

U.S. Naval Academy, Class of 1975, Shipmate Column SEPTEMBER 2023

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Dear 'mates, Just when you think the Class of '75's contribution to the Long Blue Line has long since passed, **Tim Born** forwarded a Sit Rep letting us know that on 26 May his youngest daughter Heather received her commission — along with over a thousand other bright-eyed men and women of the Class 2023. The total included 744 Ensigns (539 men and 205 women) and 257 Second Lieutenants (198 men and 59 women). The times have certainly changed since our heyday — as evidenced by Heather being among

Born family at Heather's USNA graduation



Born family at Hanna's undergrad pilot helo training graduation



dozens of other women selecting Marine Ground as their first choice. As luck would have it, she received one last “Navy Good Deal” by drawing the short straw and being assigned to the first TBS class with a report date of 5 June.

Joining Tim for the celebration were members of another Long Blue Line (Air Force style) comprised of his wife, Dana (USAFA '83 and former USAFA Dean of Faculty) and eldest daughter, Hanna (USAFA

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'20) who two weeks earlier graduated from undergraduate pilot helicopter training (UPHT) at Fort Novosel (formerly Fort Rucker), AL. Following an initial instructor pilot tour, she will continue onto advanced PHT at Kirtland AFB, NM for training in the HH-60W. For the eagle-eyed among you, you may note that Tim is wearing the same Dress Whites (long since "retired" by the Marine Corps) that he and his fellow Marine options were commissioned in 48 years ago.

As always, 18th company showed their family attitude and commitment to each other at the committal service for company mate **William "Milo" Meyers**, held in Delaware this Spring. **Dan "Rudy" Elins** is the organizing force and the glue of this amazing company of Flower Children.

Five classmates attended the Spring USNAAA Board of Trustees meeting in Annapolis. **Alex Plechash**, **Tom Gregory**, **Craig**

Quigley, **Steve Hall** and **Bill Squires** represented the class and fellow graduates. Thank you all

for your service to USNA and to the alumni association.

At a June ceremony at the National War College, **EJ Wunderlich** happened to run into fellow USNA '75 submariner **Les Foster**. The Foster and Wunderlich families were there to celebrate their sons' NWC graduation. In the photo: LCOL Matt Wunderlich USAF, EJ Wunderlich '75, Les

18th Company at the Meyers committal service



Classmates at the spring BoT meeting



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Foster '75, and CDR James L. Foster USN.

Let me turn the keyboard over to special guest Scribe **Steve Ferguson** for a fantastic report on the luau at the end of the youngster year for the Class of '25.

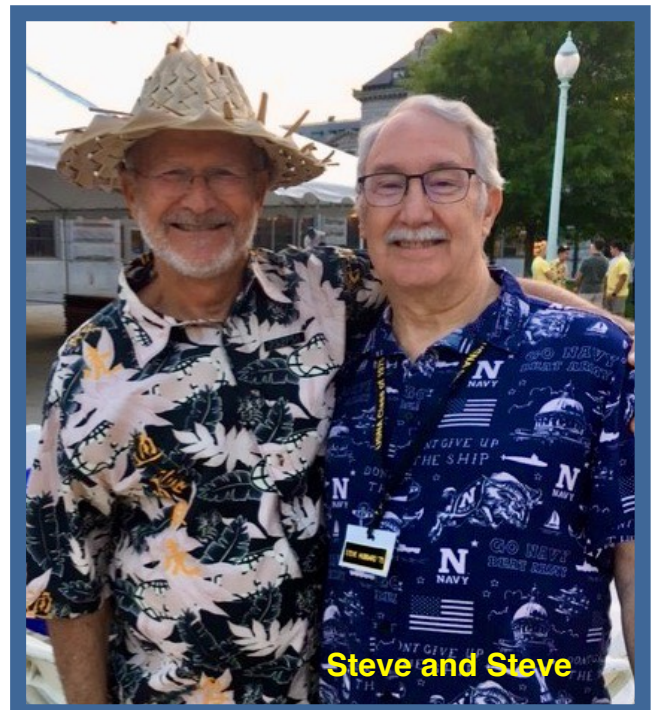
“As Another Link In The Chain sponsors (granddads???) of the Class of 2025, our Class was invited to be their guests at a new tradition at Navy: The End-of-Youngster-Year Class Picnic. This year's theme was a Hawaiian (OOPS....I mean Hawai'ian) Luau, conducted in the Yard in Smoke Park/the L-A Area, and the event was fantastic! Brief summary follows:

