

3 December 2021

Dear Classmates,

Greetings from sunny Maryland. I hope you all are well and looking forward to a Merry Holiday season.

I attended the Council of Class Presidents meeting yesterday and have attended several other events in Annapolis recently. I am writing to pass on some things I learned to all of you. The complete minutes from the meeting yesterday are posted on our Class website for anyone who wants to review the entire meeting. You might be interested in the briefing from the Superintendent.

Overall, things at the Academy are slowly approaching “Normal”. 98% of the Midshipmen, faculty, staff, and workers have been vaccinated. Masks are worn in classes, and all indoor spaces. The Brigade is eating three meals a day at the tables in King Hall for the first time in sixteen months. This is significant, for many “lessons” of leadership and other topics are learned at the tables. We had one female Mid, the Captain of the Woman’s Rugby Team, selected as a Rhodes Scholar. Numerous other prestigious scholarships will be announced in the next two weeks. *U. S News* ranked USNA as the number one public four year college in the Nation -- so the leadership is proud of the Academic achievements.

Athletically, Navy has played Army in seven fall sports and won six of them. Football is next weekend, and we are all hopeful Navy will return to dominance over Army. The Pandemic cost the NAAA over sixty percent of its revenue last year. They are making that up this year but feel it will take at least one more year to fully recover. The Athletic Director said that 95% of the funding for varsity sports comes from tickets, TV revenue, and from private donations. Unlike many other colleges, Navy did not have to drop any sports and kept all its coaching staffs. There are 33 varsity sports now, third highest number in the Nation, and they plan to add men’s and women’s rugby as varsity sports next Fall, assuming the Rugby Excellence Fund can raise enough for two years of operations.

There is good news regarding facilities. Yesterday, we toured Hopper Hall (the Cyber Building). Our Class plans to visit that next Fall as one of our Reunion events, and I am certain you will be impressed. Cyber is a very important warfighting skill now, and the Academy is in the forefront of teaching these skills. ’66 was a pioneer Class supporting Cyber, and we can all be proud of what has been accomplished. Ricketts Hall has been renovated and is now called the Terwilliger Student-Athlete Center. In my view, it is truly grand. There is an area of displays honoring student-legends from all the classes. ’66 nominated eleven of our Classmates to be recognized, and all were approved by NAAA. Four Classmates are already in the display, and the others will be added by the New Year. When you are in Annapolis, make time to visit this Center – you will not be disappointed. While not a part of the Academy, the Naval Institute has been on the Yard since 1873. They just completed an impressive auditorium and conference center by renovating a wing in the old Naval Hospital. It is also an impressive facility and will be available to reserve for events and activities in the future. Lastly, we visited the site on the

new Alumni Association Building. They broke ground last month and are hard at work. This should be completed by the Fall of 2023 and will be available for reunions and other gatherings. It will be a significant enhancement to Annapolis.

I will close out this letter by highlighting some needs if you plan to make some end of the year gifts to the Academy. The first need is the Alumni Association Building. Thus far, '66 has donated about \$90k to this project. We have two Classmates who have challenged us by committing to matching our gifts – up to \$75k each. We need to raise \$250k to be recognized in the manner we would want, so I urge you to consider giving something to this project. '67 has already pledged over \$500k and has a major gate named in their honor. Other opportunities include the Rugby Excellence Fund. Rugby needs a total of \$2 million raised to become a varsity sport. They are close but could use a little help.. Army has been a varsity sport for about five years now. They barely beat Navy this past Fall in a nationally televised match at FEDEX Field. Army had eleven players recruited to play rugby. Navy had none! Varsity status will turn this around quickly. Cyber, Sailing, Music Programs, and Leadership are all other areas where your end of the year gifts can make a difference. Please give if you can.

Again, have a great Holiday and stay safe. The Executive/Reunion Committee is working hard on the planning of our 55th plus 1 Reunion next September. I hope all you that can are planning to attend. Registration is scheduled to begin on January 15, 2022. Unfortunately, we lost Nunna Spikes last month. She and Clay both have been the energy behind planning our reunions for many years. Your Executive Committee will be coming to you soon with a recommendation for honoring Nunna.

Warm regards and Semper Fidelis,

Carl Fulford