

**Annual Report of the Quantico Area Chapter of the**

**U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association**

**1 June 2021 – 31 May 2022 (Year 10)**

This annual report is compiled to record events and activities that have taken place during the tenth year of the Quantico Area USNA Alumni Chapter. The narrative is followed by the financial report prepared by the Chapter Treasurer.

Officers and Council Members (volunteers) (Approved in May 2019 by silent acclamation):

President: John Keenan ‘81, LCDR USN (Ret.)

Vice President: Robin Dreeke ‘92

Secretary: Nancy Sprinter ‘87, Col USMC (Ret.)

Treasurer: Ron Diefenbach ’00, Maj USCMR

Council Members: ‘60s and Before: Walt Giraldi ’69

‘70s: Steve Ritacco ’73, LtCol USMC (Ret.)

‘80s: Don Schmieley ’81 CAPT USN (Ret.)

‘90s: Greg Lane ’94, LtCol USMC (Ret.)

‘00s: Kevin Barnard ’01, CDR USN

‘10s: Bob Taylor ’74, CAPT USN (Ret.) (At-large)

Appointed Positions:

Senior Enlisted Advisor: J. D. Baker, MSgt USMC (Ret.), Honorary member of ’05

Dave Mattingly, MCPO USN (Ret.)

Membership Committee: Bob Taylor ’74, CAPT USN (Ret.)

Area Blue and Gold Officer: Jim Ripley ’74, CAPT USNR (Ret.)

STEM Coordinator: Phil Salinas ’82, LtCol USMC (Ret.)

Website coordinator: Bob Taylor ‘74

Objectives/End of Year Status:

The following goals were set early for the 2021-2022 Chapter year. Chapter Officers, Board of Advisor members, and any other member members willing to get involved established objectives that the Chapter must complete to achieve the goals.

**1. Continue to grow the Chapter Membership.** Membership at the end of the year was 95.

**2. Improve QAC Branding and Increase Fundraising Activities.** We continue to appeal to the altruistic, service-oriented personalities typical of Academy graduates and maintain our theme of **“It’s not what you get, it’s what we give that matters.” focusing on the intangible benefits of Chapter membership.** We raised scholarship funds for the Naval Academy Summer Programs through the Run to Honor (RTH) Remembrance Run. The RTH Remembrance Run committee sold T-shirts emblazoned with the Chapter logo. The Chapter also donated to two veteran and service member-themed non-profit organizations: the Semper Fi Fund and the Sgt Mac Foundation.

**3. Increase Member Participation in QAC Activities/Events.** Our activities include but are not limited to the monthly Guest Speaker breakfast series, watch parties for Army vs Navy sporting events at The Basic School and other locations spread throughout the Quantico area, RTH Remembrance Run, and a battlefield tour. Participation in the Quantico National Cemetery’s annual wreath laying and retrieval in December and February, respectively and participation in the flag-raising event at the Quantico National Cemetery during May was cancelled this year due to the pandemic. The goal is always to increase the number of participants at these and other events.

**4. Establish a Creative Communication Plan.** We continue to communicate Chapter news to members though our website, emails, Facebook page, letters to membership, LinkedIn, face-to-face meetings etc. We also made extensive use of Zoom meetings during COVID-19 restrictions.

**5. Fun.** We continue to stress to Chapter Officers, Board Advisors and activity leads that we were all volunteers striving toward commons goals of promoting the Naval Academy through actions, not words. Nobody ever felt like they were on an island by themselves. Members always rallied to support activity leads. We encourage more members to participate in activities and to have fun when doing so. We are a diverse group and inclusive of all alumni who desire to participate in QAC activities.

QAC was also awarded another Distinguished Chapter Award during this period. We are proud to have been recognized three times during the past four years and will continue to be proactive and relevant for our members.

