

# **The USMA Class of 1958 Beyond Its 65th Reunion**

**Purpose.** This paper describes the activities expected to engage our Class beyond our 65th Reunion and how its affairs will be planned, organized, and directed. Our ranks will diminish, we will want to care for our widows, and we will want to leave the legacy of the Great Class of 58. We expect Class group activities to end with a Final Toast, tentatively set at our 75<sup>th</sup> Reunion in 2033, before the passing of our last classmate (date TBD.)

## **I. On-Going Class Activities and Functions**

### **A. Class Leadership**

#### **1. Constitution and By-Laws.**

These basic governing documents were created for the Class 10th Reunion at West Point in 1968. A large contingent of the Class was on the Staff and Faculty of USMA at that time, and Jack Bradshaw was assisted by other Classmates in drafting the documents. They produced a simple means to formalize class activities while still allowing ample flexibility to manage class affairs. Both documents are on the Class Website.

#### **2. Executive Committee.**

The EXCOM, in accordance with the By-Laws, is composed of at least five classmates, including a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary. There are two ex-officio members: the Class President and the Class Scribe. The EXCOM is empowered to select successors for these positions as needed, subject to approval at the next Class Meeting.

The By-laws require the EXCOM to establish procedures for the nomination and election of members to the EXCOM. If an elective position becomes vacant before an annual Class meeting, the Chairman — with approval of the EXCOM — will nominate a Classmate to fill the position and have the action approved by the class at the next Class meeting.

With the passing of time, fixed terms for EXCOM members have become impractical. Our number of living Classmates decreases steadily, so we seek volunteers for EXCOM service sufficient to fill the various roles for periods of time that will vary. Digital technology now enables Committee members to function effectively at locations other than the DC area.

#### **3. Members of the EXCOM as of November 2022**

Class President	Jack Bradshaw
EXCOM Chairman	Andy Andreson
Secretary	Church Hutton
Treasurer	Lee Miller
Scribe	Pete Penczer
CCQ Coordinator	Bob Hayden
Mike Mahler	Member at Large
Mike Daley	Class Representative to WPAOG

#### **4. CCQs**

Cadet Company membership remains integral and essential to our Class organization. To facilitate communication with each company group, George Sibert, our Class Scribe Emeritus, chose a CCQ to represent each of the 24 Companies leading up to our 30th Reunion. CCQs maintain contact with Company mates and widows, inform them about Class affairs and urge them to participate, keep Class lists current, assist with notification of deaths, and promote the writing of Memorial Articles for publication by the WPAOG.

Bob Hayden coordinates the CCQs, a group of volunteers vital to the Class. As the number of living Classmates decreases, we may have to depend upon Battalion CCQs.

A detailed guidance for CCQs and a current list of CCQs are on the Class Website.

### **B. Communications.**

#### **1. WEST-POINT.ORG.**

WP-ORG, exists to support the West Point community with email lists and Internet storage. Our Class of 1958 has used these services since they became available.

We have several email lists and numerous documents on the WP-ORG computers. To manage these lists and data stored there, we have an Internet Coordinator. Pete Trainor has performed this function for several years.

Email Lists. Email is our primary means of communication. Pete Trainor keeps these lists current and publishes an up-to-date list at the beginning of each month. A description of these lists and members of the lists are available on the Class Website.

Class Website. Much of our Class history and operational materials resides on this Website, maintained by WP-ORG and managed for us by Pete Trainor. See page 10 for a list of documents and other items on the Website.

Yearbooks. The books for our 10, 30, and 50 years exist now in digital form. These, along with the booklet kept by George Sibert and with his annotations can be accessed by coordination with Pete Trainor.

#### **2. West Point Association of Graduates.**

WPAOG exists to support the Military Academy by organizing the Long Gray Line of West Point alumni. The Association maintains a data base of information about graduates, including our Class of 1958, assists Classes and West Point Societies to organize and function, receives and manages financial resources to promote the Academy, and shares news and information with Alumni. WPAOG communicates with us via a Class of 1958 list, and it depends upon each of us for current mailing and e-mail addresses.

