

## '58 Newsletter August 2013

### **Letter from the Executive Committee Chairman** (Dick Schonberger, [richard\\_58@verizon.net](mailto:richard_58@verizon.net))

After the great 55th reunion our attention has turned to planning for the 60th as well as looking at our mini-reunion plans based on the results of the recent survey. Jack Gordon, our Social Chairman, is analyzing the feedback on the mini survey and we will have recommendations to the class soon. As previously reported, Garry Roosma will be negotiating rates and other reunion requirements with the hotels for the 60<sup>th</sup>; when ready next year options will be presented to the class. Based on the feedback to our initial query, the Thayer was the choice of the great majority of the respondents.

Frank Waskowicz has replaced John Raymond as Secretary on the EXCOM in accordance with our recently published EXCOM COOP. John has provided loyal and effective service to the class while on the EXCOM; however, his medical situation required him to stand down.

We are looking at current media and means used for class communications with the expectation that there may be ways to optimize the manner in which we pass information within the class. Frank Waskowicz has the lead and he will be working with some of our key players as we relook at our current ways of doing business.

Ed Weckel's recommendation the class provide for a "Final Toast" modeled after the Doolittle Raiders example has been acted upon and will be distributed to the class in due order. Hopefully, we will not need to implement it for some time to come.

Hope this finds you well.....'58 is Great.

**Leaders' Conference** (Paul Ruud <[ruud@starband.net](mailto:ruud@starband.net)>) I am totally convinced that the new Supe and the not-quite-as-new Comm will make West Point stronger and its graduates better prepared. I was able to stay to the end so I attended the Superintendent's dinner at Eisenhower Hall on Friday evening.

The most impressive part of the new Supe's talk for me was not what he said, but rather how he said it. He spoke as if speaking to part of the team: not "here's how I see it from up here," but "here are the challenges that we face and let's talk about how we can meet them!" He relates well with everyone! The Comm is cut from the same cloth. The future looks bright!

I attended a session regarding individual Class governance and communication that left me proud of '58. We are way ahead of whoever is in second place. If you ever think that you are at the end of the food chain, let me assure you that you are eating a whole lot better than most.

The AOG is working hard to improve the services they provide.

Although the cadet routines differ from ours, they do the job better. Today's cadet training makes a new graduate more immediately prepared than we were to be an Army 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.

Tony Smith is an absolute master at handling our affiliation with the First Class Club. He knows the right people at West Point, he is vigilant at making improvements and repairs, and is passionate about keeping this club a place where cadets want to go. Never pass up a chance to

tell him thank you, it is so well deserved.

If you have a chance to attend this conference in future years, my recommendation is to do just that. A stroll down diagonal walk stirs many memories and leaves you standing a bit taller. We have been blessed with exceptional opportunities.

**Leaders Conference From the Com** (Tony Smith <[aasmith58@msn.com](mailto:aasmith58@msn.com)>) BG Clarke's previous assignment was DCG, 10th Mountain Division. He has impeccable soldier credentials (commanded an airborne bn, a ranger bn, a ranger regt, and served as ops director for the Joint Special Operations Cmd). I liked his manner—easy-going, straightforward, comfortable in his skin, willing to tell old grads when he thought they were full of it. I also liked the way he interacted with the First Captain and key members of the Brigade staff, with him at the briefing.

The Com stressed the importance of the 4-week Cadet Leader Development Training (CLDT) which began a couple of years ago when they realized that ROTC cadets were receiving more military training than USMA cadets, particularly in the last two years. CLDT is a sort of mini-Ranger school that begins the day after graduation mostly for rising Firsties (80%) and some rising Cows (20%). It is designed to be tough and apparently is. It's the only cadet training that is not cadet-led. Passing CLDT is a graduation requirement. Six Firsties did not pass in 2012, and two in 2013. If they don't pass, they repeat it the following year, with a lot of remedial training in between.

Passing the obstacle course (pretty much unchanged since our cadet days) is also a graduation requirement. As Firstie year begins for the Class of 2014, 37 of their class have not passed the obstacle course.

At the suggestion of GEN Freddie Franks, '59, all Firsties now take MX400, a USMA capstone course on the profession of arms. It teaches officership.

