

Shipmate May 2021
Duke Longworth
23 February 2021

May Week is upon us as you receive this column. May Week does not have the same ring as “June Week!” However, I suspect the graduating Ensigns and 1st Lieutenants think of the week just as we did! I really enjoyed the pace of exam week and the following June Week. Those were the halcyon days! Health conditions permitting, I expect many of us will be in Annapolis for May Week to participate in the “Another Link in the Chain” related events and the graduation ceremony. I will be there! I look forward to seeing you!

My first note is from **John Ball**: “Duke, I am sending a photo from last October - my how time flies - at my older son’s home in Fort Collins, Colorado. Nice in autumn, but two weeks later is snowed, and yesterday (mid-February) the temperature high in Fort Collins was 2 degrees F. Anyway, my grandsons are on the left, then our older son David - I have more hair than he does - and then me, Papa.



John Ball with his granddaughters



(L-R) John Ball's grandsons, son David, and the hairier John!

"I am also blessed to have our younger son nearby here in San Diego. We took the granddaughters on a hike yesterday just behind my neighborhood, as seen in the second photo below. My house is down there on the left and that's Torrey Pines State Beach in the background.

"In your note to me you mentioned Texas. We lived in Colleyville when I was with Bell Helicopter in the 90s. I often miss Texas, but not the weather! So glad you have been traveling too. Tomorrow I am off to sightsee in Tucson for a few days. Take care, John." Thank you for the update! I'm glad to know you have family nearby as I do

here in Virginia Beach. That has made this COVID-19 experience a little easier for sure!

Next the latest from **Perry Martini** regarding the second in the series of books about our class: “Duke, I have great news - the second book - *Sea Stories: The Naval Academy Class of 1971* - is ready and it is a terrific read! Following the rousing success of the first book - *Annapolis Stories: The Naval Academy Class of 1971* (nearly a sellout) - the next edition of our class post 1971 is now ready for your reading enjoyment.

“Now is the time to order your copy/copies of *Sea Stories: The Naval Academy Class of 1971* written by over 200 classmates with editor **Hank Turowski** adding the finishing touches and making it ready for publication. There are great Sea Stories in this book about our classmates which I found fascinating for I would have never known their experiences and adventures post USNA.

“In February Company Reps sent the document you need to download for book sales orders. NOTE: book orders will be taken up to Memorial Day weekend. If you have not ordered one when you receive this column you need to do so soon! You can expect shipment to you within *one month of ordering*.

“Having read certain segments of this outstanding book (pictures and color pages included) and the series of sea stories about those who served I can assure you that this will pump you up even more as we countdown the months and days until we celebrate our Golden Anniversary of 50 years this fall in Annapolis. Thanks again to our classmate, Hank Turowski, for his hard work and literary masterpiece on *Sea Stories: The Naval Academy Class of 1971*. Please join me and order the book now! *Duces Virum, Perry.*” I have my copy; I hope you do too!

Too soon, it is time to close. Please keep our classmates and their families in your prayers for good health, especially protection from the COVID-19 virus, healing when needed, and safety in their travels. Certainly, this pandemic environment highlights that **today** is the gift of “the present” and life is precious and too short! Love passionately, give and share your blessings generously with others – as we are richly blessed so may we richly bless others. Our leadership at home, in our social circles, and in daily routines is vital to maintaining our nation’s constitutional republic. Now is the time to shape the future of our great nation as we strive for a more perfect union. There is plenty of work remaining as we increase our wisdom! Time, tide and column due dates wait for no man!

Duces Virum, Duke