

Annual Membership: 4%
Life Membership: 88%

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Greetings, '79!

"Hot time, summer in the city, back o' my neck gettin' dirty and gritty..."

Yep, it's *warm* out there! Lotsa heat, lotsa humidity, but not lotsa rain. You expect heat and humidity when you live in the mid-Atlantic region, but this drought? As an aviator, I never thought I would look forward to seeing rain so much. It has been *so dry* (*how dry is it?*) that the spiders keep building their webs in my rain gage. Sounds like a bad Johnny Carson line, doesn't it? I have the same poor jokes that he had, but our incomes are slightly different. So far!

I was cruising along toward work a couple of days ago when I happened to see a "Back to School Sale" sign. Back to school? Is summer more than half gone already? It wasn't that long ago that I was dragging the grill out of the storage shed (and cleaned out the spider webs). It was my annual "You need to get out there and do those things you said you would do this summer" moment. I mean, there's still some golf to play, weekend trips to take, boats to sail...But before I get focused on "Back to School," let's go back a couple of months to "School's Out".

Last May, just one week prior to the 23rd anniversary of our graduation from Canoe U, the Class of 2002 hit the fleet. While a big day in their lives, this was also an historic event for the Class of '79: Gentlemen, we have a legacy. The night before 2002's graduation, **Steve Smith** (sesmith@titanceg.com) sent out the following email:

Because all you guys have been "uncles" for the past 21 years, I just want to take a moment and brag about your "niece." Tomorrow morning 22nd Company and '79's first legacy graduates and gets her commission. **Becky Smith '02** will toss her hat in the after a far more successful four years on the Severn than mine (which was not hard to do, by the way). Becky rowed crew, sang in the Catholic choir and Glee club while a Mid (all those things you can do when you are not on academic probation!) and earned a Cox scholarship for French language skills. She departs for two months TAD at the U.S. Embassy in Paris Saturday night! Tough, huh? She reports to SWOS in Newport in September and gets to her first ship, **WHIDBEY ISLAND**, in Little Creek, VA, (her first choice) in the spring. Needless to say Liz and I are very proud. I will stop bragging now. I hope this note finds all of you well.

Accompanying this announcement was the following from our Class President, **Sean Cate**:

I have met Becky a couple of times, and it is a pleasure to know that she is one of many truly great people who will soon be leading our Navy. We couldn't ask for a better legacy, and how ironic that the first offspring of the "Omnes Viri" Class to graduate is female!

For Steve, please pass along the best wishes of all '79ers as we take a vicarious thrill in seeing

her lead the way for the next generation. Best wishes and good luck (Bon Chance!) to Becky.

I also want to add my personal congratulations to Becky, Liz, and Steve. Best wishes to Becky for a highly successful and fulfilling career!

There's just one problem with all of this: I still don't think we're old enough to have kids in the fleet. Maybe this is that "You Need To Get Out There and Do Those Things You Said You Would Do Before You Turned 45" moment that my brothers told me about. Nah, that's still *years* away...isn't it?

Well, the Smith family is quite a difficult act to follow, but we have several Classmates who are up to the task. First up is an excerpt from the 4 April edition of *Business Wire*, which reports that **Bob Tata** (btata@hunton.com) was one of 15 attorneys elected to partnership by Hunton & Williams, a major U.S. law firm with a significant international presence. Bob is a member of the Litigation, Intellectual Property and Antitrust Team in Norfolk, VA. The article mentions that his practice includes business and general litigation, intellectual property and patent litigation, products liability and warranty litigation, labor and employment law, admiralty and maritime litigation and advice work, telecommunications litigation, business torts, franchising litigation, unfair competition, covenants not to compete, alcoholic beverage industry defense and personal injury and wrongful death defense in federal and state courts. Bob received his MBA from Old Dominion University in 1986, and received his law degree from the University of Virginia in 1989.