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**Proud Recipient of a 2018, 2020 and 2021 Distinguished Chapter Award**

**Chapter Events**

4 Jun 21: Monthly meeting via ZOOM. Rear Admiral Mike Giorgione ‘81, CEC, USN (Ret.), and author of Inside Camp David:  The Private World of the Presidential Retreat was our speaker for the first meeting of the new QAC term. He served 29 years on active duty, retiring in 2010. He served as the Commander of Camp David for Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, working under the White House Military Office (WHMO). The meeting was convened at 1130 EDT as RADM Giorgione resides in Coronado. The presentation was very interesting and addressed the history of Camp David along with relevant stories of all the Presidents who have used the facility, and especially during his time as CO of the Camp. Attendance: 13

6 Aug 21: Monthly meeting via ZOOM. Mr. Martin Culbreth ’90, former Marine and Special/Technical Agent for the FBI, provided his story through experiences as a Marine, followed by a career in the FBI where he was involved in many notorious cases. His career culminated with a position as Head of the Tidewater/Norfolk office. During his career, he ‘visited’ some 32 countries around the world. His account was very well-received and very interesting to say the least. Attendance: 16

12 Aug 21: Article published in the July-August Shipmate.

3 Sep 21: Monthly breakfast with Col Rob Shepherd ’87, USAFR (Ret.) speaking about his experiences in the Air Force as a Navy grad. This breakfast meeting was the first we’ve had in quite a while due to the COVID pandemic. This was a hybrid effort with 17 folks attending in person and one attending via ZOOM. Held at the Holiday Inn Express in Dumfries, VA. Attendance: 18

15 Sep 21: Article published in the September Shipmate.

1 Oct 21: Monthly breakfast with The Honorable Joseph D. Kernan ’77 (also VADM) as guest speaker. We celebrated the Navy’s 246 Birthday with a ceremony, including a cake cutting. Roy Wallace ‘62 was the oldest sailor present and Joe Bertoldi ’90 the youngest. VADM Kernan reviewed his time in service as a Surface Warfare Officer, SEAL, 4th Fleet Commander, Deputy Commander of Southern Command, Senior Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, and Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence during the Trump administration. He expanded on the duties of the high-level jobs he’d held and addressed several relevant questions from those in attendance. This was another hybrid effort with 20 people in attendance and one attending via Zoom. Held at the Holiday Inn Express in Dumfries, VA. Attendance: 21

14 Oct 21: Article published in the October Shipmate.

4 Nov 21: Navy/Notre Dame football game watch party at Six Bears and a Goat Brewery in Fredericksburg, VA. Attendance: 3

10 Nov 21: QAC Vice President, Dan Morio ’91, resigns his position due to competing obligations.

12 Nov 21: Article published in the November-December Shipmate.

12 Nov 21: Monthly breakfast with LtGen Dave Beydler ’81, USMC (Ret.), current Vice Chairman of the Naval Academy Alumni Association, to help celebrate the United States Marine Corps 246th Birthday with a ceremony, including the traditional cake cutting. Dennis Lister ’67 was the older Marine present, and Ron Diefenbach ’00 was the youngest. General Beydler gave a very interesting and thought provoking talk to those assembled covering the bonds formed at the Naval Academy, the Academy’s changing and successful Marine Corps officer commissioning process resulting in more midshipman desiring a Marine officer commission than slots available (this year 278 members of the Class of ’22 will be commissioned as Second Lieutenants), and the current state of the Navy and Marine Corps as we face uncertain times in the coming years. During questions, General Beydler also addressed the Board of Trustees and the diversity survey that was sent to most alumni concerning diversity, equity and inclusiveness. Held at the Holiday Inn Express in Dumfries, VA (with one or two on Zoom). Attendance: 14

3 Dec 21: Monthly breakfast with CAPT Rusty Yeiser ’74, USN (Ret.), Senior Director for Annual Programs for the Naval Academy Foundation. CAPT Yeiser presented a discussion of how donated funds are applied to establish ‘the margin of excellence’ at USNA. He cited several examples of where the money goes and the good that it does the midshipmen. He also gave a thought-provoking discussion about a course that he teaches on ethics and morality to midshipmen and some of the case studies involved. CAPT Yeiser stayed around for further discussion with those in attendance. As an aside, CAPT Yeiser grew up with our own CAPT Bob Taylor ’74, USN (Ret.) and past president of QAC. They attended grade school through high school together, then USNA, and then aviators retiring as Navy Captains. Held at the Holiday Inn Express in Dumfries, VA. Attendance: 21

