

Shipmate March-April 2024
Duke Longworth
22 January 2024

It has been a busy winter! The Army-Navy game did not have the desired win by Navy. Next year is coming! GO NAVY! BEAT ARMY! Lots to report!

First up is a note from **Kevin Dolan**: "Duke, Lisa and I still live near Salt Lake City at the base of two awesome ski canyons. Our oldest son **Daniel Dolan '05** is a helicopter pilot, and a Commander attached to the Strike Group staff aboard *USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71)* out of San Diego. Here are two recent photos of Dan with me and Lisa on the **ROOSEVELT** - just had to include the '71 for our class. Our younger son, Matt, is an '07 grad of Kings Point Merchant Marine Academy and now lives in Durango, CO.



Kevin Dolan with son Daniel '05

"Lisa and I traveled to Scotland this September for two weeks and continue to spend much road time visiting our two sons. I'm still road biking, hiking, and skiing in Utah. BEAT ARMY! Kevin Dolan" Sounds like you live where I hoped to live in retirement! Not much snow here in VA. Scotland is a beautiful country! As is the countryside around Durango!

Next up is a note from **Phil Keuhlen**: "Duke, 2023 has been a personal annus horribilis, and am happy to see it in the rearview mirror! I

experienced multiple dissections in my aorta culminating in a 12+ hour surgery



Lisa Dolan with Daniel '05

in July to replace my aortic arch with a graft, and another hospitalization from late November to mid-December to stent the thoracic section of my descending aorta.

“There is an element in this that may be of interest to classmates. Scientists have known for a long time that Thoracic Aorta Aneurysm & Dissection (TAAD) was associated with genetic abnormalities like Marfan’s Syndrome. Within the past decade they have noticed familial clusters of TAADs in families with no history of such syndromes and have identified two genetic mutations associated with non-syndromic TAADs. I found that one side of my family has a TAAD cluster that traced back 3 generations. I tested negative for the two mutations, and positive for one that there isn’t enough data to confirm a causal link to date. My experience suggests the importance of knowing family medical history, not just your own.

“I have been blessed with rock star Cardiac & Vascular surgical teams at Swedish Hospital in Seattle, along with my family’s unwavering support and a monthly Zoom check in with my oldest and dearest 17th CO friends. They all know how much they have meant to me. But I would be remiss if I didn’t acknowledge the prayers and support from classmates across the **Class of '71** and other years we overlapped with, particularly members of **'68, '69 & '72**. Thank you ALL so much for your notes of support! Words fail to convey the depth of my gratitude.

“Two things sustained me this year. The first was the ‘don’t give up the ship’ attitude we developed in our Plebe year. The other was an international 50-meter outdoor smallbore benchrest competition sponsored by Eley.co.uk with over 200 registered competitors from around the world. Four preliminary matches led to invitations for the top 20 shooters to compete in a November 2023 Final match. I had just finished the first qualifying match when my annual screening indicated the degradation in my aorta. Throughout the year, shooting well enough to earn a finalist invitation became the organizing motivation for my cardiac rehab efforts.

“In November I received a Finalist invitation. I started rising at 5 am each morning to check conditions before November turned blustery and cold. I shot a score of 1200 out of 1200 possible points, called shooting ‘clean,’ and 90/150 tie breaker X’s. I was the last shooter to clean the Final and finished 5th. Not too bad for an old fart with a tremor! Phil.” What an incredible story! Thank you for sharing the TAAD issue, and your motivational 200-meter bench rest competition story. USNA certainly has many fine prayer warriors! Praise the Lord you received screenings and excellent care to get you through the surgery then to full recovery. Keep me posted regarding follow-up care.

Here's an Army-Navy game day report from **John Ball**: “Duke, Eight classmates attended the San Diego Chapter’s Army-Navy party at a crowded sports bar downtown. Thanks to **Tom Hammons** for encouraging our attendance this year. In the photo below from left to right are: **Pat Doyle, Rick Smith, Jim Bryant, Jim Ward, John Ball, Steve Pelstring**, and **Tom Hammons**. Not pictured is **Joe Anthony**. We each enjoyed the camaraderie among us, which to me seems warmer each year. It sure wasn’t



'71 Beat Army crew

Navy's best game yet it had that exciting but disappointing finish. Afterwards, it was thrilling to be among the hundreds of alumni standing tall, singing a rousing 'Navy Blue and Gold' with a hearty 'Beat Army!' All the best, John." Seems the San Diego '71ers can be relied upon to win the party! Next year BEAT ARMY!