The Prep School is now under the Com. They run a 3-week Cadet Command Basic Training for the incoming prepsters in the summer with a USMA cadet cadre, 80 strong.

Buckner was, what, 7-8 weeks in our day. Now it is four weeks. The rest of the summer Yearlings ("Yuks" they now call them) go off to Airborne School or Air Assault School. This year, the four weeks was cut to three because of sequestration. The massive COL who heads DMI (I forget his name) told me, "They didn't miss any training; we just cut out the fluff like Camp Illumination." Yuks don't have a March Back to campus like the Plebes, they have a Run Back. Camp Popolopen it is no longer!

When you stroll around the campus during Reorg Week (the week we were there), you often see a Plebe and a Yearling together. Yearlings are now Team Leaders each assigned a Plebe. If the Plebe fails in any way, it reflects on the Yearling Team Leader. I've talked with Yearlings; they take the responsibility seriously. No more Yearling deadbeat. This is but one of the many manifestations of the Development model they now follow, as opposed to the Attrition model that prevailed for us.

The Com bragged about some cadet achievements over the past summer. Example: the Distinguished Grad at the US Army Sapper School was a cadet. USMA sends 8/yr to Sapper School; normal drop-out/fail rate is 50%; all 8 cadets completed successfully. Example: 8

cadets went to the Combat Dive School; completion rate is normally <40%; 7 of 8 cadets graduated, the one cadet who did not had to leave of an ear infection.

For the next three years, while the new barracks construction is going on, cadet barracks will be 70% overcrowded (meaning three cadets in rooms designed for two).

Branch drawing is no longer based solely on Order of Merit (OML). They now use a formula of Army Needs + OML + Cadet Talents + Cadet Preferences = Branch selection. Sounds sensible to me. Takes care of the problem of some of the more technical branches (think Engineers and Signal) branching cadets who don't have the skills to handle the work (didn't take any engineering courses would be a reason).

Sexual assault/harassment is the Com's #1 priority. They now have a Cadets Against Sexual Harassment and Assault (CASHA) position on the Brigade staff and will extend the concept down to the companies after it is road-tested. All doors (male and female) are locked at Taps now. The lady First Captain spoke eloquently and convincingly about cadet efforts in this area. She noted the relationship to alcohol. They are phasing hard liquor back into the FCC, but gradually.

**Leaders Conference From the Dean** (Tony Smith <[aasmith58@msn.com](mailto:aasmith58@msn.com)>) BG Tim Trainor talked mainly about the Semester Abroad and Advanced Individual Academic Development (AIAD). AIAD are summer projects, usually for a couple of weeks, where cadets go on a volunteer basis to work for some civilian organization. Often, maybe even usually, cadets give up some leave time to participate.

120 cadets were sent to Semester Abroad programs last year in seven of the eight languages now taught at West Point. (None were sent to Persian-speaking countries, for obvious reasons.) 797 cadets (574 domestic, 223 international) participated in an amazingly wide range of AIAD assignments. Sequestration hit these programs hard. USMA's overall budget was cut by \$20M. This translated into cutting 25% of all the AIAD assignments and 50% of the international AIAD assignments.

The Dean is the midst of a major curriculum review. The faculty mix now splits out as 27% civilian, 18% senior military (i.e., professors and permanent associate professors), and 55% junior military rotating faculty. The Dean likes the mix.

Responding to a question about the assertion in a book, *Carved from Granite*, written by a recently retired USMA professor of history, that admission standards for recruited athletes were lower than the rest of the Corps so that better qualified candidates were not offered admission, the Dean challenged the assertion and lauded the qualities that recruited athletes bring to the Corps and the Army.

My personal view is that there is an issue regarding the role of varsity athletics at West Point. I'll give an example. As Ed Weckel reported in his post on the Plebe March Back, the granddaughter of one of our classmates was not only excused from the March Back but also from the last week of Beast Barracks so that she could train with the volleyball team. Really? Is a winning volleyball team so important that we should set these cadets apart from their classmates and excuse them from a week of Beast Barracks? If they do it for a relatively minor sport like volleyball, what are they doing for the major sports like football, baseball, lacrosse?

