



# ***Class of 79 News***

## ***August 2020***



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### **PREZ SEZ**

#### **From 7/28:**

Greetings '79!

I hope each of you are healthy and safe as there seems to be no end in sight of the pandemic.

The Yard is starting to get busy. Plebes have finished their two-week quarantine period and have been sworn in. They are now out and about just in time for the heat and humidity to set in. Each morning I see them doing PEP, marching and of course there are plenty of walking wounded on crutches. All first Class and most second class Midshipmen have returned to the Yard, only to find out that liberty is restricted to the Yard as part of COVID measures. Mids being Mids, they are trying to find fun things to do with all their free time. Hammocks have sprung up all over the place and I saw Mids fishing off Hospital Point when I came in to work this morning. All of a sudden sailing is real popular as an excuse to get off the Yard... Rumor has it there will be no liberty until November and classes will be a mix of live and virtual. Even if they are stuck on the Yard, most Mids are happy to be out of the house and back with their friends.

The football team has started practice ... so far, it's walk-throughs while maintaining a social distance. It remains to be seen what the American Athletic Conference (and Navy's) football schedule will look like. One rumor said that if only the service academies play then it would be for the Division 1 championship! As always, if I hear anything, I will pass it along.

Be careful out there. All the best,

Dave

#### **From 7/19 # 1:**

Greetings '79,

It's my sad duty to inform you of the passing of Mike "Rock" Marciano after a long battle with cancer. Mike was a proud member of 9th Company and a fellow Management Major. He went SWO upon graduation and then began a long, extremely successful career at Prudential, retiring in 2017. Mike is survived by his wife of 40+ years, Anne Marie, along with their four children and two grandchildren. Here's a link to the funeral home website if you'd like to read Mike's obituary and/or upload a memory for the family to read. [Mike Marciano Obituary and Memories](#)

If you would like to drop a card to Anne Marie, I know she'd appreciate your kind

gesture. Her address is 8 Rimwood Drive, Lincroft, NJ 07738

All the best,

Dave

### SEAN CATE RETIRED



For those of you who have wondered over many years what I would look like with a beard, the attached picture shows me on the fourth of July. What do you think? This is my quarantine beard. I will keep it for now, perhaps for awhile, but not sure about the long-term prospects.

Sean had a trivia question for the class. How many had retired flags for their fathers or fathers-in-law? If you did, please send to me and I'll consolidate the list. Thanks, Kirk

### CLASS OF 1979 FACEBOOK GROUP

As a reminder for the Class of '79 Facebook page – we want to ensure you are a classmate or have a relationship with the Class of 1979. If you want to join the group or you want to recommend others to join the group, there are three questions you / they are asked to answer:

- Are you a 1979 graduate from the United States Naval Academy?

- Are you a spouse or widow of a member of the USNA Class of 1979?
- Do you have any relationship to USNA Class of 1979?

If you have any questions, please contact the Facebook Group Administrators: Stan Clark, John Withers, Gary Rossi, Valerie Gerheiser, or Kirk Michealson.

### ALL ACADEMY CHALLENGE

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**5 Teams. 5 Days. 1 Mission.**

To our United States Service Academy alumni, families, and friends worldwide:

In May, we shared a message about our mutual values and the missions of the five United States service academies in the fight against COVID-19.

We affirmed that the ideals that support our commitment to serve our country continue to unite us during the challenges posed to our communities.

During these months, we have been proud to continue to serve and support our graduates and academies through programs, outreach, and fundraising.

Recognizing the tremendous uncertainty created by the COVID-19 crisis, our alumni communities have made it clear: they support the purpose and impact of their alma maters, and they want to play a part in their futures.

With this in mind, we are thrilled to announce the coming 2020 All Academy Challenge: 16-20 August. It's 5 Teams. 5 Days. 1 Mission—five alumni communities coming together in support of their academies: Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Merchant Marine.

Look for more information in the weeks ahead about the 2020 Challenge and how you can participate. Tell your classmates and fellow alumni to get on board—their support is more important than ever.

