



March 25, 2013

Dear Classmate,

Yes, what you saw in my last missive is true, our next reunion, in 2017, is our 50th, and, from what we are told by those who have experienced theirs, it will be our most memorable. I hope you will join in making it an incredible time of fellowship, and a celebration of our place in *The Long Gray Line*.

In this letter, I want to give you the particulars of our **50th Class Reunion Gift Project**, for which we are seeking a total of \$1,250,000. There are two funds in this project:

1. One is \$1,000,000 for an Academy gift, selected from among sixty different needs expressed by the Academy. ***This will be our last class gift to the Academy***, and our goal is total support from class members, **regardless of the amount given**. *Please return in the gray envelope.*
2. The other is \$250,000 for the Class Admin Fund for publishing the *Pooper Scooper*, providing gifts to families of deceased classmates, having seed money for the 50th reunion, and funding our affiliation project with the Class of 2017. *Please return in the white envelope.*

Our Academy gift will follow “in the footsteps” of our 40th reunion gift that established a Permanent Chair in the Physics Department in the name of our beloved Ray Winkel. Our 50th reunion gift will honor Woody Held, Head of the Department of Foreign Languages from 1994 to 2007 and will be called the **BG William G. Held Program for Study Abroad**. This gift will fully endow three scholarships for cadets to study abroad for a semester each year for many years to come. Annual earnings from the endowment of about \$40,000 (conservatively invested) will fund three scholarships each year, with the endowment principal being untouched. This endowment keeps on giving and will expand the current semester abroad program. When Woody became head of the Department of Foreign Languages there were exactly two slots for the foreign studies program, and both went to France. Today, thanks to Woody’s initiatives and emphasis on the program, about 150 cadets study abroad each year! When Woody was approached for his consent to attach his name to the class endowment, he was extremely humbled...but then that’s Woody...an unsung stalwart of our class.

Expanding on our class gift, it will help promising cadets gain fluency in the languages of strategically critical countries, e.g., countries where Arabic, Chinese, and Russian are spoken,

reinforcing the reality that relationships matter, as does awareness of other, very different, cultures in developing critical thinkers who can work through complex problems and operate well outside their comfort zones. Case in point, in male-dominated Iraq a female officer, West Point graduate (second generation) and fluent in Arabic (and Spanish) from her semester abroad, was assigned as an MP Officer. The officer assisted an infantry battalion as they operated in a village in Iraq. She made contact with the village leader and developed a good rapport with him and other key individuals in the village due in great part to her language capability. On a later intelligence gathering operation the battalion returned to the village and sought the chief. The chief wanted to know where the female officer was as she was the one with whom they felt most comfortable in dealing. When the battalion returned with the female officer, the battalion was much more effective in gaining support and information from the locals.

As we consider our individual responses to this request to donate to the last gift our class will give the Academy, may we reflect on our years at West Point, our bond as members of a class that we, plus other classes, truly believe is unsurpassed, and the opportunities and benefits that have come our way as we have lived our lives as members of the Class of 1967 and *The Long Gray Line*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John".

John Severson, Gift Committee and Your Class Officers

P.S. Over the next few years you will undoubtedly be called by someone from "West Point" asking for a donation for a worthy cause, such as the Superintendent's Fund—and there are many others. Be advised that donations to these other worthwhile causes do not go into the "1967 Gift Fund" for the study abroad program or the "Class Admin Fund". Be sure to designate your gifts accordingly so they are credited to our class.

Enclosures