**Leaders Conference From the AOG** (Tony Smith <[aasmith58@msn.com](mailto:aasmith58@msn.com)>) There are now 50,046 living graduates of a total of 70, 253 grads. The oldest living grad is Ben Heckmeyer, '35, now 102 years young. The median point of the living graduates now resides in the class of '88.

The *For Us All* major fund-raising campaign has now gone public. They are 88% of the way to the goal of \$350M. 37,196 donors have contributed. 30% of living graduates give financially to the AOG; this has risen about 1%/yr in the past few years. This compares favorably to USNA (21%) and USAFA (11%). (With all that flight pay, why are they so cheap?) The national average for all universities is 13%. Some schools (e.g., Notre Dame) exceed 50%.

**Marchback** (Ed Weckel <[Weck58@comcast.net](mailto:Weck58@comcast.net)>) The 14th MB is now history. Weather was great, perhaps the best ever. Most marchers didn't even sweat through their shirts. Lawton, Collett, Ward and Weckel represented our class. One grad marcher looked at our name tags with our class of 58 ID. He said, "That's the year I was born!" But what the hell; we are young at heart."

Busses picked us up at 0315, arrived at Buckner at 0355, gulped down breakfast, and left Barth Hall at 0410 to met up with the plebes. We began the MB at 0435, with the first platoon of the lead off company. First hour we marched in darkness. One of us noted that BNMT was breaking. The others didn't know the meaning of the term. Spoke with many cadets. There was a female plebe, whose height I would estimate as 4"8". She was "recruited" to play tennis! I thought you had to be tall, but she started playing at an early age and is apparently quite good. Walked a bit with a Chaplain; there was one assigned per company during beast. He was very impressed with the cadets.

At the ski slope, a very young looking officer joined the 58 crowd. Wally Ward asked him what his job was. His reply - - I'm the Dean! It was then that noticed the star on his uniform. We had a nice conversation; he confirmed the high academic qualifications of the cadets. At the ski slope we also had a long conversation with a female grad, Class of 81. I asked her if she ever experienced "sexual harassment", or knew of it going on. Her reply was in the negative. But she did tell this story about one of our class mates, which I need to pass on. Just prior to graduation at the end of her plebe year, she was by the library, and greeted an old grad with a snappy salute. The old grad started a tirade directed at her. She extricated herself from the situation ASAP, returned to the barracks, and was asked by an upperclassman how things were going. She briefly related this incident and returned to her room. Shortly thereafter, she received word that she was to see a certain Colonel M (our Classmate), who was a regimental TAC. Thinking that she screwed up, she went tail between legs to his office. Colonel M apologized to her for the way this old grad acted, and assured her that the grad was out of line. She is still impressed by this display of unity demonstrated to her many years ago. (Note: Col M is invited to elaborate on this story if desired.)

Now Listen Up! Next year is the 60th anniversary of our MB. If we want to, we can make something out of this event. I don't know the date, but it is likely to be around 10-11 August. Circle those dates on your calendar, and if health permits, make the 60th a goal of yours. The donation window for your Class Endowment is still open. If you care to add a few shekles, please send your tax deductible check to Russell Robertson, 8606 Cross View, Fairfax Station VA., 22039. Make the check payable to "Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund".

## **Mini Reunion Survey Results** (Jack Gordon <[hjg5041958@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hjg5041958@sbcglobal.net)>)

We did receive a significant level of response. Main results: (1) The class likes the minis for the immediate future; (2) A number commented on the point we all know, that nobody's getting younger, and eventually attendance will drop off. A few commented that the best mins to eliminate would be immediately preceding or following a maxi (5 year interval); (3) Cost is a factor for a larger number, but surprisingly, a fair number indicated they it was minor, although some felt AOG assistance is too costly and registration fees too high; (4) Generally, the class likes vacation style locations and a mix of (a) visit with classmates, (b) shop and tour, and (c) do organized social events (e.g. theater show), (d) the dedicated golfers remain; (5) Music (aka bands) were commented on as too noisy, too few dancing, and some enjoyed. DJs got similar comments but with less emphasis on cost.

