President’s Comments:  Our 2019-2020 “Season” started out with a “Veterans Day” luncheon Tuesday November 12th at Wyndemere with a terrific speaker, Mr Quang "Q" Nguyen (pronounced “Win”).  Quang’s family fought side by side with Americans since the escalation of the Vietnam war in 1965.  Some managed to stay alive, most didn’t. In April of 1975, when he was 12-1/2 he was loaded up on a C-130 with an older brother at Tan Son Nhut airport for the long journey and one that defined him as a new American.  His story of that life’s journey, his perspective looking back on the sacrifices US Servicemen and the ARVN troops made to facilitate that journey and his views on the gift of being a citizen in America with a USMC officer son and daughter who is a midshipman 2nd Class at USNA was interesting and inspirational. We had 28 attendees.  A big “Thank You” to Mike Pedersen’79 for arranging for our speaker and Bailey  Geeslin’60  USCGA who is coordinating all events at Wyndemere.

At this writing, our Army –Navy tailgate is still in the future. We are all impressed with our team and coaches and so looking forward to Saturday December 14th to join together to cheer them on at our Chapter sponsored Army-Navy Tailgate.  This event will be hosted by the Wyndemere Country Club (off Livingston Rd in East Naples) in their large ballroom (plenty of room and a great audio-visual set-up. Visions of good food, good drink and the hyper camaraderie of fellow alumni being with their team in spirit;  WHAT COULD BE BETTER? – HOW ABOUT A BIG WIN TO GO WITH ALL THAT!   GO NAVY, BEAT ARMY!!!!

We are lining up some very interesting people as luncheon speakers this season.  I encourage all local and visitors to take advantage of your status as an alumni or supporter of USNA.  Will you be a snowbird vacationer in the area this season?  We will honor your paid membership from your home USNA alumni association chapters, and you are more than welcome to attend our luncheon/meetings and events. Details of this season's remaining events are provided below.

Also:  BZ to our fellow member Al Beatrice '70 who works tirelessly with Collier-Lee Honor Flight. They have become a Partner with the Department of Defense (DoD) to distribute the Official Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Pin that was authorized by The Congress of the United States.  Al's Honor Flight Program along with dozens of patriot volunteers put on a great Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Veteran pinning event at Jet Blue stadium On Veterans Day.

Great speakers including our Governor Ron DeSantis and Former Congressman LTC Allen West and Vietnam War embedded news correspondent and author  Joe Galloway (We were Soldiers) made the occasion memorable and very special to the hundreds of Vietnam era vets (accompanied by also many hundreds of supporting family and friends) being honored.

Doug Backes’70

President