Thank you,  
Colonel Todd Browne, USA (Ret.), USMA '85  
President and CEO  
West Point Association of Graduates

Lieutenant General Mike Gould, USAF (Ret.), USAFA '76  
CEO  
U.S. Air Force Academy Association of Graduates and Air Force Academy Foundation

Byron F. Marchant USNA '78  
President and CEO  
U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation

Captain Andrea Marcille, USCG (Ret.), USCGA '89  
President  
U.S. Coast Guard Academy Alumni Association

Captain Jim Tobin, USMMA '77  
President  
U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Alumni Association and Foundation

## SUMMER UPDATES FROM THE YARD



Dear Alumni, Parents and Friends:

Earlier this month we paused to celebrate Independence Day and all that our country has achieved since its founding. Unsurprisingly, this holiday has special meaning for us, because we have the distinct honor to work with you, a remarkable community of individuals who have in countless ways served, supported and dedicated their lives to preserving what was started more than 244 years ago. Each day we are reminded that through your continued support for the Naval Academy and the Brigade of Midshipmen, the next generation of Navy and Marine Corps officers are better equipped to excel as the leaders our nation needs more than ever.

As we welcome the Class of 2024 and prepare for the reform of the full Brigade, we are excited for all that lies ahead in the coming months. In that spirit, we want to share a few updates from the Yard:

- While the traditional Sea Trials were derailed by COVID-19, the Class of 2023 completed the [equally intense E-Trials](#), with 12th Company taking Iron Company honors.
- The Class of 2024 [reported for Plebe Summer](#) over the course of four I-Days. Log in to the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association's [Photo Program](#) to track their Plebe Summer experience.
- Computer Science Associate Professor Dr. Nate Chambers received the 2020 Class of 1951 Civilian Faculty

Excellence in Research Award for [his research in natural language processing](#).

- [Radio Stockdale](#) provides intriguing and thought-provoking conversations about ethics, philosophy and leadership, by and for the naval warrior.
- Seven members of the Navy women's golf team were recently recognized on the [Patriot League Academic Honor Roll](#).
- Eleven Navy tennis players earned a spot on the [Patriot League Academic Honor Roll](#).
- Superintendent VADM Sean Buck '83, USN, [discussed COVID-19's impact on the Academy and his plans for the upcoming academic year](#) on the Naval Academy Museum's "Preble Hall" podcast.
- The Naval Academy Athletic Association launched a [great video](#) highlighting Naval Academy landmarks and student-athlete achievements.

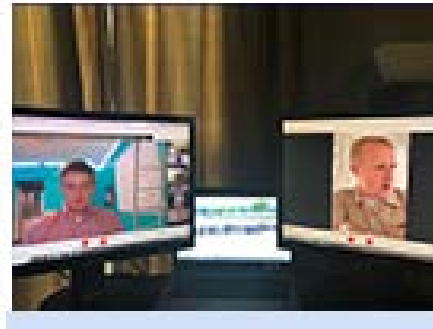
We encourage you to stay connected with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for future updates. As always, thank you for your continued support and generous philanthropy to the many programs and initiatives across the Yard.

GO NAVY!

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## **SMMER SEMINAR CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY**



[Summer Seminar Completed Virtually](#)

## **CLASS OF 2024 JOINS BRIGADE**



The Class of 2024 experienced an "I-Day" ... or days ... unlike any other, arriving in groups over a four-day period. Once on the Yard, the 1,198 members of the class began their training with a two-week restriction of movement (ROM) followed by a two-phase [Oath of Office ceremony](#) and the start of more traditional Plebe Summer activities following. Parents traveling to Annapolis were invited to stop by Max Bishop Field at Terwilliger Brothers Stadium for a socially distanced [welcome briefing](#) from Superintendent VADM Sean Buck '83, USN, and Byron Marchant '78, President and CEO of the USNA Alumni Association and Foundation. Want access to thousands of images documenting this unprecedented Plebe Summer? Make sure your Alumni Association membership is up to date and log in [here](#).

## FOOTBALL TAILGATES

With the Navy tailgaters on hold until a decision is made about the season and fans attending, the tailgater themes for the fall season are on hold. I will email the "Tailgater Group Email List" as soon as there is any information. If you are not part of the list, please email me at platweddings@aol.com to be added. Hope to see in the fall even though it's not looking likely.

Stay safe ~Valerie

## PATRIOT LEAGUE



Recognizing the global COVID-19 pandemic continues to present significant challenges to our campuses and communities, the Patriot League Council of Presidents announces the following decisions regarding Patriot League competition:

- Patriot League teams will not engage in competition in the fall season (championship and non-championship);
- Decisions surrounding winter and spring sport competition will be made at a later date; and,
- The opportunity for conditioning, strength training and other practice opportunities in all sports will be permitted provided health and safety conditions support such activities.