**Malone Award** (Dale Hruby <[dalehruby@gmail.com](mailto:dalehruby@gmail.com)>) "On the evening of 26 April, 2013, Dodie and I were honored to represent the Class of 1958 at the Annual Military Ball at the Pentagon City Sheraton, hosted by the Georgetown ROTC unit, which includes cadets from the Catholic University, George Washington University as well as Georgetown, itself. The Military Ball is a formal event and features many traditional old Army traditions including an Invocation, Grand March and introduction of the graduating seniors, traditional (but non-alcoholic) toasts to the President, The Army, the Ladies (Don't Ask), and the United States of America. The highlight of the evening, and the only award presented, was the Malone Award presented each year in memory of our classmate, Major Larry Malone, KIA in Vietnam on 7 January 1968. As one of Larry's

M-2 Company classmates, I was proud to present this year's award to Cadet Nicholas Melfi, Georgetown Class of 2014, for outstanding leadership and performance as a Member of the Ranger Competition Team, an activity that Larry Malone established when serving as PMS at Georgetown between his two tours in RVN. "

**Prostate Cancer Support** (Stan Bacon <[sbacon58@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sbacon58@sbcglobal.net)>) The class PC Support Group stands at 149 members with 51 diagnosed and standing ready to assist newly diagnosed classmates on a one-on-one basis through the treatment selection process. The other 98 don't want to go there, so we put a lot of emphasis on prevention. Total known classmate diagnoses stand at 78 and slowing—none last year, one so far this year. See <<http://www.west-point.org/class/usma1958-pc/usma58pc.htm>>. We hope that's a function of lifestyle changes and not decisions to stop getting tested. Any newly diagnosed should contact Stan Bacon in confidence. He will provide classmate contact, diagnosis and treatment information and appropriate guides to help with the tough decisions."

**Capelle Book Presentation at USMAPS** (Hugh Trumbull <[hugh@agi.com](mailto:hugh@agi.com)>) The book, prepared by Bill Serchak, details Gerry's life and times and includes background on the creation and presentation of the Capelle trophy over the years. Bill Serchak presented the Trophy to LTC Ruth, school Commandant. The ceremonies were done in the finest traditions of the Preparatory School, with its spectacular new location. The NCO supervision of the Review was especially meaningful to those of use who have served. The CCs looked sharp.

**Capelle Trophy 2013** (Hugh Trumbull <[hugh@agi.com](mailto:hugh@agi.com)>) On Friday, 17 May, the Captain Gerald C. Capelle Memorial Trophy was awarded to "A" Company USMAPS. Cadet Candidate Mark J. McGinnis, Jr. represented the company. It was another beautiful spring day at the new Prep School that many of the class got to see as we were attending our "55<sup>th</sup>". The CC's Graduation Parade, trained and supervised by the NCOs at the Prep School, was very sharp

with a large class clearly ready to join the Long Grey Line! The P-rade was followed by the Awards Ceremony. A highlight of the ceremony was LTG Bob Yerks presenting the Yerks Leadership Award. Bob was at West Point to receive a Distinguished Graduate Award during our 55<sup>th</sup>. Sadly, Bob had lost his wife of many years just three weeks before.

CC Mark McGinnis, a flanker from Detroit, was supported by a large, enthusiastic family with some military roots. He hopes to branch MI and may someday go into politics. He was the founder of an Investment Club at the Prep School – Herb Johnson take note!

The '58 sponsored Pizza Party, which goes with the Trophy, was again a big hit. The A Company Tac NCO really got on board with the program and they had a great celebration at noon the day before the graduation activities. Both the staff and the CCs expressed appreciation to the Class of 1958 for sponsoring “the Capelle.”

During the class visit to USMAPS, Bill Serchak presented the Commandant, LtCol Stephen G. Ruth, with a handsome binder detailing the origin, purpose and history of the Capelle Memorial Trophy. A copy has also been provided to Gerry's sister, Mrs. Joan Van der Castle.

**Ski '58 Snowmass 2014** (Karl Oelke <[oelkes658@gmail.com](mailto:oelkes658@gmail.com)>). Sunday 23 Feb to Saturday 1 March. We've reserved 10 rooms @ \$199/night (2 persons + 12.8% tax, applies 3 days before and 3 days after) (rooms after the 10 are confirmed are \$249 + tax). No free ski rental this year, but they're trying to negotiate a 50% off deal with a local shop—will let you know when I know. Includes full hot buffet breakfast and hot soup (choice of 2) lunch daily. Reception Monday night. Complimentary Aspen airport transfers. Phone number for room reservations 970-923-3900.