#### **3. Video Conferencing.**

The EXCOM has conducted its quarterly meetings via teleconferencing for several years. With the help of Alan Salisbury the Class has experimented with video conferencing, using the Zoom groupware. We may make greater use of this in the future. In the meantime many of us already use our smart phones to share our image while we talk.

## **C. Reunions and Gatherings.**

### **1. Five-Year Reunions.**

We have organized these large affairs beginning with the 10th anniversary of our graduation. These have taken place at our Alma Mater, and we plan one in May 2023 to mark the 65th anniversary. Going forward, we will make at least tentative plans to gather en masse for the 70th and 75th reunions. Whether there will be a sufficient number of us at average age 92 and 97, respectively, to come together physically on those occasions remains to be seen. Perhaps digital and virtual conferencing means will be so advanced that we can choose that option.

Garry Roosma has made arrangements for these big Reunions since the 35th one, in 1993, and he is organizing our 65th. Mainly Garry coordinates with the WPAOG and he has come to rely more on the Association for administrative assistance. This has greatly simplified his work, and incidentally will make the job practical should we need a successor to Garry. Key to the job is early coordination (a year or more beforehand) with the AOG to establish critical benchmarks: dates, numbers, venues, transport assistance. The WPAOG expert support of our reunions is unquestionably worth the fee we pay..

### **2. Mini Reunions.**

Large groups of us have met a remarkable number of times on years other than the 5 year occasions. In every instance one or more members of the Class have volunteered to organize and host a reunion at an interesting site around the country. The list of reunions can be found on the Class Website.

Sponsorship and hosting of a mini reunion can be a big burden. A 2014 survey suggested that we reduce the frequency of minis, simplify them, eliminate the costs associated with memorabilia, reach out to widows, and consider limitations of advancing age. In a simpler mini concept there would only be two organized events: an arrival cocktail party so attendees know who is there, and a Saturday night (final night) dinner. Any other events will be informal and organized by participants: golf, tennis (anyone still playing?), company/battalion dinners, getting together with friends.

The only collection up-front will be a nominal registration fee (\$25 dollars or so) for incidental expenses incurred by the organizer -- with no refunds. No shows will be able to count their unreturned registration fees as a contribution to the class admin fund. Basically, the organizer will only have to arrange for a hotel (attendees will make their own reservations), the arrival night cocktail party with a pay-as-you-go bar and final night dinner, again pay-as-you-go for dinner and drinks. As of this writing no mini reunion has been planned for 2024 and beyond.

### **3. Other Gatherings.**

Small groups range in size from gatherings of Company mates to dinners for four. We all benefit when photos are made and shared with the Class Scribe, Pete Penczer, so that he can share them with the entire Class.

### **4. Washington Area Social Events.**

Many of us were stationed in and around Washington, DC, during our careers and many still make their home there. For a long time one member of the EXCOM has scheduled

and managed these gatherings. Andy Andreson has been an active participant in this group and is now the Coordinator.

## **5. Memorial Services.**

Vietnam Memorial Meeting. For years many of us gathered at the Vietnam Memorial Wall during the week before National Memorial Day to pay special respects for these men. Beginning in May 2022 and going forward we will conduct this at the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington. The EXCOM organizes this event.

Five-year Reunion Memorials. On these occasions we have read the names of our deceased Classmates and widows. Sadly, the list has become very long and lengthens, so we decided that our 65th would mark the last full reading of names. Readings at later reunions will include only those classmates and wives/widows lost since the previous 5-year reunion.

## **D. Management of Class Funds.**

### **1. Administrative Fund.**

Our Class Treasurer managed this Fund, also called our Operating Fund, for years, but in December 2017 we transferred administration of the fund to WPAOG, which invests the money in short term bonds and charges a small administrative fee.

