

U.S. Naval Academy, Class of 1975, Shipmate Column MARCH-APRIL 2025

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President: **Chris Cikanovich**
Sec'y: **CAPT Larry Warrenfeltz, USN (Ret.)**
5732 Tamarack Drive, Pace FL 32571

(chicke975@gmail.com)
(usna75scribe@hotmail.com)
850-525-8727

Web Page: <http://1975.usnaclases.net>

Dear 'mates, Thanks to the immense and inexhaustible effort of webmaster **Andy Howard**, our class website has a new look. The link is in the column header above. This is the primary site for all 50th Reunion information. See the FAQ section under the **50TH REUNION** tab. Registration will be open around the time you receive this issue.

While you are on line, cruise on over to the Gulf to Goat webpage (www.gulftogoat.navy) and review the ambitious and very cool plan for October's bike ride from Apalachicola to the Navy goat statue inside Gate 1. This issue's focus charity is The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, which is the world's leader in the search for a cure for CF and supports a broad range of research initiatives to tackle the disease from all angles. Our classmate **Bill Squires** has a son who has been battling CF since age five. Bill has devoted tremendous amounts of time and money to helping the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in their mission. Now all of us can help in the cause.

Warmest congratulations to 75's newest Distinguished Graduate, **Jon Greenert**! The induction ceremony was in March. Most well deserved, Classmate!

Congratulations as well to **Alex Plechash**, who was elected to the position of Chair of the Minnesota Republican Party.

And while we're handing out congratulations, here's to **Dave Frost**. At the Pull for Navy rowing banquet on 22 February, Frosty received the 2025 Craig Thrasher Service to Rowing Award. The Class of '75 rowers presented ALITC coins to their Class of '25 counterparts. As part of the ceremonies, the 75 Crew Legacy Gift was presented at Hubbard Hall. *[At the time of this writing, the gift fund was at \$270K and rising.]*

Once again, we've lost a very good man far too soon. **Jay Carrizales** succumbed to heart failure A company mate of your



Alex with Lara Trump on the night before Inauguration Day 2025"

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Scribe, J.J. was known throughout the Brigade for his energy, enthusiasm, and love of life. When I was hospitalized for my first cancer surgery in 2001, one of my first visitors was one of our 9th company plebes — **Lee Price '78**. Jay called Lee and told him, “Plebe year never ends. Get your butt over to the Naval Hospital and check on Warrenfeltz.”

A number of 'mates attended the Service Assignment night event for our links in '25. The event does a wonderful job in bringing the entire class together to share in the excitement and, in some cases, disappointment over their Service Assignment. As always, the firsties were more than happy to include the old guys in the festivities. The new process is certainly different than what we experienced. Nowadays, the mids fill out a dream sheet when they start 1/c year. The Navy massages them to accommodate each set of dreams based on class rank and the needs of the Navy. “The main purpose of the Naval Academy is to deliver “war fighters” and Unrestricted Line Officers to the Navy and Marine Corps.”

Special thanks to **Steve Hubbard** who does a fantastic job leading our ALITC efforts. In addition, we thank Nancy Gough, who made special candy with wrappers that joined the 75 and 25 class crests. Nancy is also responsible for the wonderful job of taking the group photo and using her photoshop skills to make sure all hands are included in the photo.



Service Assignment night for '25

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On 11 January 2025 at Pier Bravo, Mayport FL, members of the class of '75 braved the cold of Northern Florida and boarded USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75) for the awarding of the USNA '75



Leadership Award. [Some Background: The ship is named for Medal of Honor recipient Donald Cook, Colonel, USMC. On 4 December 1998, DDG 75 was commissioned at Penn's Landing Pier in Philadelphia. At the reception the evening before, representatives of USNA 75 — Steve Hubbard, **Larry Warrenfeltz** and **Chris Cikanovich** —announced the institution of the USNA 75 Leadership Award.] The Leadership Award is presented annually to the Junior Officer who exhibits the highest ideals of leadership as determined by their peers and Cook's Commanding Officer. Each recipient is awarded a sword provided by the US Naval Academy class of 1975.

Members of our class have presented the award each year to the selected junior officer. The award ceremony usually is made as a solo event with a single member of the class presenting the award. This continued even when the ship was forward deployed in Rota, Spain. For the first time, the 2025 ceremony included eleven classmates and four spouses/significant others. We were also honored to have Donald Cook's son Tim and his wife Tina present for this award ceremony. Attendees included Chris Cikanovich, **Sam Dennis**, **Mike Engler**, **John Ginn**, Monica and **Steve Harmon**, **Bill Neill**, Gail and **Dave Penman**, **Bill Shannon**, Cindy and **Bob Sweeney**, **David Thompson**, Dawn Crowley, and **Bill Weyand**.

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LTJG Rowell did an outstanding job as the COOK's escort officer. Each classmate (and one spouse) who retired above the rank of O-5 was bonged aboard (forcing them to remember



exactly how to properly board a ship). They enjoyed a great Navy lunch in the wardroom and received a detailed tour of the ship before the crew was formed for the awards. They did note that the ladders seem to be much steeper now than they were in the 70s.

Since the COOK recently returned from forward deployment and immediately had a change of command, the CO was understandably unable to make the award a priority until recently. Consequently, we were two years behind in the awards. RADM Bill Shannon and CAPT Bob Sweeney presented swords to the two recipients who were present. One award-winning lieutenant was TAD.

Nancy and I look forward to seeing many, many of you in October. Hopefully, the Big Blue Navy football team will be building on 2024's success when we gather in Annapolis. The Athletic's "Way Too Early Top 25" for 2025 has us at #24. I don't disagree. Both Army and Navy had memorable football seasons last year. Army was 12-2, won the American Athletic Conference championship, led the nation in rushing, won the Joe Moore award, but lost to Navy. Navy went 10-3, won the Commander-in-Chief trophy, and beat Army. (I'll take our season over theirs.) 75 Sir! Larry