**Class Web Site** (Pete Trainor <[PBTrainor@cox.net](mailto:PBTrainor@cox.net)>) Early this Summer, the Class Web Site at <<http://www.west-point.org/class/usma1958/>> underwent cleanup and modernization. Noticeable changes:

- “Photo Album”: Moved link from left side of main page to “Achieved Info”. Haven't been any postings since 2009. No plans to post any more pictures.
- Deleted links on left side of page for ‘Class Notes’ and ‘Class Newsletter’. They can be found under the links across the top of the page under ‘Class Notes’ and “Exec Committee”, respectively. Posting of Notes and Newsletters will also be reflected under “News/Updates”.
- “...are thou at peace”: Added new link on left side of main page to a new page focusing on our classmates that have joined “the long gray line.” Explanations and links to [west-point.org](http://www.west-point.org) “Taps” and AOG memorial articles.
- “Contact Me” on the bottom of the main page. Fixed to send email to Pete Trainor that he might actually get. Old email link went to a funky place that included over 1500 emails trying to sell Viagra and other stuff. In the midst of all of that junk there were probably emails from some of you about the web site that Pete never got -- apologies – link is fixed.

Re the link to “Company Web Sites”. Currently have links to one 1<sup>st</sup> regiment and five 2<sup>nd</sup> regiment sites. Are there any others you would like linked?

Please let Pete know ([pbtrainor@cox.net](mailto:pbtrainor@cox.net)) if you have any suggestions for our Class Web Site.

**Wounded Warrior Mentor Program** (Lee Miller <mimiller58@verizon.net>) The Wounded Warrior Mentor Program (WWMP) at Walter Reed, Ft Belvoir and Ft Meade continues in to assist Wounded Warriors and their spouses to a new life. We have approximately 250 mostly combat veterans mentoring 250 Wounded Warriors. The number of Wounded Warriors has been dropping to about 50% of the previous wartime maximum but we also mentor ill and injured so the number mentored remains the same. We are in a partnership with the West Point Society of DC to have "The Young Grads" in the Society mentor the "Young Wounded Grads" at Walter Reed. We presently have twelve Young Wounded Grads at Walter Reed being mentored by the Young Grads in the DC Society. The mentoring includes getting the Young Wounded Grads out to social gatherings.

We also have eight Wounded Soldiers from the Country of Georgia at Walter Reed. All are amputees, wounded in Afghanistan fighting alongside our Marines and are single, double and triple amputees. They come to us via an inter-country agreement through their Embassy and have medical care at Walter Reed but do not have the benefits of our Wounded Warriors. Jack Gordon of our WWMP has taken on the leadership of supporting and mentoring the Georgian Wounded Warriors and the Georgian civilians here supporting them. Since they speak no English, Jack has set up English as a second language school to teach them English. He has also set up several events to introduce them the Washington area and makes them feel comfortable here.

During the past years, leaders with a passion assist Wounded Warriors at various posts have asked our assistance to emulate our program and model at their location. We have provided them our processes and help in training their initial group of mentors. We call this an outreach program and have assisted in the founding of Wounded Warrior Mentor Programs at Brook Army Medical Center in San Antonio, TX, Ft Gordon, GA, Ft Eustis, VA (Led by Tony Nadal) and the McGuire VA Poly Trauma Center in Richmond VA.

Even though our mentors are now all services, ranks, and genders, the Class of 58 is proud to have founded the Wounded Warrior Mentor Program nine years ago at the "Old Walter Reed" and we appreciate the support of the Class over the years. We have successfully mentored and led the transition of over 700 Wounded Warriors and spouses to new productive lives and professions. Many Classmates and wives have played leadership roles and been mentors in making these successes happen. Last and more important, the Wounded Warriors and families we have assisted are very appreciative of the support they have received from our Program.