4 Dec 21: Annual wreath laying for the Sgt Mac Foundation at the Quantico National Cemetery.

11 Dec 21: QAC hosted its 5th Annual Army Navy Football Watch Party for the officers of The Basic School, Quantico, VA.  From 70-120 lieutenant students gathered with several Chapter volunteers to share in the camaraderie of the annual football contest.  The group had an enjoyable time, especially after the upset Navy win. Beat Army!

21 Dec 21: QAC Council meeting held via Zoom.

27 Dec 21: QAC was notified that it had been awarded a third Distinguished Chapter Award. BZ

5 Jan 22: Scheduled QAC breakfast cancelled on due to major snow storm, major power outages, and dangerous roads, plus another snow storm expected on 7 Jan, the scheduled day of the breakfast.

4 Feb 22: Monthly breakfast in person and on Zoom with CDR Juliana Vida ’94, USN (Ret.), the recently seated Mid-Atlantic Trustee for the USNA Alumni Association. Ms. Vida presented a discussion of the organization of the Association and Foundation, along with slides showing various outcomes of the recently completed ‘Called to Serve, Daring to Lead’ campaign. She also answered numerous questions about current efforts and changes within the Academy, along with some comments about the association survey results which are now being reviewed by chapter and SIG Presidents. A lively discussion concerning various changes at the Academy was a highlight. Held at the new meeting place, the Hampton Inn in Dumfries, VA. Attendance: 16

12 Feb 22: Army/Navy basketball game watch party at Six Bears and a Goat Brewery in Fredericksburg, VA. Attendance: 6

23 Feb 22: Article published in the January-February Shipmate.

4 Mar 22: Monthly breakfast in person and on Zoom with LtCol George Williams ’87 USMC (Ret.), currently working as a line manager at Dahlgren as the Modular Weapon Systems Development and Integration Branch (H21) Branch Head responsible for the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) Surface Warfare (SUW) Command & Control Software (C2S) and Missile Engagement Processor (MEP). George is an active QAC member and provided those assembled with a detailed explanation of Dahlgren and the various tasks performed at Dahlgren, along with explaining a number of challenges he faces in the current post-COVID environment. Held at the Hampton Inn in Dumfries, VA. Attendance: 14

4 Apr 22: Article published in the March-April Shipmate.

8 Apr 22: Monthly breakfast in person and on Zoom with chapter member and current QAC VP, Mr. Robin Dreeke ’92, a retired FBI agent, best-selling author, professional speaker, trainer, facilitator, former Marine officer, and Chief of the Counterintelligence Behavioral Analysis Program for the FBI, speaking on the Russian Foreign Intelligence Services and more specifically, Vladimir Putin and the current war being waged by Russia against Ukraine. His presentation about behaviors was very interesting to all who gathered and brought up many questions about the current conflict and the ‘reality’ of the situation from someone who has studied Putin for a very long time. Held at the Holiday Inn Express in Dumfries, VA. Attendance 16

23 Apr 22: Army/Navy lacrosse game watch party at Six Bears and a Goat Brewery in Fredericksburg, VA. Attendance: 5

13 May 22: Annual chapter meeting convened via Zoom call as local venues were not available. Chapter business, including a recap of the previous year, the Run-to-Honor plans, the bylaws update, the slate of new officers and information from the national association were addressed. Attendance: 15

24 May 22: Article published in the May Shipmate.

30 May 22: Run-to-Honor event conducted at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, this year honoring and remembering Capt. Michael Ohler ’97, USMC, who was killed by sniper fire in Beirut, Lebanon. Thirteen runners/walkers participated in person, with many classmates and family members participating online. Around $3000.00 was raised by QAC and will be used to fund STEM camp and Summer Seminar camps at USNA for those applicants who are in need of financial support as determined by USNA.

**2021-2022 Financial Report of the QAC**

