

Shipmate November-December 2015  
Duke Longworth  
28 September 2015

Fall is nearly gone by the time you receive this column; however, as I prepare the column fall has just begun! There's much I like about fall: football, changing colors, the cool, crisp air, memories of fun fall activities! I hope you have a fun, family-filled fall! I hope to see many of you at a Navy football game this fall!

First up is a note from **Bill Jenkins '70**: "Duke, I was riding my bike in RAGBRAI (largest bike ride in world-15,500 riders this year) last week when I came across your classmate **Jim Gosma** in a beer tent: I've attached a photo of us (he's on the left with the nice jersey!). Turns out Jim and I were members of the Glee Club; small world, as they say. He's just retired as a Delta pilot and was riding in his first RAGBRAI (I was on my second). We cycled about 500 miles during the week-long ride. Lots of stops along the way in small towns to eat and drink. It's a fun time and is a great adventure for anyone who enjoys riding a bike. Bill Jenkins '70." Thank you Bill! This ride is on my must do list for '17!



CAPTION: (L-R) Jim Gosma and Bill Jenkins

**Jim Gosma** followed up with this note: “Duke, I just completed RAGBRAI, bike ride across my home state of Iowa, with some old high school friends. Saw one other grad, Bill Jenkins, '70. Here is the end of the ride, dipping the front tire in the Mississippi River in my hometown of Davenport, IA. If anyone is interested in this next summer, contact me. Cheers, Goz.” Nice photo! I plan to join you in '17!



CAPTION: Jim Gosma in the Mississippi River!

Next is a note from **Eric Benson**: “Duke, I was in Annapolis for refresher Blue and Gold Officer (BGO) training July 12-16 and was amazed at the positive changes in our Academy; it was even fun living in Bancroft Hall and dining (yes, dining) in King Hall. I’m in my fifth year as a BGO and am very encouraged by the quality of men and women that are applying to the Academy. I am very fortunate that the competition was not that tough back in 1967 or I would have had a very different life. I topped off the short week of renewal with dinner on Wednesday with Jane (**Skip**) **Wilhelm** and Gail and **Ed Mathus**.

“My next adventure is to Ireland in September for golf and *True North* at the Clifden Arts Festival. The music maestros, *True North*, were formed in the bowels of Bancroft Hall and survive to this day spanning the American northwest from Portland to Eagle River, Alaska. *True North* are Toni (London) and **Bruce Batten, Denny Walsh, Janet and Gareth Tabor** plus a couple of non-USNA types. Also in the band is the master harmonica virtuoso Benjy Cockman and a fiddler to be named later (the previous fiddler, Charli Meachem, retired).

“This will be our second trip to Ireland to find *True North*. Our first, which also included Suz and Ed **Bouton**, Ann and Hugh **Butt** and **Bill Long** was in 2013 and included weeks of golf, great music and a pint or two lifted at the end of each day.

“I see that the next deadline is the day we fly back but will try to send a photo or two from the Auld Sod before your next deadline. If I am successful expect a golf club or pint of Guinness to figure in the picture. Eric Benson.” This trip sounds like lots of fun! Perhaps I will get to visit Ireland one day!

I was pleased to receive the following note from **Terry Tonkin**: “Aloha Duke, as time passes, I am even more interested in the comments and updates from class mates. I guess now that life is slowing a bit, I'm a little better at appreciating the remarkable opportunities and people who have been part of my life over the ‘decades.’

“Shauna and I moved to Hawaii in 2009 and are thankful for every day here. I'm blessed to have my granddaughter and three children nearby. I have an old wooden trawler that we often take out to Kaneohe Bay to snorkel, barbeque, and enjoy the gift of creation. Shauna is the Director of Education at the Pacific Aviation Museum which has been a great time for me to reconnect with my aviation roots. Frequently, I have the opportunity to follow her around as she visits aviation museums and the like, so I think it would be great to go visit **Bob Cabana** at NASA. Mahalo nui loa, Terry.” Aloha, squadronmate! We had some fun days in Pensacola! I look forward to seeing you again – perhaps in Hawai'i! I hope you connect with Bob!

Here's a most excellent note from **Steve Brighton**: “Duke, I successfully completed my 3rd ‘Alcatraz Sharkfest’ swim on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Of the 900+ swimmers I

finished in the middle of the pack with a time of 58 minutes 34 seconds. The water temperature was 66 degrees. On a different note, Pam and **Mike McNallen** with their daughter Brienne, Susan Brighton, our daughter in law Melissa, and our two sons, Matthew and Andrew, all will enter triathlon relays in Naples, Florida January 9th and 10<sup>th</sup>.” Way to go, Steve! That swim sounds challenging as you must adjust direction based on the tidal currents! Wow!



