

U.S. Naval Academy, Class of 1975, Shipmate Column JULY-AUGUST 2024

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Dear 'mates, I am beginning this column with the annual announcement that our Herndon record still stands! The Class of 2027 completed the task in 2:19:11 — only an hour and fifty-nine minutes longer than it took us.

So sorry to say that we have lost another good man too soon. **Keith Zwingelberg** passed away unexpectedly on 26 May. Our condolences to Keith's wife Gwenn and the Zwingelberg family.

The Class was well-represented at the annual Alumni Association Board of Trustees meeting. **Bill Squires, Craig Quigley, Steve Hall, and Alex Plechash** posed on the deck of the new alumni center (aka '75 House). It's a spectacular building with a nice view of the Academy.

Dr. **Carl June** was honored in April as a winner of the 2024 Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences — “The Oscars of Science.” Carl's ongoing research in cancer immunology has saved many lives. Since he first developed chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T cell immunotherapy, more than 34,000 patients have received the treatment. BZ Classmate!

Our Links in the Chain of '25 held their final major event of their Segundo year on 18 May. Early on in the planning stages, they invited '75 to join them at the 2024 Ring Dance. It was such a popular idea that 25's Ring Dance Chair arranged for a second binnacle containing the waters of the seven seas just for our attendees. Two of the participants on the “older” side of Dahlgren Hall



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were **Dan “Rudy” Elins** and the amazing Ruth Hasten Elins. Ruth said the heck with the Hospice bed — she was going to Ring Dance! She did, and they continued on to visit some of Dan’s history and friends in WV, DE, and OH before returning home to Tellico Village, TN. Ruth is showing all of us how it should be done.



During the dance, president **Chris Cikanovich** and Another-Link-in-the-Chain chairman **Steve Hubbard** met with USNA Superintendent VADM **Yvette David '89**. Steve presented the Supe a 75/25 Honor Coin and explained how we became the Flower Children of the Brigade. The admiral loved the story and the strong *link* between our two classes.

Received a nice note from **Greer Puckett** ...

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2025's Ring Dance

made even better when I ran into classmates during my work. These included **Steve Hall**, **Ken Hart**, and **Bob Koppers**. I was walking down starboard side of USS MICHIGAN in Groton, CT one day and said hello to Steve as he passed me. In Holy Loch, Scotland, I ran into Bob at the O-club one Friday night and Ken shortly thereafter on the tender.

Over these many years, I have had the privilege to work with the finest people I have ever known — the submarine officers and enlisted personnel of the United States Navy. Whether we were in a shipyard, on sea trials, or down at Cape Canaveral for Demonstration and Shakedown Operations (DASO), I

“Due to Covid slamming the world when I retired four years ago, I just recently received a Letter of Appreciation from Vice Admiral Johnny Wolfe, Commander of Strategic Systems Programs. Over a nearly forty-year career with Westinghouse/Northrop Grumman, I worked on every American TRIDENT submarine, two of the UK Vanguard submarines and over 20 of the forty-one for Freedom Polaris/Poseidon submarines. More recently I also thoroughly enjoyed my time involved with testing and writing procedures for the new Columbia Class submarine.

I had a wonderful career that was

Greer receives his retirement letter of appreciation. Just a bit late!



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always enjoyed my time with them and call many of them my friends to this day.

Upon the passing of my husband in 2021, I moved to Las Vegas where I have made many new friends and have been visited by Debbie and **Pat Sloan** and **Larry Kloth**. If any of you come to town (and I expect some of you will), please give me a call. I know some good restaurants.”

The week before Memorial Day, I returned to the Legends Way Ballfields in Clermont for the Florida state softball championships. It is always one of the hottest, most exhausting, and absolute **best** weeks of my year. As the Florida High School Umpire-in-Chief, I see some great softball, hang out with some of the best umpires in the country, and train our crews from around the state over the course of 21 games. This year was especially sweet as my “home town team” — the Pace Patriots — won the 6A State Championship. MaxPreps (the national high school sports authority) called the Florida 6A division the “toughest championship to win in the country.” No wonder. The four teams that made it to Clermont were all ranked in the top twelve high school softball teams — in the country! The four pitchers we saw are committed to Florida, Florida State, LSU, and UCLA. When we see them again, it will be on ESPN.

Enjoy a wonderful summer, and drop a postcard to your Scribe! 75 Sir! Larry

