

touring the Island, daily trips to the beach, and beautiful sunset dinners by the water. We had a wonderful reunion that we will remember for many years. We have not sent many items into the class column because we live boring lives, but we want to thank Charlie Pease(10), Tom Lukish(2), and Bill Wheaton(14) for all their work in sending e-mails to keep us up to date and informed of all the things related to our class. Rise and Shine with '59 ■



At The St. Maarten Command Center

In Memoriam: Lawrence D. Bauer (10) passed peacefully on March 13, 2015 with his loving wife and brother-in-law by his side.

Good Times: Geoff Cant (22) reports:

■ The 19th installment of the Class of '59 ski gathering founded by the late Dan Branch was held at Dillon, CO, 25 Feb – 4 Mar. Fifty-niners present were **Hugh Severs (22) and his wife Jeanne, and myself, (also 22), and wife Cathy. Dan Branch's widow, Kathleen,** was a vivacious participant and leader. Also joining were Jan MacGregor '62 (and 22 Co.), stalwart **Joe Mahaffey,** and newcomers, Walt Stephenson and Will Zurliene. We had great snow and enjoyed the fine slopes of Summit and Eagle counties. We plan to do the 20th gathering next year, so bring your sea stories and join us. ■

Rise and Shine

60 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 1%
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 67%

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From **Ted Parsons (18):**

■ “Dear Bill, this is a bit late I admit. (No excuse sir) However it might be of interest to the Class. I have my difficulties with the computer, so bare with me, and edit as

you see fit. (or is it bear with me? I live in the Canadian Rockies) I sort of peaked out at the slide rule stage, of which mine had a lot of wrong answers. Nonetheless...

LAST CALL FOR A PILOT'S PILOT

Our plan was to drive to San Diego to see the grand kids in early October, but hearing of the passing of classmate **Charlie Della Peruta (14)** and his internment at the United States Air Force Academy on 21 October, 2014, a simple adjustment to our travel plans seemed in order. Hell, Colorado Springs is only about eight hundred miles out of the way to San Diego. It's a solid three day drive from Canmore, Alberta, through the beauty of Montana and Wyoming, to the absolute Madness of the Denver free-ways, and finally down to Colorado Springs. But one of the excellent bennies of a military career is the ability to use what we used to call BOQs. All along the way we enlisted them by setting it up on the Internet, and they were all excellent to outstanding.

We arrived at the USAFA on Sunday 20 October, and after driving around for miles (the USAFA is big!), finally found the BOQ, wherein we checked in without problem, and retired to our assigned billet. While loading our cases into our room, across the hall, there was a fellow and his wife doing the same. I had a NAVY FOOTBALL cap on and he asked me if I played football at USNA. I replied, “I did.” “Are you here for Charlie's memorial?” I said, “I was,” and he introduced himself as Greg Boyington, said he was running mate of Charlie, and was here also for the service. We chatted in the hall, and before our respective wives dragged us into our rooms to get ready for the evening's dinner we found that we had met before. It was Plebe Summer, when Greg, as an enlisted Marine stationed across the river, came to say hi to his fellow NAPS Marine, **Bernie Eberlein (18)**. (Bernie went through NAPS twice) Greg told us he took the Air Force Academy because he was a typical AF puke who needed at least 14,000 feet of concrete runway to take off and land one of those tailhookless airplanes they called fighters in the AF. His Marine Aviator Dad must have rolled over. But, like Charlie, Greg is a likeable guy, and one has to excuse them both for going AF.

There was a dinner (Italian) for the thirty or so family and friends, and Greg told us we should come. We did, and it was a jolly gathering indeed to remember a jolly guy. Who can think of

Charlie Della Peruta (14) without that grin on his puss? He was just one of those people who you couldn't help but like. Besides, he was a pilot's pilot, which is good enough for this only average pilot. The guy flew everything with wings.

The internment was the next day at the AFA's Cemetery, attended by three dozen family and friends, along with a dozen AF troopers. With the bugle, the flag, the honor guard of spit shined AF noncoms, and a tiny female USAF Col (ret) directing the proceedings, it went off quite well. The rifle salute, and mournful Taps, added to the solemnity of the occasion. BZ AirForce. BZ Charlie. BZ for his buddies sticking with him to the last.

All during the proceedings I kept thinking about the gentlemanly arguments I had with Charlie, during First Class year. The guy came to the Naval Academy with a Commercial Pilot Ticket, and knew from flying. He belonged to Naval Aviation. But in spite of my eloquent arguments, he went Air Force, and won the semi-final argument after a distinguished flying career, which included flying T-28Ds for many of those strange, albeit secret, missions he flew out of Thailand during the long lost war in Vietnam. After the Air Force he ran a fixed base operation in New Jersey called Ultra Jets. I'm not exactly sure what Ultra Jets did to make money, which it most assuredly did. But knowing Charlie was Italian, I never really pursued the question.