We believe the assets in the Administrative Fund will cover foreseeable expenses during the next decade (honorariums for deceased classmates, mailings to support our widows, fees for EXCOM teleconferencing, flowers for our annual memorial to our fallen Classmates in VN).

When the Class Leadership deems that this fund is no longer needed, it will instruct WPAOG to transfer the remainder to the Perpetual Endowment Fund (PEF) Board.

Donations to the Administrative Fund are welcome.

### **2. Class Gift Fund.**

Our gift to USMA is the renewed First Class Club. Initially we donated funds to establish the FCC in its present location in 1993. The Club was instantly popular with Cadets and Academy Leaders. In time we provided further funds in 2013 to extend the Club physically, and finally, following a final drive for Class donations, we supported in 2018 refurbishing and enhancement of the Club. The details and history of the First Class Club can be found on the Class Website.

The Director of Cadet Activities wrote that the First Class Club "inextricably links '58 to all future classes."

The 1958 Gift Fund still exists on the books at WPAOG. Each of us can donate to that Fund at any time, although we will not have another fund drive for that purpose. The EXCOM has agreed with WPAOG that the balance of the Gift Fund will pass to the Superintendent's Fund when our Class directs that that be done.

### **3. Perpetual Endowment Fund..**

The PEF is a unique gift by a West Point Class to USMA. It was created by the Class in 1998, coincident with our 40th Reunion, is overseen by a Board of Directors according

with By-Laws, and is expected to grow to a substantial fund in current dollars so as to begin annual money gifts to USMA beginning in 2058.

The Perpetual Endowment Board still includes one or more members of our Class, but leadership is being gradually transferred to Class descendants. Russ Robertson, Class of 1982, is now Chairman of the Endowment Board. Tony Bauer and Frank Harlem remain on the Board until 2025 and 2027, respectively.

The By-Laws of the PEF, its Board minutes, and Treasurer's Report are on the Class Website.

## **E. Annual Award Presentations.**

1. Awards to honor members of the Class of 1958.

Lawrence M. Malone Award. A trophy awarded to the outstanding cadet in the Georgetown ROTC Ranger Challenge Team Competition.

George Walker Award, administered by the USMA Department of Social Sciences and presented annually for Excellence in intercollegiate debate.

Brigadier General James Ramsden Award, administered by the USMA Department of Chemistry and Life Sciences and presented to the outstanding student of Chemistry

Brigadier General Anthony A. Smith Award, presented to two Cadets for Excellence in Foreign Studies.

Captain Gerald C. Capelle Award, presented annually to the winning company in intramural competition at the Military Academy Preparatory School (USAMAPS) at West Point.

General William G. T. Tuttle, Jr. Award for Business Acumen in Defense and Government.

W. E. Serchak Astronomy Award, administered by the USMA Department of Physics & Nuclear Engineering and presented to a cadet who demonstrates academic excellence, scientific passion, and leadership.

2. Grandchildren at West Point. Several grandsons and granddaughters have honored us by graduating from West Point. We will continue to acknowledge this achievement with an engraved pewter tray, procured from the WPAOG Gift Shop. On behalf of the Class Jack Downing coordinates this and arranges for a small ceremony at the First Class Club to present our gift.

## **F. Death of a Classmate.**

1. Notifications. We all want to know when one of our Classmates passes away. We want to learn about it as soon as possible but this is only possible if a survivor of the deceased knows how to inform us and does so in a timely way.
2. Everyone of us should explain to a family member or other person how to contact the Class of 1958. Name, telephone number, and email address of the respective CCQ or any other Classmate is all that is needed.
3. Often the CCQ learns first, but the notice of death sometimes comes in another way and sometimes it is too late for us to honor the dead as we would want. Terry Connell coordinates communication of death notifications, He informs the Class via email of a

death and of final arrangements for the deceased. Terry also shares details with WPAOG, which then issues a message to its 1958 list and updates its data bases.

4. For many years our Class has honored a deceased Classmate with flowers to the survivors. That is still possible, if the NOK chooses, but we more often honor the dead with a donation of \$100 to a charity or institution chosen by the NOK. Our Treasurer handles this task.

