

Shipmate June 2021  
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30 March 2021

Summer is here! May Week for the Class of '21 is in the books! Seems like there is much change in the air, hopefully that change will lead to an in-person attendance for our 50<sup>th</sup> reunion! I am certainly looking forward to seeing and visiting with as many of you as possible! Reckon I'll be a very busy person!

Speaking of May Week, I will have a report in September column of the "Another Link in the Chain" related events and the graduation ceremony in which our class representatives are permitted. There are some variations for the Color Parade, graduation, and handing out the Ensign or 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant bars. Stay tuned for the full report!

Here's a note from **Randy Hartshorn**: "Greetings, Duke! I am working my way through *Annapolis Stories* and just received *Sea Stories*. In recognition of the dedication and class spirit promoted by those responsible for these tomes, I commit to reading every page of both before our 50<sup>th</sup>! Not that I'm suggesting a trilogy, but you will find attached yet another Class of '71 'I can't believe I did that'. The classmate named here in has signed-off as to the veracity of this story. You have my permission to publish yet another entry to Navy lore should the occasion arise!" With warm regards, Randy." That is a noble goal! I am sure there will be a few who take your challenge!

Here's Randy's story, "Divine Intervention: In December 1972, there was a maiden (snow bunny, rather) in distress. Things with her boyfriend on this ski trip to Mammoth Mountain were deteriorating rapidly because her "boyfriend" made her go down a black diamond run and she was a beginner, so she ditched the boyfriend and decided to fly solo. It wasn't long before she shared a chairlift and her story with an understanding young gentleman, who lived not far from Long Beach, her ultimate goal. It was revealed that her erstwhile boyfriend, served in the Navy in Long Beach. Could it be possible? No? Yes, the stranger sharing the chairlift, like the loser she left stranded on the mountain, was also in the Navy. Officer? Yes. Academy? Yes. Class of 1971? Yes! 'Could it be possible that you know Randy Hartshorn?' 'Randy? Oh, he's a great guy,' responded the stranger. 'Single!' shouted the snow bunny! The event took place toward the end of 1972 or the beginning of 1973. The classmate on the chairlift? **Bill McKinney**. I regret that I waited nearly 40 years to share this story with Bill. Marianne and I met Bill at his church during our 2011 reunion to thank him for his 'Divine Intervention.' It was emotional to say the least. Marianne and I celebrated our 46<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 2021 thanks in some degree to our classmate, Bill McKinney

and Divine Intervention! Randy and Marianne.” What a great story! I’m sure Bill’s prayers helped you! You were certainly blessed by Pastor Bill! I hope to see you at our 50<sup>th</sup>!

Speaking of our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion, did you know 71% of our class indicates they will attend! That is fantastic! Also, the target registration start date is June 9, 2021, or 50 years to the day since our graduation and commissioning. The reunion committee selected 9 June as this provides time for the Covid-19 uncertainties to subside. You should already have your calendars marked for the 30 September to 4 October reunion. It is June! Now is the time for you to register!

Also, the reunion committee recommends you review our class website at: <http://1971.usnaclases.net/> to see preliminary Reunion information, including a welcome letter from your 50<sup>th</sup> Committee, the reunion Schedule of Events, and list of area hotels located within 5 miles of our HQ hotel.

The reunion committee expects to send more announcements during the spring with more detailed information on the class reunion website regarding scheduled reunion events, class gear, Ship’s Store, etc. See you in September!

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