

U.S. Naval Academy, Class of 1975, Shipmate Column MAY 2021

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Dear 'mates, Ahhh ... spring time! Hope everyone is vaccinated and returning to the life outside the walls.



Buttermores, Mahoneys (active) and Mahoneys (retired)

James Buttermore sent us a note documenting a pre-COVID event at USNA. He and his wife Maria enjoyed the commissioning ceremony of the USS SIOUX CITY (LCS-11) on 17 November 2018 at the academy. James is pretty sure that he was the only USNA graduate in attendance who is from Sioux City. The Buttermore's daughter, Major Jennifer Mahoney USA, and her husband, Major Tom Mahoney USA, along with Tom's parents, BGEN Steve Mahoney USMA '79 and wife Yanny were also at the event. The November weather was pretty chilly (in

the 30s) but it was a good experience and, thanks to Steve's pull, the group had seats up front.

During the early run-up to last year's reunion (before COVID interference), **Marc Siedband** contacted **Bryan Covington's** wife Cathy to invite her to join the class at the reunion. After their reminiscences about Bryan's life, Marc and Cathy exchanged several emails about the Covington family. Children and seven grandchildren are all doing very well. Cathy sent a verse from Psalm 49 that Bryan had underlined in his bible. *"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah."* The photo is from Bryan's last active duty assignment as the XO of the NROTC Unit at Oklahoma.

Tom Kelley tells us that 25th Company had a great Zoom Happy Hour in early February. Thanks to numerous sea stories and BYOB refreshments (the only kind of refreshments at a Zoom Happy Hour) the party lasted for more than two hours. Ten grads and one non-USNA grad participated. Tom says it was great to see **Paul Viscovich**, **Wynn Calland**, **Randy Baughman** (resigned after Plebe year), **Jim Thoms**,

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Bo Clark, George Melnychenko, Denis Powers, Lunce Bass, Mike Groothousen, and Bob Giuda.

Well, I finally have room to continue with Tom's 25th Company update that he began in the October issue. **Dave Corley** lives in Plano, TX. After graduation, Dave went to Post Graduate School and then on to the nuke sub training pipeline. His first tour was as Damage Control Assistant and Weapons Officer on USS HAWKBILL (SSN 666) with classmates **Erwin Wunderlich** and **Bruce Miller**. After instructor duty in Groton, Dave served as the Navigator and Operations Officer on USS CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI (SSN 705), relieving classmate **Doug Philip**. Dave's third boat was USS PARCHE (SSN 683) where he relieved classmate **Dave McCall** as the Navigator and Operations Officer. Dave left active duty in 1988 and returned to the Dallas-Fort Worth area, where he met and married his wife. Dave stayed in the Reserve, serving with **Bill Kelley, Tom Kapurch, and Kevin Miller** at NR CARGRUONE as Sub Liaison Officer. Dave retired from the Reserve in 1997 after two grueling years at a VTU. Dave's two wonderful kids, Walker (28) and Erika (26), are sailing under their own power in Fort Worth and San Francisco, respectively. Dave's CIVTEX life has been as a product line manager and engineer at eight tech startups. Dave also did time at Cisco Systems, working on Enterprise and Small Business networking products. Dave is 100% retired now. Retired life is above average; he spends much of it at a local food pantry, feeding his inner nuke. Late nights find him issuing 'Bead Windows' to wanna-be Cold War submariners. He can't wait for the reprised 45th Reunion.

Kenan Knieriem resided in Honolulu, HI with his wife, Debi until his death in 2011. Kenan died while at sea fishing. He and his first wife had two children—**Kenan Knieriem, Jr. '06** and Katie (American University '08). Kenan was a Surface Warfare Officer during his six years on active duty, serving on destroyers. He remained in the Reserve and retired as a Captain. His most renowned assignment was as Commanding Officer of NR COMSUBRON Seven. As a civilian, Kenan was a very successful Investment Advisor with Merrill Lynch. He was a First Vice President and the Account Executive-in-Charge of managing the Merrill Lynch Institutional Advisory Division—Honolulu office. Kenan also headed the institutional fixed income trading desk providing institutional research and market coverage to major banks, trust companies, and governments. Kenan spent his free time on a soccer field or on his fishing boat, *Ikaika*.

Bryan and Bradley Covington



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After 30 years in the Navy and six years with Johns Hopkins APL, **Chuck Louie** and his wife Angela have been enjoying retired life to the fullest. These days they spend much of their spare time traveling to many continents (including Antarctica) and discovering the many rich cultures, exceptional cuisines, fine wines, and beautiful languages all over the world.

Still more 25th Company updates to come. Standing by to execute

West Point Raid (Epilogue). For the last three *Shipmates*, we've enjoyed **Tom Dempsey's** story of the November 1974 raid on our brothers on the Hudson. Tom did some further research and shared some additional background information on the participants.

The primary escort was a really sharp, highly-decorated, combat-wounded, medically-retired USMA-graduate Army Captain named Paul Bucha. It was Bucha who suggested to H.Ross Perot '53 that the Chaplain might be willing to play along with Perot's plan. That chaplain was Reverend Jim Ford, a Swedish Lutheran clergyman who had been at the USMA since early 1961 and was then the West Point Chief of Chaplains. (In 1979, Ford became Chaplain to the U.S. House of Representatives where he served for 21 years.)

While staying at Chaplain Ford's quarters one evening, Mr. Perot got into good natured ribbing with the Chief Chaplain and Brigadier General Pete Dawkins (USMA '59, Rhodes scholar, and 1958 Heisman Trophy winner). Chaplain Ford thought it would be fun to have Perot play "Anchors Away" and the "Marine Hymn" on the Cadet Chapel organ at midnight. As it was one of the largest organs in the western hemisphere, the Cadet Chapel organ playing Navy-Marine Corps tunes would not only wake the Cadets but resonate for miles throughout the Hudson Valley. Thus H. Ross Perot, the same guy who helped institute the Brigade honor system, had found his "in" to West Point.

According to (co-conspirator) General Dawkins, "To get to the (Cadet Chapel organ) carillon, we had to walk up these back circular stairs, then creep across planks at the top of the church. We were kind of giddy with the mischief. Then with great gusto, Ross did indeed play Anchors Aweigh." Shortly afterwards, Dawkins and Perot could see multiple lights coming on in the barracks, flashing lights on MP vehicles and then cadets storming up the hill toward the chapel. Chaplain Ford skedaddled, leaving the two senior graduates to face the music. "We scrambled down the passageway believing that the event was over. But when we got to the door of the chapel, the military police were there, and they arrested us. We were laughing about it, thinking it was a big joke. But the military police didn't have a great sense of humor, so we were locked up in jail for several hours. We began to get concerned that this was really something more than a prank. Finally, the (West Point) superintendent was awakened, got the gist of it and thought it was a hoot. So we were released." Any record of their "criminal activity" was expunged.

The Toms (Dempsey and Kelley) have carried me as far as they could. I need other willing classmates to step up to relieve them as column-stuffers. Or ... I could always tell some sea stories. (Just a threat, guys!) '75 Sir! Larry