5. When possible and desired by the NOK we are privileged to have our Class Flag displayed in some way in the funeral or memorial event for the deceased.

6. The WPAOG promotes the writing of an article to memorialize each member of the Long Gray Line. It provides guidance for composing a Memorial Article and assists in the task. Our Class heartily supports this and one of our Classmates has coordinated the work for many years. WPAOG publishes the MAs in a yearly TAPS booklet and makes them all available on their Website for viewing anytime.

7. Detailed steps following a death are on the Class Website.

## **G. Widow Support.**

We are as concerned about our widows as we are about ourselves and we want to acknowledge them and support their well-being. A Widow Outreach Team (WOT) has formed to offer condolence and assistance to new widows and to keep all widows informed of Class activity. A WOT member attends meetings of the EXCOM. More details about the WOT are on the Class Website.

## **H. Disposition of Items Belonging to the Class.**

1. The EXCOM has a telephone system that it uses to teleconference its meetings and a \$300 bottle of 1958 Armagnac for the planned Final Toast. We will continue to use the telephone until it is obsolete. Of course, we plan to consume the Armagnac. The EXCOM has custody of the Armagnac.

2. There is a variety of class mementos in the personal custody of classmates, such as flags, banners, reunion books, stick pins, and table guidons. These were created to help celebrate specific events and have little monetary value. We will not endeavor to assemble these and dispose of them on behalf of the entire Class.

3. Our Class Flag with streamers will be given to the PEF Board for display at an appropriate ceremony in 2058, probably in coordination with USMA 2008.

## **II. Class Support Service Volunteers**

**Class E-Mail**           Pete Trainor

**WP-ORG Class Website**           Pete Trainor

Pete established a Class Website using the services on WP-ORG over twenty years ago. He has added to the Site numerous documents of importance to the Class, as referenced many times in this document. The Site is easily accessible on the Internet except for a few items, for which a password is needed, in order to protect personal information.

The Website was created initially with some Microsoft software, which is now old but still functional. This could become too outdated to use. Pete is supported by Brian Bradshaw, who is capable of replacing the software, if necessary.

It may be possible to relocate our Class documents to a WPAOG server if WP-ORG support is no longer needed.

**Class Address List**                    George Lawton and John Nun

The master class roster of all living classmates, their wives and widows is maintained by John Nun, supported by George Lawton. It is posted by Pete Trainor on the Class Website and upgraded periodically. John's database can be manipulated to meet needs, such as company rosters, rosters by state, etc.

**Class Notes**                         Pete Penczer

**Death Notifications**                Terry Connell

Terry Connell maintains a list of all deceased members of the class. Pete Trainor also maintains a master file in Excel of all deceased Classmates that includes dates of birth and death.

**Class Flag Custodian**                Otto Thamasett

Our three Class flags are for use at Class activities such as funerals and reunions. The primary flag has streamers reflecting the various mini-reunions. Our guidelines for flag use require that a Classmate must be on the receiving end when flags are shipped for use.

WPAOG displays class flags, including one for USMA 1958, in Herbert Hall at West Point. This flag may be used for funerals at West Point. The Alumni Association supports the family of a deceased Graduate in making funeral arrangements for burial at West Point, including the use of the flag.

**Grandchildren who Graduate**                Jack Downing

**Five Year Reunion Coordination**                Garry Roosma

**PEF Board Membership**     Tony Bauer and Frank Harlem

**Widow Outreach**                    Audrey Webb, Betsy Hall, Barbara Raymond, Margie Downing

**Video Conferencing**                    Alan Salisbury

### **III. Class Projects**

#### **A. First Class Club (FCC)**

We supported the reactivation and relocation of the FCC and marked the occasion of our 35th reunion by donating this officially to the Academy. At our 55th reunion we commemorated our initiative to extend the physical Club facility, and we conducted a final fund drive before our 60th reunion to refurbish the Club, to complement the Academy's funding a complete rehabilitation of the structure.