*Because the United States Military Academy and the United States Naval Academy are unique in their environments and their missions within higher education, the Council of Presidents agree that the academies may continue to engage in competitive opportunities as considered appropriate by their respective Superintendents.*

The collegiate athletics experience at all Patriot League institutions is valuable to fulfilling our educational and developmental missions, and the League recognizes that any degree of non-competition this fall is deeply disappointing to our student-athletes, coaches, and fans. However, the health and safety of our campuses and communities must be our highest priority.

The League is committed to exploring creative approaches and alternatives to providing future competitive experiences to our fall sport student-athletes, including the possibility of conducting fall sport competition and championships in the second semester.

### Patriot League Council of Presidents

Sylvia Mathews Burwell, American University

Robert A. Brown, Boston University

John Bravman, Bucknell University

Philip Boroughs, S.J., College of the Holy Cross

Brian W. Casey, Colgate University

Alison R. Byerly, Lafayette College

John D. Simon, Lehigh University

Brian Linnane, S.J., Loyola University Maryland

Lt. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, United States Military Academy

Vice Adm. Sean Buck, United States Naval Academy.

### **“THE DO-OVER” PODCAST FEATURES CHAMBERS ’52**



“The Do-Over,” a Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership podcast focused on times leaders wished they would have or could have taken a different path, [recently featured Distinguished Graduate RADM Lawrence Chambers ’52, USN \(Ret.\)](#), the first Black Naval Academy alumnus to make flag rank, and the commanding officer of MIDWAY during the evacuation of Saigon. In this episode, Chambers tackles the challenges of grounding a pilot.

### **TRACKING TRADITIONS**



Change is inevitable but at the Naval Academy, many traditions stand the test of time. Have you ever wondered if the traditions or policies on the Yard you enjoyed or lamented as a midshipman are still in practice at the Academy? *Shipmate* wants to share alumni responses to the following question below in a future edition of “Clear the Deck.” What tradition or experience from your time at the Academy would you ask a current midshipman if it is still in practice? Please send responses (200 words or less) to Managing Editor Jimmy DeButts at [jimmy.debutts@usna.com](mailto:jimmy.debutts@usna.com).

### **AFTER THE US NAVY’S BONHOMME RICHARD CATASTROPHE, A FAR- REACHING CRACKDOWN ON FIRE SAFETY**



Smoke rises from the USS Bonhomme Richard at Naval Base San Diego Sunday, July 12, 2020, in San Diego after an explosion and fire Sunday on board the ship at Naval Base San Diego.

U.S. Navy brass is telling sailors and contractors to put fire safety at the center of their work in the shipyards and on the waterfront in the wake of a catastrophic fire aboard the [amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard](#).

As Naval Sea Systems Command continues its formal assessment of the [damage to Bonhomme Richard](#), the Navy has both sailors across the organization and contractors working on the ships reviewing their procedures and ensuring they are doing everything possible to prevent a second tragedy.

Adm. Michael Gilday, the chief of naval operations, said the enterprise-wide effort was to prevent a similar event from taking place, a lesson he drew from the Navy’s response to a string of [accidents in 7th Fleet in 2017](#).

“Could there be another Bonhomme Richard waiting to happen? If you go back to 2017, who would have predicted we’d have had two collisions of that magnitude within a month?” Gilday said in a July 16 interview with Defense News. “So, I’m not waiting for ‘No. 2’ to decide we have a trend here. In a

situation like this, one incident is enough for me to determine that there could be a trend and I'm not going to leave it to chance that there might be."

In the wake of the fire, he ordered fleet commanders to send a lengthy list of requirements to the waterfront, including a mandate to do fire safety inspections of every space on every ship. So-called "zone inspections" of each space on a ship are generally spread out over months, rather than packed into a week.

The orders also included reviewing maintenance records on all damage control equipment – such as fire hoses and fire main connections, fire extinguishers, fixed fire suppression systems and firefighting gear – and ensure it is 100 percent accounted for. Additionally, each in-port duty section (a rotating group of sailors from the crew designated to stay on board the ship for 24 hours) was required to undergo a formal assessment as to their proficiency in firefighting and validate that they were properly manned to be effective.

Contractors and shipbuilders have also been warned by the Navy to take fire safety seriously. In the days following the Bonhomme Richard fire, two minor fires – one on board the [amphibious assault ship Kearsarge](#) at General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard and another on the Navy's future [carrier John F. Kennedy](#) at [Newport News shipbuilding](#) – have curtailed work and prompted a doubling down on safety.