Dick Enderly sent this note: "Hi Duke! I thought I would take a few minutes to pass along some news of a 'gathering of classmates' on 14 December. It has been quite some time since this many '71ers were together at the same place and time in Hampton Roads; but when as the event organizer I invited **David Poyer** to travel down from his home on Virginia's Eastern Shore to speak at our Chapter's monthly Networking Breakfast (in actuality coffee, donuts and bagels), he drew a crowd of six classmates and about 20 other local alumni and fans of his work. Standing left to right in the photo are **Steve Butkus**, **Mark Scharfe**, **Terry Foust**, David's wife Lenore Hart, **David Poyer**, **Dick Enderly**, **Mike Cohen**, and **Ken Marks**.

"At the meeting Dave introduced and discussed his latest novel *The Academy*, which is the final chapter in the 22-book Dan Lenson series. Dan completes his most interesting and sometimes mind-boggling career as 'The Supe;' and I would recommend that even if some have never read any of the previous 21 novels, many alumni, especially those of our vintage, will find *The Academy* to be an interesting and



71 Networking Breakfast Dave Poyer with '71ers and Lenore

entertaining trip down Memory Lane as VADM Lenson periodically harkens back to his days as a 1/C Mid; and it also provides an opportunity to peek at some of the goings on behind the scenes at our Alma Mater. Oh....and some might be interested to know Dave has further broadened his horizons and some of his latest ventures include diving into the world of playwriting! All the best and Happy New Year to all! Dick.” Thank you! Dave’s new book sounds quite entertaining, especially with the USNA setting!

Phil Williams sent this note: “Duke, Here is a photo of my placing the Marine Corps wreath as part of Wreaths Across America at our community’s 16 December ceremony.” Glad you were available to represent the USMC!



Phil Williams laying the Marine Corps wreath.

Next is a note from **Bob Capra**: “I think some of you know I have a son that went over to the dark side and graduated from West Point in 1995. He then married a West Point '96 grad. This past week, he retired after 28 years in the Army. He and his family moved from Ft. Hood (now Ft. Cavazos) to Georgetown, TX. As it turns out, Georgetown is also the home of my company-mates Jill & **Gene Baker** and Trudy & **Bob St. Germain**. As a result, I invited both couples to my

son's retirement ceremony on 15 December. Both couples accepted; however, at the last-minute Trudy and Bob were not able to attend. Attached is a picture of the company-mates along with Gene's bride Jill. It was great catching up with them since they were not able to make our 50th reunion. With warmest regards, Bob." Nice coincidence! Now you have more people to visit in TX!



Bob Capra and son, Kevin, Col US Army



Bob with Jill & Gene Baker

John Ball sent another update: “On Saturday, 20 January, ten classmates gathered at the Mount Soledad National Veterans Memorial to dedicate a plaque honoring the esteemed Class of 1971. This culminated months of planning by our class trustee **Pat Doyle**, who is a docent at the memorial atop Mount Soledad, with spectacular views over San Diego. Pat spearheaded the plaque project from concept to its dedication. Our Class Board of Trustees approved the design, but the plaque was financed with donations from 18 San Diego classmates. It is permanently mounted on a low wall at the memorial (behind the class flag in the group photo) and will serve as a lasting memory of the USNA Class of 1971 in San Diego. “It was cloudy, cold, and windy. Pat Doyle and **Tom Hammons** provided remarks, wisely cut short due to the chill winds. **Jim Bryant** sported a kilt and hired a bagpiper and drummer to add pomp. A bugler played taps. After photos, a quorum adjourned to a warm lunch spot nearby. Yes, we just beat the rainstorm.

“Classmates attending are pictured in the photo below (L to R): **Jim Bryant, Pat Doyle, Russ Stahlak, John Ball, Bill Bashore, Bill Nevitt, Tom Hammons, Steve Comer, Jim Ward, and Steve Pelstring**. John.” Many thanks to the San Diego contingent for the memorial plaque! Well Done, Classmates!



71 gathering at Mount Soledad

Sadly, we lost three classmates who passed away since my last column.

William “Bill” L. Hatcher passed away on 10 August 2023 after a valiant and stoic fight against cancer that lasted over ten years. Bill was born in Jacksonville, FL on 24 June 1949, and joined us on 28 June 1967 as a member of the Class of 1971. Bill was a wonderful, respected, and quiet classmate who excelled in many areas. He was a Trident Scholar (project title: “A Special Purpose Multiprocessor for the Simulation of

Dynamic Systems”) graduating with distinction as a member of the 34th CO, awarded a Burke Scholarship eventually attending Northwestern University where he earned a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering. Several company mates credit his patient tutoring in “wires” and “thermo” for enabling them to graduate. He was a member of the Plebe Varsity Swim Team and swam on the varsity in 1969. Bill then focused on Lightweight Crew, lettering in ’70 and ’71.