A plaque at the Club entrance is inscribed: Championed and Generously Supported by the Class of 1958 From its 35th to its 60th Reunion in April 2018.

More details about the FCC are on the Class Website.

#### **B. Perpetual Endowment Fund (PEF)**

Ed Weckel conceived this unique way to build a substantial fund for the benefit of USMA beginning in 2058. He proposed it at our 40th reunion, at which it was approved by the Class. A Constitution and By-Laws were composed and approved and the Fund has continued to grow through donations from the Class and leadership by several members of the Class who have served on the PEF Board.

More details about the PEF are on the Class Website.

### **C. Widow Outreach**

The Widows Outreach Team (WOT) was organized to provide sustained contact with Class of '58 widows and to enhance their feelings of belonging within the Class after the loss of their husbands. The WOT moderates an email list of widows and promotes involvement of widows in Class activities, such as mini and 5-year reunions. .

The Team contacts newly bereaved class widows at the time of loss, sends a condolence card on behalf of the class, and provides the WOT-developed "Grip Hands" booklet providing useful information to the new widow.

The Team will follow up with the new widow after a reasonable time to see how she is doing. They will also ask for her email, and determine if she wants to be added to the Widows E-mail list. There is no pressure to have them sign up.

The immediate goal is to get new widows added to the existing E-mail list; however, effort is needed to work with Bob Hayden and the company CCQs to contact existing widows to make sure they are aware of the list. If they do want to be added, their names and E-mails will need to be sent to the list moderator.

The WOT will take the lead on determining interest for including a widows' event at class reunions and gatherings. If so, they will take the lead on organizing the widow event in conjunction with the reunion organizer.

### **D. Prostate Cancer Support**

This support effort was organized and is coordinated by Stan Bacon and comprises a group of well over 100 Classmates.. Its purpose is to provide support and assistance to newly diagnosed classmates, to provide a medium for the dissemination and exchange of information and support among those PC victims throughout the progression of their disease, and to disseminate up-to-date information on the prevention and control of the disease. Read more on the Class Website.

### **E. Memorial Articles**

We fully support the WPAOG to memorialize every deceased Classmate with a Memorial Article(MA), unless the NOK declines to support it. Bob Hayden coordinates CCQs, who are charged with the assignment and completion of individual memorial articles. We are keeping pace with the accelerating deaths in the Class as we age and hope we will be able to continue meeting the challenge. We had 15 published in the 2021 TAPS (all were graduated classmates) and have 3 approved for publication in 2022 as of this writing in the fall of 2021. At this point, we have 226 MA's published or awaiting publication for classmates and 5 for Ex-classmates and have 65 deceased graduated classmates without, as yet, having an MA published.

As our ranks thin, we anticipate there will be challenges in finding authors for the MA's and in keeping contact with classmates, ex-classmates, and NOK. Therefore, we



encourage all to make sure their contact information for both snail mail and email is up to date by checking the Class Website. We also know it would be a tremendous help if each of us drafted our own MA while still living—we call that a Living MA. A few classmates have elected to not have an MA published. If you are sure you are in this category, please tell your CCQ.

## **F. Wounded Warrior Mentor Program.**

The program was founded in 2004 by Lee Miller, John Herren, Pete Brintnall and Bob Tredway. During the period 2004 through 2018 the program was emulated at several Military installations: Ft Meade, Ft Sam Houston, Ft Belvoir and Ft Eustis. In this Program individual mentors become intimately involved with severely wounded military service men and women and, with the decrease of war activity, with Ill and Injured at Walter Reed and Fort Belvoir. Their mission is to assist wounded, ill and injured personnel and their spouses transition to a new productive life and profession after discharge from Service. They employ a mix of education, internships and jobs. Their client population includes cancer patients, PTSD and traumatic brain injury (TBI) patients resulting from armed conflict, automobile, motorcycle and other accidents, and some with undefined medical conditions. Since 2004 the program has helped over 3,000 individuals.