In a Friday letter, Navy's top acquisitions official James Geurts told shipbuilders and contractors to take Bonhomme Richard as a lesson.

"Anyone who steps aboard our ships must be ever vigilant about ensuring fire safety," Geurts wrote. "I urge you to use [the recent fire] to ensure that our work spaces are clean, that unnecessary clutter is removed, that all fire safety measures are being

followed and that there is unrestricted access to firefighting and damage control equipment."

### 'Gutted'

The safety crackdown follows the Navy's worst in-port disaster since the 2012 fire on board the attack submarine Miami, which suffered a major conflagration while in deep maintenance at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine. That incident was later determined to be arson.

The Bonhomme Richard fire, which experts fear may have damaged the "big deck" amphib beyond repair, raised troubling questions about how prepared sailors are to combat one of their most fearsome enemies: a shipboard fire, a threat they are trained to deal with from their earliest days in Boot Camp.



Sailors combat a fire aboard the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) on July 13 in San Diego.

In a letter this week from Gilday to all Navy flag officers and top enlisted leaders, he detailed how a series of explosions and a 1,200-degree inferno caused "extensive damage" to 11 of Bonhomme Richard's 14 decks.

"There is fire and water damage, to varying degrees, on 11 of 14 decks," Gilday wrote. "With the flight deck as a reference, I walked sections of the ship 5 levels below and had the opportunity to examine the superstructure.

**EDWARD A. BURKHALTER JR.,**  
**NAVY VICE ADMIRAL AND**  
**INTELLIGENCE OFFICIAL, DIES AT**  
**91**

“The island is nearly gutted, as are sections of some of the decks below; some perhaps, nearly encompassing the 844 ft length and 106 ft beam of the ship ([Naval Sea System Command’s] detailed assessment is ongoing). Sections of the flight deck are warped/bulging.”

The fire on the Bonhomme Richard broke out the morning of July 12 while it was pierside in San Diego, California, undergoing maintenance. The blaze was aided by wind and explosions, Gilday wrote.

“While response from the crew and federal firefighters was rapid, preliminary reports indicate there were two main factors that contributed to the intensity, scope, and speed of the fire,” Gilday wrote. “First was wind that fueled the fire as the vehicle storage area leads to the well deck, which opens to the air at the stern gate. The second were the explosions, one in particular, reportedly heard about 13 miles away.

“The explosions, some were intense, and the uncertainty of their location and timing, led to a situation, that might have been under control late Sunday night, but expanded into a mass conflagration, spreading quickly up elevator shafts, engine exhaust stacks, and through berthing and other compartments where combustible material was present.”

The Navy has launched dual investigations into the fire: A safety investigation, which are generally not released to the public so that witnesses can feel free to speak openly, and a more formal administrative investigation, which generally comes with disciplinary recommendations and are releasable to the public.



Edward A. “Al” Burkhalter Jr., a retired Navy vice admiral who served on nuclear submarines early in his career and later held high-ranking intelligence positions, including as an adviser to the CIA, died July 1 at a hospital in Annapolis. He was 91. The cause was a heart attack, said a son-in-law, J.D. Baldwin.

Adm. Burkhalter entered the Navy’s submarine corps soon after his graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy and was among the first generation of sailors in the nation’s nuclear-powered submarine fleet in the late 1950s.

As navigator of the USS Seadragon, he had a major role in planning the submarine’s route as it made its way past Greenland, then through the Northwest Passage in the Arctic Ocean. The [nuclear-powered Seadragon](#) made international news in 1960



when it became the Navy's third submarine to reach the North Pole and the second, after the USS Skate, to ascend to the surface at the top of the world.

Adm. Burkhalter later served aboard other submarines, including a tour in the late 1960s as commander of the Skate. He had a planning role in a top-secret program in the early 1970s, [Operation Ivy Bells](#), in which U.S. military and intelligence units attached listening devices to undersea Soviet communication cables. From 1974 to 1976, Adm. Burkhalter was commander of a submarine squadron at a now-defunct [U.S. naval base](#) on the Italian island of Sardinia.

He spent the rest of his military career at the Pentagon as an intelligence officer, including as deputy director of the Defense Intelligence Agency. From 1981 to 1986, he was the chief military liaison to CIA director William J. Casey, who was a close friend.

Adm. Burkhalter had a key role in preparing intelligence agency budgets before retiring from the Navy as a three-star admiral in 1986. His decorations included the Defense Distinguished Service Medal and the Legion of Merit.

