



Whoever emails us the answer first will enjoy a complementary cocktail at the awards dinner following the 50th Reunion golf extravaganza. Tell us the theme represented by the costume sported by the individual on the left and you'll earn an additional tasty beverage of your choice!

Lastly, since we opened with a quote on humility, it's only appropriate we close with a related item. On the Sunday before the Memorial Day weekend, six members of '77 were humbled by the opportunity to gather together to honor the memory of **Gene McCarthy (18th Co.)**. Shown below, left to right are: **Dave Kirkman (18th Co.)**, **Colonel Mike Sanders (10th Co.)** (Gary's words, not ours!), **Corky Gardner (18th Co.)**, **George Korchowsky (1st Co.)** and **Paul Croisietiere (35th Co.)**.



In attendance but not pictured was the aforementioned **Gary Gambarani (24th Co.)**, along with Paul's wife Sue.

The '77 contingent was joined by a number of residents near Gene's old neighborhood in Brooklyn at the Marine Major Eugene T. McCarthy Triangle...



McCarthy Memorial Plaque

...to participate in what has become an annual event at the site, which you can locate using the search box in Google Maps. You'll recall Gene gave his last full measure of devotion on 2 February 1991 while flying a combat rescue support mission in a Marine Cobra helicopter during Operation Desert Storm. Corky Gardner, Gene's company mate, frequent post-USNA roommate and fellow Marine, spoke for the entire Class as he offered some heartfelt and very fitting remarks about the service and dedication of both Gene and his family.

Gene's brother, Dennis, was also honored, having passed away some six years ago while with the DEA. Dennis' passing was linked to his presence as a first responder at the World Trade Center in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. A plaque in his memory was presented to the family and will be added to the Major McCarthy Triangle later this year.

One cannot help being humbled. We can't imagine a more fitting tribute for two brothers who placed the lives of others above their own; Greater love hath no man! Semper Fi, friend and classmate.

Magoo

'78

Life Membership: 81%
Donor Participation: 45.09%

Pres: **Glen Woods**
e: glenwoods@verizon.net

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**
1320 Homewood Ln., Annapolis, MD 21401
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Chip Walston (10th Co) got to do something few of us can or will. He pinned his Naval Aviator wings on his son, Sean, in his winging ceremony at the end of June. The occasion was even more memorable in that it was 44 years ago, that Chip's dad pinned those *same* Navy pilot wings onto his uniform at his winging. In this kinder, gentler world Chip (and others) were requested by the command to not make them "blood wings". I hope he at least got to give him a good punch. lol. What a wonderful moment. Good luck to Sean in his Naval Aviation career. May he have as much fun as his dad and all of us did!



Bravo Zulu to our last-man-standing-in-uniform, **Bill "If" Fell** (34th Co). "If" received another honor when the Merchant Marine Academy announced in June that it renamed the *Power of Inspiration Leadership Award* to now be the *Captain William "Bill" Fell, Jr. Power of Inspiration*. Bill has always been an inspiration to all. Over the years at Kings Point he's been a motivator and leader to his Midshipmen—especially when he goes into his Blue Hulk mode at pep rallies! Nice to see his legacy continue.

In July, **Bob Vogt** (35th Co) reported that he had just returned from Pensacola after visiting family. While there he also had an opportunity to catch up with Patty and **Dave Babcock** (6th Co) and **Richard Jesmonth** (35th Co). They attended a local charity event together and got in some fishing on Dave's boat.

Deke Philman (24th Co) dropped a note from San Antonio to say that his Company-mate, **Scott Godfrey**, visited him and Sylvia. Deke added that, "Besides sampling the tasty Mexican cuisine, the fellas also saddled up on a couple of Deke's Harleys for a picturesque ride through the Texas Hill Country. Of course, no ride to Fredericksburg would be complete without a quick stop in the legendary road-house at Luckenbach, Texas!" Here's a photo of the two "Easy Riders."



Bruce Gearey wrote that a "contingent" of his 30th Company-mates joined him, his wife, Robin, and son, Noah, for a great dinner in Virginia. The group who dined, commiserated and told sea stories were **Bob Ryan**, Katherine and **Lew Wolfrom**, and **Dick Boehme**.



