The group constituted a great cross-section of communities, including aviation, subs, surface and supply. Though the sun shone 20 hours each day (with twilight the remaining four), mid-July temperatures averaged in the 50s. The ship twice traversed the Arctic Circle, at which point the SIRENA's crew conducted a much kinder, gentler civilian version of the Shellback initiation.

Bob noted one of trip's highlights was the sight of USS ALBANY (SSN-753) moored in a remote Faroe Island fjord. Not quite Pattaya Beach or Perth, but we guess any liberty is better than no liberty.

*For those such as Buddy Barker, who, despite having graduated from an institution dedicated to maritime knowledge (hence the motto, *Ex scientia tridens*!), never gained a meaningful grasp of naval terminology, "circumnavigated" means to have sailed around a body, be it an island, such as Bob circumnavigated Iceland, or the globe, as was the case with Sir Francis Drake.

Moving on, **John Geary** (32nd Co.) forwarded the following photo from a 32nd Company tailgater at his home in Arnold, MD immediately prior to Navy's memorable upset of Memphis. Pictured from left to right are: **Al Stuart** (32nd Co.), **George Herning** (32nd Co.), **Bill Daniels** (32nd Co.), **Ron Long** (32nd Co.), **Michael Golda** (32nd Co.), **John Read** (32nd Co.) and lastly John, along with Blossom the Wonder Dog.

And what a game it was!

Finally, we'll wrap things up with the trio of **Doug Isleib** (19th Co.), **Shawn Morrisey** (18th Co.) and **Corky Gardner** (18th Co.) attending the Temple game.

Looking good, '77!
—Magoo

'78

Life Membership: 81%
Donor Participation: 45.10%

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

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**
1320 Homewood Ln., Annapolis, MD 21401
e: canoeu78@aol.com

Website: **usna1978.org**

This job doesn't get any easier over time, especially as Father Time catches up to us- and when he shows us the sands have run out on someone's clock. That is the situation this month as I sorrowfully have to report the passing of three of our '78 family, **John Lyver** (6th Co), **Ken Halek** (27th Co) and Elaine Stalling, beloved spouse of our brother, **Jim Stallings** (34th Co). Their obituaries can be read in detail on our class website's "Memorials" page. You can also find them on the Alumni Association's website. Here is some information on their wonderful lives. Please remember the good times we shared with them and the warmth and love that still resides in us from them having touched our lives. *Eternal Father, String to Save.*

John Lyver passed away this summer (June 16th) while vacationing in Alberta, Canada, with his wife of almost 16 years, Sally. Some of you may remember John from choir or his playing trombone in Drum & Bugle. After graduation he serve on USS DUPONT and the USS CARL VINSON. He retired from the Reserve. John's civilian job was at NASA Headquarters. For almost 25 years he worked in the Office of Safety and Mission Assurance as the Nuclear Flight Safety Assurance Manager. He led the nuclear safety reviews of NASA's Cassini Mission to Saturn, New Horizon's Mission to Pluto and the Kuiper Belt, and NASA's missions to Mars, including Pathfinder, Mars Exploration Rovers, and Curiosity. He retired from NASA in 2012. John became "Doctor John" when he added a PhD in Computational Science and Informatics at George Mason University (GMU). After "retiring", he was an Associate Professor (Adjunct) at Northern Virginia Community College teaching physics and astronomy, and at GMU teaching Computational Data Sciences. In 2020, he was recognized as "Teacher of Distinction" at GMU for excellence in on-line teaching. John was 1st Vice Commander of the American Legion Post 1799 at the time of his death and was a proud member of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. A strong Christian, John's heart lay with his God, family, and country. He was involved in many clubs and activities and loved to travel with his wife. John was buried in a private ceremony at Chestnut Grove Cemetery in Herndon, VA. In lieu of flowers, the family requested that donations be made in John's memory to either Cornerstone Chapel in Leesburg, VA, Tunnel to Towers Foundation in Staten Island, NY, or American Legion Post 1799 in Haymarket, VA. Please remember John in your prayers, as well as Sally and their two sons, John V and Thomas, and two stepchildren, Stephanie and Andrew Redfern.

