teach one more year and is

looking forward to retiring next spring. Mary and I keep working to fund our travels—Mary at the Clay Mineral Society, and me consulting to ManTech on various bids to the government. We are lucky that both our jobs are flexible enough to allow us to travel as much as we want.

<photo 75#2: “The guys at Denali”>

<photo 75#3: “MUSH! Wassels, Cihlars, Grays”>



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From a report by **Rob Glendinning**: A House Warming party hosted by Cici and **Dennis Poulos** at their gorgeous new home turned into a "House Swarming" by 5th company mates who also showed great sense

in marrying beautiful women and living in Florida. Someone remarked that it was just 47 years ago to the day that we were thrust together in Bancroft Hall to begin the adventure. "I do solemnly swear..."



<photo 75#4:
"Poulos house
warming—
Begleys, Reillys,
Wooleys,
Glendinnings,
Browns, Poulos's">

<photo 75#5:
"Fifth Company
Florida">

Navy Mutual was the proud sponsor of the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp Military Day baseball game in early July. Peg Begley, who as a Navy Mutual representative has been helping Sailors and their families understand financial benefits for more than 13 years was joined by

her husband **Grant Begley**, a retired Navy Captain, proud Naval Aviator, and Navy Mutual Member who threw out the first pitch.



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<photo 75#6: "Peg and Grant on the Jumbo Shrimp field in Jacksonville">

<photo 75#7: "Ferguson, Cikanovich, and Duffie">

From **Steve Ferguson**: "Two ragtag scalawags courting favor from His Excellency—Mr. President at the Eastern Shore White House. As you can see, it was a formal occasion, uniform-wise, and all hands maintained a s o m b e r deportment. Many thanks to The Most Gracious First Lady who was ever-

tolerant of us sailors. It should be noted that all three Navy warfare communities are represented here. We needed a Marine!"



<photo 75#8: "Scribe with Paul Harvey '62 at the Seattle Museum of Flight">

On a trip to the amazing Museum of Flight in Seattle, Nancy and I met one of the friendly and knowledgeable volunteer docents—**Paul Harvey** USNA '62. Type to you again next issue. '75 Sir! Larry