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CLASS OF 1948 SHIPMATE COLUMN

MAY 2006

You need to know that with the success of the USNA Foundation's six year "Leaders to Serve the Nation Campaign", much covered in Shipmate, the Foundation has not stacked arms and relaxed. They continue annual giving pressure on Classes supplemented by periodic large Class efforts such as our own 2 million dollar gift for support of the Academy IT programs. So you may find individual solicitation in your direction from time to time, towards which you may react as you wish.

I am sad to report the death of **Gordon Kenyon Meriwether, Jr.** (18th Company) on 10 March in Pensacola after some 5 weeks of advancing pneumonia. His wife, Lovie, and some of the children were able to be with him most of that period. He was an aviator and resigned in 1955 to join the family real estate and insurance business in Montgomery, AL, remaining in the Naval Reserve. During Vietnam he returned to active duty with the National HQ of Selective Service. He was then assigned to the OSD (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) as Head of the Committee for Employer Relations for the Guard and Reserve. He retired in 1980. He continued his educational pursuits, picking up masters degrees in Management Science and Public Administration, and a PhD in Public Administration from Auburn at age 73. Gordon was a stalwart in an

active 18th Company group, and will be missed. He leaves his wife, Lovie, and 4 children; Gordon III, McLean; VA, Kitty Schaum, Virginia Beach; Neal Meriwether, Vienna VA; Julie Schmidt, Galveston; nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren. I know all hands join me in expressing our sincere condolences to Lovie and the family.

At the 10 March Class luncheon at the Army Navy Country Club we were joined, as has become traditional, by representatives of the 24th Company for a very entertaining and informational gathering. Lt Ben Oakes ('99) the Company Officer and the Company senior enlisted Chief Aviation Machinist Bob Coats brought along six first classmen, Midshipmen Joe Campbell, Kyle Vandegriff, Michael Feagans, Kristin Bentz, Eric Shuey, and Jeff Rosser. Shuey, the company commander, was the football team punter. Lt Oakes, a big man, who was a star rugby player, is justifiably proud of his company and his mids. Chief Coats says his job with the Company is one of the best in the navy. Each mid spoke briefly about his life, how he got to the Academy, and his hopes and aspirations for the future. Once again, we were impressed by their articulate ease, their pride in their accomplishment and their obvious love of Navy. The USNA is in good hands and on the right track. Classmates on hand with wives were **Harkins, Carlquist, Heid, Villarreal, Rardin, Reed, Munly, Ball, Cab Davis, Corley, Bass, Tony Duncan, O'Connor, Carruth, Gene Kelly, Dyer,** and singles were **Graham, Morgan, Ghormley, Flood, S. Moore, Buhrer, Prichard, Borlaug, Arnold, and Andrus.**

At the luncheon, the DC Area Class of 48 Organization, which is legally constituted (donations are tax deductible), held the required annual election of officers, and the incumbents were swept into office once again, President Graham, Vice President Ball, Treasurer Ghormley, and your Scribe, Secretary. By the time you read this, you should have received a letter requesting funds to replenish our treasury, which pays for flowers and memorials for the deceased, and provides support for the 24th Company Wardroom. Send checks made out to "Class of 48 U. S. Naval Academy" and mail to Cdr R.L. Ghormley Jr., 5408 Christy Drive, Bethesda, MD 20816. In the last 10 years, we have sent flowers to 64 funerals, donated to various charities in the name of 46 Classmates, and provided over \$7000 to the 24th Company Wardroom for a TV, refrigerator, vacuum cleaner, gas grills, furniture, etc.

Robert I. Conn, 14th Company, died 16 February 2006 in Sausalito, CA. He was a Californian, resigned from the Navy in 1953, took a law degree from U. of Cal Berkeley in 1956, and practiced law in Marin County. His active duty was in Tarawa (CV40), patrol craft Pearl Harbor and USS Shelton. He is survived by his wife, Sharon, and two sons, Timothy J. Conn, and Robert A. Conn, all of Sausalito.

I have just heard from **Bob Styer** that the Class also lost submariner, **Herbert Schuyler Kline**, 12th Company, of New Windsor, MD, on 11 March 2006, of a stroke. He entered the Academy from Erie, PA, graduated in 48 and served in the submarines Diabolo, Trout, Trumpetfish, and Irex. He retired from the Navy in 1968 and worked with Vitro in Gaithersburg. He leaves his wife of 43

years, Patricia, and daughter Sarah Lacy Kline Joy and granddaughter Ashley Megan Joy, both of Westminster MD. He was predeceased by sons Herbert B. and Christopher D. Kline. I join all hands in expressing our sincere sympathies to Patricia and the family.

On 8 March, **Phil Rogers**, having extended a luncheon invitation to Coach Paul Johnson at the USNA Officer-Faculty Club to thank him who, through his coaching genius, put the Academy into the national spotlight and gave alumni, midshipmen, sailors and marines cause for new pride and celebration. Phil presented to the Coach on behalf of the Class, a framed photograph with a presentation brass plaque, "To Coach Johnson, Teacher, Leader, Winner, USNA Class of 1948". The photograph depicted one of the Academy Crests that adorn the 2 wrought iron gates at Gate One, which were designed, carved, and cast by late Classmate, **Bill Wagner**, as part of the 1986 Memorial Gate Presentation by the Class. These crests still adorn the gates, and will be retained although the rest of our Gate One upgrade, with the general security overhaul of the Yard, is being redone, with the ultimate disposition not clear. Coach Johnson was visibly pleased and spent an hour answering questions and relating his experiences during the past four years, on and off the field, interactions with other coaches and institutions, challenges with the players, both mental and physical. He even threw in a few personal anecdotes to the delight of everyone. On hand were **Phil Rogers, Don Buhner, Bill Bass, Bill Barnes, Roger Carlquist, Tony Duncan, Charlie Heid, Bob Smith**, and 48 footballers **Ben Moore** and All American **Dick Scott**. As a final gesture, Dick Scott presented to the Coach a 48 Blazer patch

with the stipulation that he wear it and consider himself an honorary 48er, which the Coach graciously acknowledged. While gathered, the Class group discussed the preliminaries of the looming 60th Reunion. A full account of this celebratory luncheon meeting can be found on the Class Website.

George Sullivan reports having visited Rome with a group under the escort of Joint Academy Travel. He indicates that traveling with Academy graduates in Rome provided much in common with Army...sore feet and plenty of good wine. See the foto of George relaxing on a capital in the Colosseum .

Dave Carruth has provided the photos of the Class luncheon with the midshipmen of the 24th Company.