Bill served in the surface warfare community during his first eight years of active duty. His first assignment was as 1st Lieutenant and Gunnery Officer in the newly commissioned *USS W S SIMS (DE-1059)*, in Mayport, FL. Later in the tour, he assumed the duties of ASW Officer (ASWO) before detaching for Northwestern University in August 1973. After attaining his Ph.D., Bill completed the Surface Warfare Department Head course in Newport, RI; was assigned as Operations Officer (OPSO) in *USS CONNOLE (FF-1056)*; and achieved Surface Warfare Officer qualification. During his sea service, Bill made multiple Mediterranean and Caribbean deployments during which he gained exceptional sonar operational expertise. Bill shared with classmates that his ASWO job had set the path for his entire career. *SIMS* was the SQS26 CX sonar system test ship and then, as luck would have, *CONNOLE* was the test ship for the advanced models of the 26 and 53 series sonars during Bill’s tour as OPSO. Following his at-sea duty, Bill was the Surface Ship Sonar Test Director at Operational Test and Evaluation Force (OPTEVFOR).

Bill transferred to the Engineering Duty Officer (EDO) community in 1978, where he served for eighteen years and rose to major program command. He completed two tours at Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) in the Naval Tactical Data System (NTDS) computer office and Surface Ship Sonar office during which he provided expertise in signal processing, served on two contract selection boards, and installed and tested new systems. Bill then moved to Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) where he supported the development of new Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS) variants. Bill retired after twenty-six years of distinguished service.

After retirement, Bill initially worked for ORINCON, which was subsequently bought by Lockheed Martin, and supported signal processing development. He then moved to a woman-owned small business where he was involved in research and development programs in distributed sensor Border Protection systems and the Littoral Combat Ship. Bill had many interests. He was an avid and skilled bridge player. He was an accomplished woodworker who could laminate and bend pecan to make a dining set. He also enjoyed being on the water, built a rowing scull, and outfitted a catamaran. He enjoyed classical music and was converted to loving opera.

Bill was predeceased by his parents, William Lloyd and Mary Ann (McKinney) Hatcher. He is survived by his partner, Lea McDaniel, and siblings: Ruth Anne, Robert (Bob), and Mac. Bill was a proud father of two children: David who is a civilian engineer and Electrical Power Lead for an F-18 program for NAVAIR, and Rachel, who is a Certified Nurse Assistant.

H. Leland “Lee” Whitfield passed away on Friday, 5 January in Atlanta, GA surrounded by his family. He fell and hit his on 28 December causing a brain hemorrhage.

Lee was born January 7, 1950 in Hazleton, PA to H Leland Whitfield, Jr. and Dawn Fichter Whitfield. He graduated from West Hazleton High School in 1967. He received a Secretary of the Navy appointment to the Naval Academy and subsequently Lee graduated with an aeronautical engineering major. Lee's service in the Navy included assignment to the *USS Hancock* during operations in Southeast Asia and the Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes. He took great pride in being the Conning Officer during transit of the HANCOCK under the Golden Gate Bridge and a night passage through the Malacca Strait.

Lee separated from the Navy in 1977. He then entered commercial real estate sales in San Francisco before moving his young family to Atlanta, Georgia. He settled his family in Vinings while growing his career with Coldwell Banker as the Atlanta office manager and later regional business developer. During this time, Lee was a faithful member of the Buckhead Rotary Club, Cub Scout Leader, grief share facilitator at Church of the Apostles, and a charter member of Burge Plantation Hunt Club. Lee was a respected sportsman and loved to share his passion for the outdoors with others.

Lee was a devoted son, husband, father, and grandfather. He patterned his parenting style after his maternal grandfather with whom Lee shared a close connection during his youth. Lee was preceded in death by his father and his daughter, Lindsey Anne Whitfield. He is survived by his mother, his wife Sharon Ealy Whitfield, son H Andrew Whitfield (Lauren), sister Nancy Lockwood (Rob), stepson Chad Ealy, stepdaughter. A graveside was held on Friday, February 9, 2024 at the National Cemetery in Canton, Georgia.

Robert “Alan” Holbach bid farewell to a life-well-lived with two of his favorite things by his side, his beloved wife Bonnie, and a generous pour of bourbon on ice. Alan spent plebe year with us and then joined the Navy serving for four years. Born in Houston, TX he spent his formative years in Glen Burnie, MD with his younger brothers Tom, Bill and Jim, younger sisters Mary Elizabeth and Sharon and his late parents, Betty and Al. He spent his last 38 years in Florida, where he worked as a County Administrator and Director of Public Works enjoying all the amenities Florida has to offer with Bonnie by his side as they enjoyed kayaking, fishing, and time in Sanibel.

Too soon, it is time to close. Please keep our classmates and their families in your prayers for good health, healing when needed, safety in travels, and strength to meet every challenge. **Today** is a gift - life is precious and too short! Love passionately, give, and share your time and 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!

Duke Longworth