CAPTION: Steve Brighton as he emerges from Alcatraz Sharkfest!

Here's an interesting note from *The Washington Post*: "D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser named retired RADM **Christopher Weaver** to head the District's Department of General Services, which presides over the city's public building construction and renovation projects, including schools, hospitals and office buildings. As director of General Services, Weaver will supervise a multibillion-dollar budget for an agency that has been plagued by recent allegations of poor accountability and the mismanagement of more than \$1 billion in taxpayer funds." The article continues with an outline of how

quickly Chris landed the job with the city and the many challenges facing him in the billet. The mayor asked Chris "...to stay focused on how and what needs to change in the organization, and how the organization does business." Pressed by a reporter about his credentials, Weaver acknowledged that he has no experience in municipal government but said that he believes he is up to the job. "A naval base is very much like a city with a fence around it." Congratulations! Chris, I'm confident you'll do well getting DC squared away!

Sadly, I received two notes of classmates passing away.

Here's the note from **Scott Fry** and **Doug Cho** (Tim's roommate) regarding **Tim Vaughn**: "Timothy Lee Vaughan, was born June 14th 1949 to Raymond and Lois (Smith) Vaughan, the eldest son of 4 children, in Columbus, Ohio. Tim completed his elementary and high school education in Arlington, Texas in 1967, where his family had moved when he was 10. Tim was a graduating member of 28th company. Tim passed away on Saturday 8 August following a valiant struggle with cancer. A math major at USNA and a frequent Dean's and Supt's list recipient after graduation he reported aboard the supply ship USS San Diego. Following a three year stint he returned to the Naval Academy as an instructor teaching celestial navigation. Tim resigned his commission in 1976 and began a non-denominational Christian ministry soon afterwards as an itinerant homeless minister and continued in this ministry until his death caused by multiple types of cancer. He spread his ministry in Virginia, New York, Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Georgia, Michigan, West Virginia, Ohio, Iowa, Missouri and Florida."

The second note: **Clifford H. Beckley** passed away on Sept 5, 2015. Cliff entered with our class on June 28, 1967 and departed during our plebe year. After graduating from Canoga Park High School (Hollywood, CA) he followed his heart and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, where he served as a Corporal in the 1st Battalion 9th Marine Regiment, the Walking Dead, of the 3rd Marine Division in the Republic of Vietnam from 1965 to 1967. Cliff began his service as a California Highway Patrolman in 1972 in Orange County, working tirelessly to also complete his B.S. degree in Administration of Justice from CSU Long Beach in 1976. Cliff was promoted to Sergeant in 1986, and after faithfully serving his community for thirty years as a Highway Dog, retired in 2002 from the Merced County office. Cliff and his wife, Deanna, were married nearly 43 years and had three children and three grandchildren. He was proud of his service in the Marine Corps and was passionate about military history, which was evidenced in his life through his love of firearms, riding and owning horses, and Civil War reenacting."

Here's a note about our plebe year Superintendent's namesake ship - From *The Virginian Pilot* on September 18<sup>th</sup>: "After nearly 28 years of Naval service, USS

Kauffman (FFG 59) was decommissioned at Naval Station Norfolk September 18, Norfolk's last Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate. The ship was commissioned Feb. 28, 1987, and was named for VADM **James L. Kauffman '08**, a veteran of World War I and World War II, and his son, RADM **Draper Kauffman '33**, a veteran of World War II. The elder Kauffman had the distinction of having served the longest time in command and the longest time at sea than any other officer of his time; both were renowned for their focus on anti-submarine warfare. Draper Kauffman organized U.S. Navy Bomb Disposal School at the Washington Navy Yard, a precursor to Explosive Ordnance Disposal School. He was also the first commanding officer for Navy demolition teams, the forerunner to the Navy's Special Operations Force known as the SEALs." Our Superintendent those days was an excellent example for us! We were blessed with excellent leadership<sup>1</sup>

Too soon it's time to close. Please keep our classmates and their families in your prayers for good health and safety in their travels. Our classmates in business and government leadership continue to need our thoughts and prayers, too. Life is precious and too short – seems we too often are reminded of life's brevity. Love passionately, give and share your blessings generously with others – we are richly blessed – may we richly bless others. Give thanks for your many blessings, especially for the gift of citizenship in our great nation. Now is the time for us to be actively shaping the future of our great nation. There is plenty of work remaining as we increase our wisdom! Time, tide and column due dates wait for no man!

Duces Virum, Duke