He told me at the 45th that he was in a crash, wherein he lost the use of one of his eyes. But apparently it didn't slow him down, and he pressed on. What couldn't get to him externally got to him internally, and with a great fight, he succumbed.

I figured Charlie won the final argument as to loyalty by being buried at the Air Force Academy. But Charlie's stone monument at the Air Force Academy reads:

LCOL CHARLES DELLA PERUTA USAF

21 OCTOBER, 2014
USNA 1960

How many AF pukers are buried at the Naval Academy Cemetery? God love you Charlie One Eye. I surely did. You had to be the best pilot of our Class.

One has to admit that the Air Force has some strange customs, and at the grave site, routine proved it. After the distinguished ceremony, Greg passed out nickels to all in attendance and one by one we all

threw them into the small hole wherein Charlie's cremains were interred. As it seemed to be the thing to do, Wendy and I tossed ours. But being somewhat confused, I wrote Greg, and he informed me that it was a tradition the result of a Korean War vintage AF song that went. Song is found on the Class website. **Ted Parsons, '60** ■

From **Harry Butler (10)**:

■ "At our February meeting at the Army-Navy Country Club in Arlington, VA, **Harry Butler (10)** and his ballroom dance instructor, Alison Krauss from the Silver Spring, MD Arthur Murray studio, gave a presentation about ballroom dancing; performed a waltz routine they danced at a national competition (see the attached photos); demonstrated Cha Cha, Swing, and Tango steps; and taught six brave couples a waltz box step.

After a bit of fumbling and Alison's commands to "Stop looking at your feet!!" the dancing couples got the hang of it, and wanted more. So Harry and Alison are planning to come back in the Fall for an encore.

Harry told the group that he and his wife Carol been dancing since the early 1960's, but that about 20 years ago, they decided to learn how to do it right. So they signed up at the Arthur Murray studio, and have been taking lessons there off and on since. ■



Harry Butler & Partner



'60: SOCal group

From **John Schmidt (20)**:

■ "Glee & **John Schmidt (20)** recently hosted a SOCAL 60 gathering. Attending, left to right, **Bob Stevenson (2)**, **Bill Lloyd (21)**, **Tom Curtis (22)**, **Doc Hand (7)**, **Dick Banister (9)**, **Sam Ward (8)**, **John Pethick (9)**, and **Chuck Schroeder (23)**. Headless-Schmidt. ■

From **Bob Osmon (17)**:

■ "Congratulations to classmate **Joe Jaap (13)** on his recent induction into the Sons of the American Revolution. Joe's family has a long and distinguished record of service to our country. Bob ■

From **Rod Friedmann (5)**:

■ "Bill, our monthly Class Luncheon was held in a "Cheers-like" restaurant/pub called Tempt's in Virginia Beach. On Tues, Mar 10th, thirteen classmates ventured out to the "Beach" for drinks, camaraderie, and great food. The owner (Tiffany), her husband and Amber, a very attentive & efficient waitress, made us feel at home and took very good care of the aging Mids. We had about an hour before lunch was served to congregate around the bar to tell some old lies and embellish some familiar sea stories. We then we moved to the dining area, with a blazing fireplace to keep the old warriors warm. Bar conversations were continued. Orders were placed from a fixed price-customized menu, which included Tempt's famous "Best-of-the Beach" Oysters Rockefeller. No one was disappointed.

Attending the luncheon were: **Al Ablowich (16)**, **Jim Eilertsen (21)**, **Wick Parcels (12)**, **Ed Clextton (10)**, **Rod Friedmann (5)**, **Bill Kee (9)**, **Jack Greenhalgh (9)**, **Joel Febel (5)**, **Mike McCullough (14)**, **Frank Kay (8)**, **Bert Johnson (10)**, **Paul Cooper (5)**, and **Al Bissell (8)**, who recently

relocated to the Virginia Beach area. Jun 9th will feature our Annual Antique Car show and luncheon at Fellini's in Norfolk (Donna & **Mike McCullough's** place). Rod



Febel, McCullough, & Parcels



Ablowich, Bissell, & Johnson

61 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 3%
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 69%

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Well, folks, here is my second try at a column. The first was put together on somewhat short notice, burning some midnight oil, and partly on a cruise. Hopefully, this will be slightly improved. As I begin to write this, I hope we have enough news so we have an interesting column. That, of course, depends on all of us, so don't be shy about sending in anything you might think might be of interest to at least some of us. If you feel it could be embarrassing, well, try me. If it gets by me (not hard), then it's up to the SHIPMATE censors to do their thing.

Congratulations!
CLASS OF 2015

*Fair Winds and Following Seas
from your Alumni Association*