I received a quick email from Bob after this article came out. He told me that last spring he joined up with **Bob Leszczynski** and **Herb Wilson** and headed over to Charlottesville, VA, to attend George Welsh's retirement party at UVA. Also, his sources say that **Phil McConkey** was due to get married about the same time. Sean Cate passes that he is still waiting for his invitation to the wedding. I'm sure it's "in the mail."

And in more *Business Wire* news: **Larry Kihlstadius** was appointed vice president of the Employment Process Solutions business of Spherion Outsourcing Group, a company that provides recruitment, outsourcing and technology services. He will be responsible for strategy development and for executing the sales and operational direction for the Employment Process Solution business within the group. With 20 years of experience in sales, human resources and operations environments, Larry joined Spherion from TMP Worldwide®, where he was executive vice president responsible for operations and sales in the Southeast. According to the article, "While at TMP, he successfully transitioned the business unit to a new organizational model while achieving profitability within only six months. He also held management positions at various companies including Staffmark®, Randstad Staffing®...He also completed advanced management studies at Harvard Business School and is certified in Six Sigma facilitation from the Juran Institute." Great going, guys!

A couple of weeks ago I was sitting at my desk, writing an extensive discussion on the rotor coast down characteristics of the Army OH-58D helicopter (ZZZZzzzzz...), when my phone rang. On

the other end was Pax River alum **Scott Bruce** (sbruce@avericon.com). Scott called to say that he and the family had left Connecticut and returned to Southern Maryland. He's now working his own company, AVERICON, L.L.C, and is out shaking the bushes for Navy contracts. Lauri and the kids are doing well. Amie (15) will be a high school junior in the fall, and Nicholas (13) just completed the seventh grade. Scott promised a follow-up email, and he was as good as his word. The entire email is quoted here for your information and enjoyment:

"Wiz—Thanks for the great phone call. Now—*get back to work!* Keep up the good work on the column. Scott"

Ah, my adoring public. Seriously, thanks, Scott, for the call. Looking forward to seeing you around the base!

This month I had the extremely good fortune of hearing from Companymate (and Plebe Year roommate) **Gary Rossi** (garyrossi@csmintl.com), checking in from one of my favorite cities, San Diego. After a few pleasantries, Gary had the following update:

Now for the latest—I have left Booz. I have launched my own business and organizational performance excellence coaching, consulting and training firm. I am also affiliated and am a principal with the Centre for Strategic Management. It just happens that the Centre's founder is a member of the Class of '68 (**Steve Haines '68**). It is amazing, we do all stick together.

Jana and the children are great. Jana is in her second year as our children's elementary school PTA president. Amanda is 10 is doing great in school and is very successful at tap dancing. AJ is also doing great in school (they both love education) and a very diverse athlete: he plays soccer, roller hockey, baseball, and basketball.

If you hear of anyone looking to start their Baldrige journey please refer them to me. I am currently working with four clients in education and business with their Baldrige journey. Have a great weekend.

Now I have to admit, I had absolutely no idea what a "Baldrige Journey" was, so I surfed through the Centre for Strategic Management's web site. In the process, I came across Gary's bio, which I thought was rather interesting. Turns out that Gary "is the Centre's Practice Leader for Performance Excellence and Process Improvement (PI). His ten-years experience in performance excellence and PI comes from serving on the Board of Examiners for the Hawaiian Quality Award, the Presidential Quality Award (PQA) and the California Award for Performance Excellence (CAPE). He is a CAPE Senior Examiner, Trainer and Examiner Mentor. He also coaches and edits performance excellence and quality award applications. Gary serves as an American Society for Quality (ASQ) Senior Member and an internationally Certified Quality Manager. He holds a Master of Arts in Management with an emphasis in Total Quality Management (TQM). Gary...completed 20 years of service as a Naval Officer leading Naval Special Warfare (Frogman/SEAL) and Bomb Disposal Teams. Additionally, Gary served as a Team Leader for the Navy's Pacific Fleet Total Quality Internal Consulting Team that trained, consulted, and coached Navy organizations located on the west coast to as far as Japan, Korea, and Australia in TQM."