30th Company Dinner



'78: 9th Company

As we begin marching (okay- sailing) towards our 50th Reunion, we are recognizing many "50th" anniversaries (50th since I first got fried, went over the wall, etc.). Of course, THE first event at Mother B was our I-day. This past July 8th marked the 50th since 1513 of us raised our hands in T-court and started our journey together as potential naval officers, and lifelong classmates and brothers. To mark that moment, members of 9th Company participated in an emotional and unforgettable reenactment of the oath of office on the steps of Bancroft Hall. They attended morning colors and then had the oath administered by CAPT Jaja Marshall ('97), USN, USNA Chief Engagement Officer. (You can see the ceremony in a video on our class website.) Participating from 9th Company were Jack Fernandez, Mark Haring, Carl Jensen, Stephen Koronka, Wayne Leong, Fred Shutt, John Spegele, Lee Yarberr, and Robert Zalaskus. Marcus Fisk joined via Facetime from France. Joining them were Joe Alvite (17th Co.) and fellow Echo Company-mate Al Baker (10th Co.). Al at least wore a dixie cup to add to the "Plebe nostalgia". I was invited to join them but had a date with "Margaret Mattress" at time of the morning.

Besides, wasn't our swearing-in done at 1800? I did pop into the O'Club at lunchtime to say hi to the gang, their lovely brides and family. After lunch, the group went to the Columbarium to pay respects to their late Company-mates, Ty Glasgow, Harry Woods and Kevin "Fuzz" Foley. A nice dinner followed later that evening on the Eastern Shore. Overall, it was a very memorable way to mark our 50th anniversary of I-Day!

Thanks to the "2 Joes", **Joe Peterson** (6th Co) and **Joe Martin** (10th Co), for representing the class on 19 July at the Change of Command of our sponsored ship, USS PORTER (DDG 78). They saw CDR Joe Hamilton relinquish command to CDR Cameron Brunette. You may recall that last year Joe P and Joe M had a bit of a Change of Command themselves when Joe P took over being the lead for our PORTER support from Joe M. We have a lot of authors in our class. Just look on our website for those we know. Well, the latest is Michael Sears (36th Co). Michael's first book, *Existence and Algorithm*, was released in June. It talks about the fascinating intersection of AI and Existentialism. He also discusses the ethical, social, and philosophical implications of being

human in the age of artificial intelligence, drawing on the teachings of the major existentialists. It will be a shared future, an existence of both

humanity and algorithms with humans in charge. While it sounds "above my QPR," I may have to get it and slog through. I can always meet the author at Miss Shirley's for breakfast and EI. I urge everyone to look at our authors' page and think about supporting them by checking out a book or two. Congrats on the publication, Michael!

A lot has been going on with our Link in the Chain Program. By the time this *Shipmate* reaches your homes we have supported I-day, the Honor Coin Ceremony and Plebe Parents Weekend. (Check out our class website for stories and info about those events.) Next year there will be more activities, and we'll start working on contributions for the Bonds of Gold effort. That's where you can donate gold from your '78 rings, pins and miniatures. That gold is presented in a ceremony to '28 in their Youngster year. That gold is then melted and mixed with new gold that will be formed into the Class of '28 rings. **Mike Dinn** (33rd Co) has volunteered to help lead that effort for us. More info will follow. This all leads me to a great ring story from **James Warren** (23rd Co) that will close the column. Jim wrote:

✉ "...While stationed in San Antonio around 1986, my oldest son, who was about 5-yr's old at the time, took my first ring and while playing "He-Man of the Universe" lost it...after searching the neighborhood for days, I gave up hope and used my Aviation Bonus to replace the original. Now fast forward more than 35 years...I received an e-mail from the Alumni Association saying my original ring had been found...a young couple in the old San Antonio neighborhood was digging a spot for a wading pool for their toddler and saw something shiny...to make a long story short, it was my class ring. They contacted the Alumni Association and soon I was reunited with the ring..."

What a delightful story and thanks in advance, James, for committing to donate one of those rings to our Bonds of Gold program.

Until the next issue, Launchin' Spot Four.



'76: Change of Command, USS PORTER

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May-June '25	24 Mar '25
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