Ken Halek died suddenly in September. His niece posted on Facebook that he "was taken to the hospital Tuesday [17 Sep] not feeling well. He passed away from a heart attack the same day." At the time of death, Ken lived in Anderson, NC. As this comes to print, we were still trying to find out more details. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

Jim Stallings' beautiful bride, **L. Elaine Stallings**, died on September 21st of this year. Her's and Jim's story – like many of yours – was a beautiful love story. They first met when they

RIP- John, Ken and Elaine

were 12 years old, and a friendship grew that continued when they had some classes together in high school. A few years later, they reconnected when she caught Jim jogging on a rainy day in Annapolis. It must have been some special rain, as love sprouted and they were married on April 25th, 1981. The rest was history. Elaine was a highly successful businesswoman. Having earned degrees from North Carolina Central University (BS) and a masters from George Washington University (graduating magna cum laude) she made her professional career in the field of Human Resources. She worked her way from management to executive roles in various companies including Fortune 500 companies like Verizon where she was a human resources manager, to local companies like Xomed, Inc. where she was Vice President of Human Resources. Elaine's true passion was giving back to others and her community. A lifelong philanthropist, she believed that small causes were equally as important as grand ones. Her primary charitable works were in areas of education and the arts, with a particular focus on youth. In lieu of flowers, the family requested that gifts be made in memory of Elaine Stallings to the Mayo Clinic to support Dementia Research at Mayo Clinic in Florida. Please keep Jim, their two sons, Mr. Antonio Walker (Kiran) of Willingboro, NJ, and Mr. Brandon Stallings of Jacksonville Beach, FL; their granddaughter, Arianna Walker and the rest of the family in your prayers.

Our artist, boat-builder, dinghy racer and weightlifter- man of many talents**, James Bland** (19th Co) dropped a note in August. He provided photo proof that he took an Icelandic Cruise with one of those tours offered by the Alumni Association. His pictures looked like it was a good time- especially if there are fellow grads along. Onboard the cruise were a few Naval Academy shipmates. James provided a photo of the gang, "poised for shore leave on the Faroe Islands." They sure look like a bunch of liberty risks to me. The gang consisted of **Bob Barnes** ('77), **Charles Lewis** ('70), **Grant Thorpe** ('70**), James** and **Dennis Bostich** ('74)

Liberty Risks

James waiting to go ashore

Got a quick note from **Mike Shumaker** (13th Co.) who visited his middle son, LT Greg Shumaker, and his family in Navy housing in the Pacific Beach neighborhood of San Diego. Greg is SUPPO on USS MUSTIN (DDG-89). During that June 29 – July 5 trip Mike took his two grandkids to the playground and accompanied them to lessons in swimming and martial arts, fireworks, *and* to the San Diego Zoo. He also caught up with his 13th Co. roommate, **Ernie Sanchez**. Ernie is a San Diego resident.

As I close, I send a plea on behalf of Julie and Brad "JB" Richardson (14th Co). Their son, George, is in dire need of a kidney transplant. It is a life and death situation as George is in end-stage renal failure. Sixteen years ago, he was diagnosed with a rare kidney disease called IgA Nephropathy (Berger Disease). There is no cure for IgAN, and he now needs a kidney transplant. Unfortunately, all possible living donors from his immediate family have been disqualified as donors. Our Class President, **Glen Woods** (13th Co) had put the word a couple of months and many of us have been spreading the word via our respective social media connections. Besides making the plea, we attached a link that explained more about George, his condition, and how to be a donor. I am not sure if the editorial staff will allow us to post it here, but here goes: https://nkr.org/ZPK426. If it doesn't appear in this column, you can read it on the "Class News" tab on our class website, our Class Facebook page, or just drop me a line. Please spread the word to any group or person you think might know how to help George get a possible donor. If someone is not a match for George, but willing to donate a kidney in George's name, that would still help as it elevates his name on the national waiting list. I hope by the time this *Shipmate* comes to your doorstep that this plea is unnecessary; that George found a donor and is well on his way to recovery. Let's see what our '78 family can do to help. Please also keep George, Julie and Brad- and all the Richardsons in your prayer.

Since this is a joint month edition (Nov-Dec '24), I wish all my fellow Marines a Happy Birthday. I also send best wishes to all of you for a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. How this year has flown by- if we blink, we will find ourselves in 2025!

Semper Fi and Launchin' Spot Four

'79

Life Membership: 91%
Donor Participation: 17.66%

Pres: **CAPT Dave Jackson, USN (Ret.)**
e: dajaxn79@gmail.com

Sec'y: **LCDR John "Wiz" Withers, USN (Ret.)**
1886 Woodpoint Ct., Lawrenceville, GA 30043
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Social Network Links:
http://www.linkedin.com/in/wizwithers

Facebook Group: **USNA Class of 1979**

Website: **https://myusna.com/topics/9426/home**

Greetings 79ers!

I write this just a few days after returning from our 45th Reunion. The whole event was just about perfect – the weather was beautiful, the game was exciting (a BIG win over Memphis), the food plentiful and the camaraderie was everything you could ask for. The reunion committee did a fantastic job, and already have turned their sights to the 50th. I don't have any reports from the reunion yet, but I do have some news.

Steve Walsh and Joe Padula

One classmate that never lets grass grow below his feet is **Steve Walsh.** Every time I hear from him, he's at this conference or that event,