The Youngster Luau was great/wonderful/yummy/etc! Pulled pork (spicy and not), grilled chicken, baby back ribs; vegans needed not apply. Yes, there were individual salads for fiber and the meat-averse ... plus homemade peach and berry cobbler and cookies. And ... there was keg beer — two kinds! Navy was never like this for us. The Class of 2025

acquitted themselves well but looked SO very young. Doing the math, it actually is possible that, age-wise, they could be our grandkids. All were respectful to our table of a dozen or more gray heads (haze gray heads??). There was no downside but we grays did agree that the DJ playing continuous Rave....music???....at 10 giga-decibels (which echoed between the 5th and 6th wings) made it impossible to converse at the table without SCREAMING at each other but ... the Mids loved it! Good thing that I had Hubbs' starboard ear.

It was nice 're-meeting' new friends/Classmates, as always happens when you haven't seen each other for almost 50 years. We have certainly changed a bit! In the photo below, my Roomie is the good-looking one, while I'm the barnacle wearing the palm frond hat. Best Man Chick in the group shot even looks taller than me — perhaps he's wearing aviator/elevator platform shoes?

From port to starboard in the group photo: **Steve Laabs** with Nancy, Diane Cikanovich, Mary (nee Kilcline, Pat's sister) Novak, **Steve Hubbard**, Jan Schoenbauer, **Bob Young**, **Steve Ferguson**, **Chris Cikanovich**. There were several more Classmates at the event (**Dave Gough**, **Ron**



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Casey, Jimmy Jackson, Rob Sweeney, Jim Phillips, Mike Lipari, Tom Gregory, and Ric Johns) but unfortunately, they missed the photo-op.”



And now, a report from **Tony Barbieri**.



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The brains behind the event: Laurie, Debbi, Mary Ellen, and Linda



“Howdy Guys: This was one of those events where you enjoy writing the After-Action-Report. Of the twenty remaining members of 20th Company, eight grads participated in the 8th annual “Hackin’ for Harden” golf tournament at the Legacy Golf course in Phoenix. As we know, the Harden Family started a memorial fund in the name of their son, Josh, who passed at 32 years of age after a (*very*) brief bout with cancer. Josh was a terrific young man whose passion, besides family, was golf. As a certified professional caddy, Josh worked at the Legacy Golf Resort in Phoenix. One of his true joys was getting children and young adults involved in golf. In recognizing Josh’s devotion to the sport, especially his involvement with young people, the Hardens, in concert with the Legacy Golf Resort, sponsor a golf weekend each year. The proceeds go to the First Tee of Phoenix for youth scholarships. The festivities started with our usual toast (and roast) of those in 20th Company that have gone before us ... Our most recent loss is **AB (Bruce) Johnson**, who passed in May.

On 2 June, a pre-tournament planning exercise was held at Tim’s son Andy’s pub — Four Peaks Brewery in Phoenix. Andy is the Brew Master there. This year’s event garnered a record breaking donation to

First Tee in excess of \$35,000 from entrances fees and contributions, including from many grads. A great “shotgun start” featuring more than forty foursomes reminded me of WWII movies of Rommel in North Africa. The day included best-ball events for longest ball, participants from past First Tee awardees, and “beat the pros.” (Of course, Laurie Harden, Debbi Shaw, Mary Ellen Hoffman, and Linda Barbieri kept us honest). Tim thanks all the many Alumni, especially his son, **Matt Harden ’99** (really?) and his teammates; plus hundreds of well-wishers and supporters. Doing the Yeoman’s work were Laurie, Tim’s son Andy and daughter Megan, and *their families and friends* (without whom this would be just another beer-bust).

While the tournament is always the first Saturday in June, donations to First Tee in Josh’s honor are welcome throughout the year. We (all eight 20th-ers) would love to face



20th Company sponsored a tournament hole. 99 and 00 are on report for the graffiti

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off with the rest of '75 next year. Details forthcoming! This is truly a memorable and worthwhile event for a special guy ... we hope to see more of "us" next June!

I've got a special treat saved for next month's issue. The latest adventure in the exploring life of **Peter Damisch**. This time it isn't polar bear guard duty in the Arctic or braving sub-zero temperatures and high seas around Antarctica. Find out in the October *Shipmate*!

75 Sir! Larry