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Good Afternoon (or Morning) ’81!

Now that the busy holiday season is over, we’ve entered a new year and Spring is hopefully right around the corner, I thought it might be a good time to bring everyone up to date on some recent news, upcoming events and initial planning for our 40thReunion (can you believe it?).

**Distinguished Graduate Award**- In case you hadn’t heard, we are very proud to inform you that our classmate, Wendy Lawrence, was selected as a 2019 Distinguished Graduate.  The award ceremony will take place on Friday, March 22 at 1630 in Alumni Hall.  The Naval Academy Alumni Association will send out an invite to our class on 7 February and reserve a section in Alumni Hall for our class to accommodate the number of RSVPs.   We have also worked with McGarvey’s to reserve room for our class to meet after the ceremony.  Congratulations Wendy!  Well deserved!  We hope to see a large Class of ’81 turnout to help her celebrate on 22 March! (Note:  A special thank you to all who helped with Wendy’s DGA package, especially Noreen Leahy and Tim Disher!)

**Art Athens Retirement -**After an outstanding military and civilian career, Art Athens retired in December 2018.  Art's most recent assignment was as Director, Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership (2007 -2018), where he led the moral development of the nation's Naval Service leaders.  The Class of '81 has always had a special relationship with Art, starting as our Regimental Commander on I-Day in 1977 to his most recent assignment as Director of the Stockdale Center.  Class of '81 sponsors the Stockdale Center's Ethics Award dinner honoring the midshipmen who excelled in the Ethics curriculum.  In 2011, Art was elected an honorary member of the Class of '81.  In honor of his outstanding career and impact on the Class of '81, we would like to surprise him with 81 thank-you cards, letters, or emails, that we can deliver to Art as a token of our appreciation.  Please take the time to think about what Art has meant to you, put the words into writing, and mail to the Class Vice President, Tim Disher, at 314 Locust Avenue, Annapolis, Maryland 21401.  If you prefer to send an email, Tim will be collecting those at [disher@usna.edu](mailto:disher@usna.edu).  We will collect all correspondence through 15 March and deliver to Art at an event where we'll invite classmates to participate.

**40thReunion Update**- We are two and a half years away from our 40threunion and have begun the planning process.  Given AAC alignment and late football scheduling, we have tentatively selected Labor Day weekend in 2021 (2-5 Sep).  There is currently a home game scheduled for the 4thagainst Marshall.  Tom Jacob (our last reunion coordinator) has graciously offered to assist in planning this event, however, we are looking for other volunteers (best if from the NCR area) to lead and assist in planning this event.  We are currently considering the Westin Hotel to host the reunion, but also considering not having a host hotel if we cannot negotiate a reduced room rate without committing to a Friday night dinner at the hotel.  We had mixed comments in the post-reunion survey regarding the Friday night dinner, so we are contemplating reserving this time for independent Company events followed by a social event at a local establishment. We would love to hear your thoughts, ideas and comments to help make this reunion a resounding success. Please reply to this email (cc:  [disher@usna.edu](mailto:disher@usna.edu)and [tom\_jacob@comcast.net](mailto:tom_jacob@comcast.net)) with your thoughts and comments

**Class Leadership Telecon**– Held on 12 Dec 18.  A summary of the call is attached.

**40thReunion Project**–We continue to make steady progress on our class project.   We have almost reached the $600,000 mark against our goal of $1.5M.  If you have been thinking about supporting our project but have not gotten around to it yet, click here to donate or make a multi-year pledge: [https://www.usna.com/give](http://give/)

In the “*I would like my gift to go*” box scroll to the bottom of the list and click on “*Giving Programs*”, then click on “*class project*”.  Help us reach both our goal of $1.5M and our 81% or better participation rate. The class and the Academy can really use your support.  If you have any questions, please contact Dan Quattrini at [dan.quattrini@usna.com](mailto:dan.quattrini@usna.com).

**Shipmate assistance/Class News**– Ken Aimen ([classof81scribe@gmail.com](mailto:classof81scribe@gmail.com)) has been working diligently to fill the Shipmate column and keep us all up to date by passing along Class News, but he can’t do it without your help.  Please share anything noteworthy directly with him and/or through your Company Rep (see attached list).  Thanks for all of your hard work Ken!  We really appreciate it!

**Class Website**– Don’t forget to check the class website from time to time: [http://www.usna1981.org](http://track.smtpsendemail.com/6026964/c?p=3Njan0nhd3srhJ5CPymiO75d8ybWQF8RbZp8fwxJp81yuXOy13rCRiLVuGbAAZNVW6_FrKnACEAgs5lx6LB_68bBNiC5qX86F41zk2pofJEAX4ORng4uVUC1DyoLG1EV). Thanks to Patty Whitney for maintaining it for us!

Wishing you all a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2019!

V/R,

Otto Stutz

“'81, second to none!”