The Program is a 501c(3) Not-for-Profit organization with all volunteers and no employees. Mentors come from all Services, genders, and military ranks. Its modest operating budget comes entirely from donations. Read more about this in the 50 Yearbook.

## **G. Final Toast**

In 2013 the EXCOM approved a proposal to arrange for a final toast to the Class of 1958 at its last official gathering. We were inspired by such a toast of the Doolittle Raiders of World War II. Ideally the Toast will occur in the First Class Club at West Point on 4 June 2033, marking the passing of 75 years since our graduation. We imagine that as many of our living Classmates as possible, at least two of them, will be assembled, perhaps joined electronically by others who are still alive. We have purchased a bottle of Vintage 1958 Armagnac as the libation for the Toast.

We expect the living Class leaders will organize and conduct the ceremony, with help from their families and possibly with help from our grandchildren who graduated from USMA. We have drafted the words of a Proclamation to precede the Toast. Incidental expenses should be minimal and may be covered by any remaining Administrative Fund assets.

According to the 2020 Register of Graduates, 29 of the 852 Graduates in USMA 1945 were living. At that survival rate about 19 of our Class will be alive and candidates to attend a Final Toast in 2033.

USMA 1950 celebrated the 70th year following graduation. Of its 670 graduates 116 were still living, or 17.31%. At this rate USMA 1958 would have 99 candidates to attend a 70th Reunion.

We will review the Toast arrangements periodically.

More details about the toast are posted on the Class Website.

## **H. Ring Melt**

At the suggestion of our Classmate Ron Turner the Academy began in melting down rings donated by Graduates to amalgamate with the rings for the Class of 2002. Including the ring melt for the Class of 2023, 27 of our Classmates have donated rings for this purpose.

A description of the program and a listing of the ring donors can be found on the WPAOG Website. Before a donated ring will be included in a melt, a Memorial Article for the donor must be written and submitted to WPAOG.

## **I. Ray Riggan Locker**

Ray Riggan was goalie and Captain on the West Point Lacrosse team that was undefeated in 1958. Ray was selected as All-American. Our Class donated funds to dedicate a locker to Ray. It is located in the Lacrosse Center.

## **J. Honorary Classmates**

Over the years the suggestion has been made that we recognize and honor a person as Honorary Member of USMA 1958. We did that for Chaplain George Bean but for no other, and we do not intend to recognize any other in this way.

## **I. Time Capsule to Open in 2058.**

This capsule containing over 100 items reflective of our West Point years was created at the initiative of Jack Downing. It was buried behind Herbert Hall in a joint ceremony between our Class and USMA 2008. We intend that the capsule be opened at a ceremony marking our 100th Anniversary of Graduation and the 50th Anniversary of USMA 2008.

Our Class Website stores the list of items in the capsule, a MOU between the two Class Presidents concerning the 2058 ceremony, and a draft letter that each of us might modify and sign to inform descendants about the ceremony.

# **IV. Class Website Content**

Class Constitution and By-Laws

Meeting Minutes of Class Executive Committee

Class Notes of Class Scribe

E-mail guidance for using WP-Org lists.

Class Rosters, mailing lists and email addresses

- CCQs and Duties
- Dates and Sites of Class Reunions
- 10, 30, 50 Year Books
- Our Gift to the Corps - The First Class Club
- Perpetual Endowment Fund Info

- Annual Awards to Honor Classmates
- Classmate Death Notification
- Deceased Classmates
- Widow Outreach Team Activities
- USMA 58 PC Support Group
- 1958 Time Capsule, contents, history, opening
- Class Ring Melt
- Web Sites for USMA, USAF, USA, USN

## **V. Our Legacy**

- Class Website
- A class flag will go to the PEF Board for custody and display at the 2058 ceremony.
- Annual Awards
- First Class Club
- PEF
- Wounded Warrior Mentor Program
- Ring Memorial Program
- Time Capsule and Partnership with USMA 2008
- Saint Equestrian Center
- Groves Golf Clubhouse