

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

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Dear 'mates, Hard as it is to believe, '21 has hit the fleet. Our "Another-Link-in-the-Chain" class — USNA 2025 — will arrive in Annapolis this month! Throughout '25's four-years-together-by-the-bay, we will be part of many of their significant events. Beginning with I-Day (COVID precautions permitting), classmates from '75 will be there as mentors for '25. **Steve Hubbard** has accepted the challenge to chair our ALITC efforts. One of Steve's first tasks was to put together a committee to design a challenge coin that we will present to every plebe as part of their honor concept training near the end of plebe summer. I am absolutely amazed at the success of the committee's two Zoom meetings. I have to say that we came up with a home run of a design. The coins (which will be produced by Capital Gifts and Awards) will also be available for purchase. I can almost guarantee that you will want one! More details to follow. In addition to Hubbs and your scribe, committee members included **Tom Kelley, Ric Johns, Bob Sweeney, Chris Cikanovich, Steve Laabs, Bill Daley, Ray Coffey, Marc Siedband, Alex Plechash, Steve Curlee, and Dave Duffie**. We were joined on the second Zoom by Holly Powers of USNAAA and Gary Harkins of Capital Gifts and Awards.

Like many other companies during pandemic quarantine, 9th Company gets together for occasional Zoom Come Arounds. During one of them, we were laughing about things we remembered from our time together in the early 1970s. Someone mentioned the Forrestal Lecture featuring Gloria Steinem. Nobody remembered much of what she said, but everyone remembered that the menu for evening meal included fresh whole oranges. Of course, Ms. Steinem had no idea that we traditionally pocketed fresh fruit from evening meal for a snack during study time later that night. She just saw four thousand men armed with potential projectiles — and I do think we frightened her.

Jay Carrizales followed up with a story of meeting Gloria Steinem years later. She had come to talk to students at the University of New Mexico in 2012. After her talk, there was a small dinner for Ms. Steinem and selected guests. Jay took his 10-year old daughter to the talk and dinner since his wife had duties elsewhere. After dinner, he took Cosi to meet the guest speaker and to chat for a few moments. After a brief conversation, Jay handed Ms. Steinem an orange. She took it graciously, but one could see she was a bit puzzled at the "gift." He reminded her that she had once spoken at USNA. At the mention of Navy, the light came on and she smiled and laughed. She asked Jay if he had been there that night and laughed even more.

Peter Damisch has no stories of remote exploration adventures this year, as his expeditions were quarantined. He was in Laos when things started to unravel, bailed out of Vanuatu, and barely made it onto one of the very last flights out of Australia before they closed the country. Peter did share a link to a *NY Times* "State of the Unions" feature from the 23 February LOVE section. Peter and his wife, Lesley Friedsam, met in 2003 on the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia where they were both visiting the grave of British explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton. In 2006 they returned to the Shackleton grave site to exchange vows. The detailed article (produced after dozens of interviews over many hours) is fascinating. You can find it at <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/fashion/weddings/a-marriage-grows-deeper-during-the-pandemic.html>

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

Gary Miller at the Senior Games



Gary Miller and I exchanged a couple of emails. He sent along a copy of the *Florida Bar News* story on his participation in the 2020 Florida Senior Games. (TAMPA'S MILLER STRIKES GOLD AT 2020 FLORIDA SENIOR GAMES.) Gary won both the 800m and the 1500m events. The Games were almost cancelled due to COVID but, fortunately for Gary and other "mature" athletes, the Florida Sports Foundation in Tallahassee finally decided to push forward with the annual event, which was conducted in December in Melbourne. It's always fun to report on Gary's longstanding addiction to masters track and field.

Gary invited me to stop by Tampa if my softball state umpire-in-chief duties took me there. I mentioned that this year's state finals will be at the National Training Center softball complex in Clermont (near Orlando), but with 21 games in five days I probably wouldn't make the I-4 drive to Tampa. That reminded Gary of the year there was an "all-comers" meet at the NTC track and field site. There were so many participants that the meet quickly bogged down. To speed things up, the officials decided to combine the age groups for some of the longer races. Gary says,

"When I lined up for the 1500m, there were so many runners of all ages it looked like the start of the New York City Marathon. To avoid being sucked into the blistering pace set by the fastest high school and college runners in Florida, I simply zeroed in on the runners with gray hair and settled into a reasonable rhythm. Though it was a bit confusing, I ran a good race and was pretty sure I had won my age group. Unfortunately, the officials had underestimated the number of timers needed to keep track of a field that large and weren't sure of the places except for the first few runners. So they corralled all the participants onto the infield and instructed us to line up in the order of finish. For the next forty-five minutes we were all walking around scrutinizing one another to reconstruct the

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

order of finish. (Not so easy when seven people fit the description of “the guy in the blue singlet.”) The word FUBAR came to mind, though they ultimately did a pretty good job of sorting things out.”

I also enjoyed exchanging a couple offun emails with **Steve Ferguson**.

“Heidi and her ever-ready camera caught a couple of Old Goats hanging around the barn one February morning. Interestingly enough, although we’ve had the old guy (the hairy one with the horns— but wait, that really doesn’t clarify, does it?!) for almost 17 years—a long life for a pygmy goat—we never got around to naming him. I k n o w ... I know....’Bill’ would have been the logical choice, but we’ve always just referred to him as “the male goat.” He was originally part of a pair of young pygmies that actually turned out to be three because, unknown to us, the female was in foal when we got them. The offspring and the female passed on a number of years ago but this old guy is tough and has hung in there. If you can read the goat’s lips, he’s saying, “BEAT ARMY!”



And after a social meeting with President Chick, another missive arrived from Fergie in March:

“Twas my honor and privilege to be granted an audience and then break bread with Himself yesterday in the quiet Eastern Shore hamlet of Berlin, MD. I was all ears as He waxed philosophical about the office, our Class, and the challenges facing our Sacred Institution. The beer was also good. In addition, while sitting six feet away from everyone, we noticed the guy at the next outdoor table was a Whoop. Three guys in the same restaurant having received a free edjumacation! What a small world. It was fun exchanging a few pleasantries with him. I congratulated him on the most recent A-N game. He was polite and didn’t rub it in. Oh ... he also referred to us as *youngsters!* HA! (He was class of ’65.)”

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Plans are proceeding for Reunion 45 MOD 1. Notre Dame weekend (4-7 November) in Annapolis. Get vaccinated if you haven't already, and prepare to enjoy a great time with the friends of your youth. '75 Sir! Larry



Two more old goats