**55TH Reunion Wrap Up** (Garry Roosma <ggroosma@gmail.com>). The final tasks associated with our 55TH Reunion have been completed. All the bills have been paid and the excess funds have been transferred from the WPAOG to the class of 1958. We had a profit of \$10,000 much of which was due to the diligence of our coordinator Lexie Davis. I recently presented her with a gift card from the class for the WPAOG Gift Shop for all her great work to make our reunion a success. She has recently been promoted and is handling six reunions this Fall and all of the Spring reunions. I will be working with her in June 2014 to set our direction for the 60TH Reunion.

Our comments to the Alumni Affairs Directorate in regard to the Alumni parade have been heard and corrections to the timing and waiting will be addressed.

The Benny Haven's Room was a big success thanks to Chuck, Patti and Eric Toftoy.

And a big thank you to all of you who helped with the reunion. Your efforts were greatly appreciated.

**Remember Our Departed Classmates** (Jack Downing <[ejdowning@cox.net](mailto:ejdowning@cox.net)>) There are two ways to memorialize our fallen classmates. One is by writing a Testament in the WPAOG site. The other is to write a Eulogy in the [West-Point.org](http://West-Point.org) site. Both can be reached through our class web site. Since the constitution of [West-Point.org](http://West-Point.org) states that upon its demise, all files will be turned over to the WPAOG, I see no advantage of one over the other.

If you write your own Memorial Article, it can be saved by putting it in your Cullum File. Marilee Meyer ([Meyer@wpaog.org](mailto:Meyer@wpaog.org)), the archivist, will save it there. You can use this file for other items you want to save for posterity. Memorial article authors should contact Marilee to request the contents of the file of the classmate they are memorializing.

You should also maintain current your 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion Book file. Authors should use this as input for the memorial article they are writing. Dian Welle ([diwelle@west-point.org](mailto:diwelle@west-point.org)) is the [West-Point.org](http://West-Point.org) person I have dealt with and she is extremely helpful.

Gary Graves ([garygraves16@gmail.com](mailto:garygraves16@gmail.com)) and I share the duty for helping memorial article authors. Gary has the 1<sup>st</sup> Regt. And I have the 2d. George Lawton also helps me contact the CCQs and authors to update the status of articles-in-progress.

Remember that I am one of the few people with access to the restricted class e-mail list. So if you hear of the death of a classmate, it is best if you let me pass the word to the class. Gary has this access in my absence.

**FCC Handover** (Tony Smith <[aasmith58@msn.com](mailto:aasmith58@msn.com)>) When we handed over the First Class Club (FCC) to the Class of 2014, I began my remarks by saying that if we were in their place and listening to the class 56 years behind us, we would have been hearing the class of '02 tell us of the Spanish-American War, Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders, the charge up San Juan Hill, and maybe the Philippine Insurrection.

There was a large turnout of Firsties eager to have their first beer in what is now their Club. The First Captain, Lindsey Danalack (a woman from NJ who runs hurdles) and the Brigade staff were there, as was the class president.

We introduced all the classmates present, focusing on the contributions of Dale Hruby and Butch Ordway, without whose efforts the FCC would not be the place of pride for us that it is today. Dale and Dodie were present, along with Dodie's sister and husband, and Nancy Ordway was there, accompanied by a significant group of Butch's relations from the Roddy family. Other classmates who attended were: Chuck and Celia Hansult, Pete and Lynne Penczer, Branch and Nancy Worsham, Brad Johnson, Munge Moore, Paul Ruud, Tony Nadal, and, of course, Bonnie Smith to keep me out of trouble.

The new Supe, LTG Bob Caslen, accepted my invitation to come (he had previously attended the event as Com and remembered it) and brought his wife. The Com, BG Richard Clarke, attended, as did two members (one the Dean's wife) of the class of '83, to which class we will pass the handover responsibility one of these years.



The DCA (Director of Cadet Activities) LTC Joe Orecchio and his staff did a splendid job. It was a beautiful evening, cool with low humidity. The patio roof was open and it was rewarding to see how well our latest gift to West Point has worked out.

At closing time, Brad Johnson was surrounded by a half dozen members of the Sprint Football team (National Champs last year), Tony Nadal had corralled several Firsties at his table (with tales of the la Drang?), and Munge Moore had buttonholed Buddy Moentmann's grandson and was regaling him no doubt with stories of what a model cadet Bud was. Ken Herberger's grandson also came up to me to say hello, and I had a nice chat with him.