**Edward Alan Burkhalter Jr. was born** Sept. 15, 1928, in Roanoke, Ala. His father, a World War I veteran, managed a textile mill.

After a year at Auburn University in Alabama, Adm. Burkhalter entered the Naval Academy, graduating in 1951.

Following his military career, he operated a consulting firm, Burkhalter Associates, that held contracts with the Defense Department and CIA. He was also board chairman of SteelCloud, a technology and security company based in Northern Virginia. He retired in 2012.

Adm. Burkhalter received the [Distinguished Submariner Award](#) from the Naval Submarine League in 2013. For the past 25 years, he lived near the grounds of the Naval Academy and was associated with several organizations supporting the academy's alumni and athletic activities.

His marriage to Elizabeth Johnstone ended in divorce. His second wife, Rebecca Robinson Lloyd, the widow of a Navy officer who died in a submarine mishap, died in 2016 after 44 years of marriage. Adm. Burkhalter adopted her five children.

Survivors include five children from his first marriage, Susan Green, Clay Burkhalter and Wendy Eck, all of Stonington, Conn., Heather Bessette of Mystic, Conn., and Holly Bosman of Mooresville, N.C.; six children from his second marriage, David Burkhalter of Chicago, **Elizabeth Smith of Burke, Va.**, Susan Baldwin of Hoboken, N.J., Mark Burkhalter of Henderson, Md., Ted Burkhalter of Springfield, Va., and Edward A. Burkhalter III of Alexandria, Va.; 29 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

NOTE: Elizabeth Smith mentioned above is our classmate Steve Smith's wife. On behalf of the class, I send our deepest sympathies to Liz, Steve, and their family.

### [USNA 79er DATABASE, ETC.](#)



- 1 – [Welcome to the Area / Newsletter](#) –
- New additions this month include:  
None

- Updates include: Dave Frost, Dick Tobey

## 79er COORDINATOR

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or [Kirk.michealson@gmail.com](mailto:Kirk.michealson@gmail.com)  
Cell – (407)375-3440

## HOW DO YOU UPDATE YOUR PROFILE ON USNA.COM?

(updated July 2019)

The Class of 1979 Leadership relies on the information contained in the USNA Alumni Association database to maintain our contact with you. All “official” emails going out to the class use the addresses in the Alumni Association database. This includes items like reunion information, upcoming trips or classmate gatherings, loss of classmates, or any information of a time-sensitive nature, as well as *SHIPMATE* magazine delivery.

Changes to your Alumni Profile can only be made by you – the Class Leadership is not able to do this for you.

It is very important to stay in communications with your Class by email and regular mail, as well as telephone contact in order to stay informed through *SHIPMATE* articles and the Class Column and Class President emails. Please follow the following instructions to change and update your Alumni Profile.

- Step 1: Go to [www.usna.com](http://www.usna.com).
- Step 2: Click on “Log In” at top right of the page. On a mobile device, tap the menu icon at top right, then tap “Log In”.
- Step 3: Enter your Username and Password, then click/tap on “Login.”

(Important: If you forgot or don’t know your Username and/or Password, click/tap on the “Forgotten Password” link. Do NOT use the New User Registration unless you know you’ve never registered an account – highly

unlikely. If you receive *SHIPMATE*, then you probably have an account.)

- Step 4: Click on “My Profile” at top of the page. On a mobile device, tap the menu icon at top right, then tap “My Profile”.
- Step 5: Scroll through your Personal Information and update the appropriate fields. Ensure your mailing address and email address are correct. After completing your updates, click on the “Submit” button at the bottom of the page. I suggest you then look over your profile again to make sure it’s accurate. Please note the “Make Private” options for any or all of your information. Use them if you feel it is necessary.
- Step 6: Click on “Logout” at top right of the page. On a mobile device, tap the menu icon at top right, then tap “Logout”.

## HOW DO YOU FIND CLASSMATES?

(same as last month)

If you want to find contact information on our classmates or other Naval Academy grads, you can use an Alumni Tool called Alumni Lookup. Of course, our classmates or other grads must enter their information in the system, but if they did, you can find it.

When you Log in at [www.usna.com](http://www.usna.com) go all the way to the bottom right of the page and you will see an “Alumni Lookup” button. Click that. A login page for USNA.com will open it for you to enter your information and then agree with the user agreement.

Then you enter fill in the search fields, click search, and your results will show up in a box below the search fields.

That’s it. Happy hunting! Hopefully, our classmates and other alumni will be registered.