

Shipmate September-October 2016
Duke Longworth
25 July 2016

Fall is in the air! This is a favorite season of mine, and no need to wonder why! We've just held our 45th annual reunion and football season is in full swing! Leaves are turning color and the air is getting crisp and cool. Classmates are at the stadium tailgates sharing stories of days gone by and of grandchildren! This is a good time in our lives!

My first note is from **Bruce Nichols** in sunny San Diego! Bruce organized our annual Ethical Character in Leadership Award ceremony onboard the THEODORE ROOSEVELT. Here's his note: "Duke, We had a very nice award presentation last Wednesday at the Naval Air Station North Island I-Bar. Six Classmates attended: Barb & **Bruce Nichols**, **Pat Doyle**, **Pat Kelly**, **Bill Nevitt**, **Russ Stahlak**, and **Tom Hammonds**. Attached is a photo as proof that we all look just like our Lucky Bag pictures. The ship held the presentation in conjunction with a Hail & Farewell with about 150+ Officers in attendance. I presented the awardee with our gifts and gave a few well-chosen remarks. The ship's commanding officer, CAPT C.A. Clapperton, followed me. He commented on the exceptional leadership that our awardee, Lieutenant Nancy Griselda Helfrich, NC, USN, had consistently demonstrated beyond her normal duties. He then presented her with a Navy Commendation medal. LT Helfrich was most impressed and thankful for the book award and the generous gift card.

"The captain expressed his thanks for what we do and invited us to join the ship for a shakedown cruise when they finish their current maintenance availability period. All in all it was an excellent event. Hopefully, next year with a little more advance notice and planning, we can turn this into a San Diego '71 get together with a presence that approaches that of the ship's. Hope to see you guys in Annapolis in September if not before! Bruce." Thank you for the update and for taking command of this annual award presentation! I hope to attend next year!



CAPTION: L-R Tom Hammons, Pat Doyle, LT Helfrich, Bruce Nichols, Bill Nevitt, Pat Kelly, & Russ Stahlak

Bruce and I spent a few hours on a sunny afternoon in May conducting an event turnover and coordinating with the THEODORE ROOSEVELT admin officer. I agree with Bruce that with a little more heads up we '71ers can have a larger contingent attend the event.

Bill Perman sent me this very nice note from April Stevens': Dear Perry, Chuck, Duke and James, Sorry it took so long to thank you for the beautiful framed invitation to the reunion of the class of 71 at Annapolis. I have it on the wall in a place of honor with my other precious photos and awards from my career. Great Memories!

"I am excited and looking forward to meeting all of you in 'Crab Town' in September. Thank you so very much. Always, April.

P.S. I have attached a photo so you will recognize me. GO NAVY!



CAPTION: Our guest at the 45th! April Stevens

John Ball sent this update: “Hi Duke! **Karl Schwelm** visited San Diego with his granddaughter Nina from his home in Marietta, Georgia. Karl and Nina spent a week on the go here, hitting all the sights and hooking up with classmates. I took them sailing on San Diego Bay, the first time Nina had been on a sailboat. We had a delightful time followed by a Mexican lunch in Coronado where Karl and I reminisced about our flying exploits and shared our latest news.

“As for me, I just returned from a 3-week Italian immersion course with Middlebury College in Oakland, where I spoke nothing but Italian. I’ve been studying Italian for two years - for fun and growth - but this was an intensive academic environment, the hardest since Test Pilot School. I learned a lot, and will make our next trip to Italy in September even more rewarding. Ciao, John Ball.” Thank you for the update! Both of you are looking good! I last saw Karl in Marietta three years ago. I hope to see both of you at our 45th reunion!



CAPTION: John Ball and Karl Schwelm on the boat

Here's the gouge for our football season tailgates from **Tom Gross**: "Duke, Our class tailgate will be up and operating every home game, with the exception of our reunion weekend. We'll be in our traditional spot on the parking lot perimeter, directly out from the press box. We're easy to find, so plan to meet up with your group at the tailgate. Even though kickoff times are widely varied this year, the tailgates will continue to start two hours before kickoff and remain open through halftime. All classmates and guests are welcome. The menu is pot luck, and varied by time of day (a 1200 kickoff sounds like a good time for a brunch menu). Classmates bring dishes and snacks to share; some even bring brats or burgers to burn on the grill. Coming from out of town? Don't sweat it. If don't have a chance to pick up something, come anyway. We haven't run out of food yet! See you there! Beat Army...again! Tom Gross." H (410) 956-4405 M (410) 271-1749 tmgross4@verizon.net

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. For everything there is a season and a purpose. Life is precious and too short –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. As much as every before, now is the time for us to be actively shaping the future of our great nation. This national election season promises

to be very interesting. There is plenty of work remaining as we increase our wisdom!
Time, tide and column due dates wait for no man!

Duces Virum, Duke