



USMA Class of 1965

Strength and Drive

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Annual Class Letter

10 May 2015

To All Members of the Class of 1965

This Letter covers Class activities and events from October 2013 through the present

1. 50th Reunion

The Class will gather at West Point and the Westchester Marriott Hotel in Tarrytown during the Alumni portion of Graduation Week, May 17-20, 2015, to RENEW * REFLECT * REJOICE! A total of around 820 members of the Class community are expected to attend all or some of the events, that include the Memorial Service, Cemetery Visit, Academy Briefing, Class Meeting, Dinner/Dance, Alumni Exercises, Cadet Review, and Alumni Luncheon. The expected attendees include 322 grad classmates (66 percent of living), 6 non-grad classmates, and 134 family members representing 40 of our fallen brothers.

Bob Doughty' amazing narrative about the Strength and Drive Class of 1965, will be available at the Marriott for all who have registered. Additional copies may be purchased on line from Amazon.com. This is a classic book that captures our careers and many lives in a compelling way. Kudos and huge thanks to Bob for his skilled work in writing this for us.

Fund Raising for Class Gift will be further explained in this letter, but up-front I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work done by Bob Harter and his crew in fulfilling Harry Dermody's dream. We have exceeded expectations and set all-time records for amounts and especially, Class participation. We should be proud of the monies we all contributed, and cognizant of the good they will do for years to come (as they are all invested in endowments).

The "Distinguished USMA Class of 1965" Directory has been mailed to all Classmates and widows who remain in contact. This is the result of a huge effort by Tom Kovach and his reunion team to establish contact with the Class and with families of our deceased brethren. Chuck Nichols labored to update database information and then formatted it such that this directory could be published efficiently.

We will have displayed at the Marriott the historical panels developed by Tim Thames that present interesting facts about our Class, as well as those from previous classes of 1915, 1865 and 1815. Tim researched and developed them for use in what was then the Second Class Club for our affiliation Class of 2015.

2. Taps

We remember the following Fallen Comrades who have passed away in recent months. We have lost 109 of 596 = 18% of our brothers (plus 6 former classmates)

John Anderson*, 26 Feb 2014	Gil Gilchrist, 9 Feb 2015
Rance Rountree*, 28 Feb 2014	Jack Terry, 19 Feb 2015
Bo Forrest*, 5 Apr 2014	John (Jack) Concannon, 18 Mar 2015
Steve Ganshert*, 30 Apr 2014	Lance Stewart, 19 Mar 2015
Tom Borkowski, 6 May 2014	Paul Renschen, 26 Apr 2015
Dick Tragemann*, 4 Sep 2014	Joe Weatherall, 6 May 2015

*asterisk indicates already written Memorial Articles that will appear in TAPS 2015

3. Memorial Articles

The forthcoming WPAOG-published edition of TAPS (that you must purchase to receive in magazine form) will have 19 articles memorializing Classmates (including 2 former classmates), and a Class-purchased memorial page developed by Chuck Nichols and Bob Frank. The memorial page includes an apt inscription that we borrowed with his permission from Bob Doughty's Strength and Drive book.

Chuck McCloskey has done a fabulous job in finding and tutoring authors for Memorial Articles, but as always, he could use a little more help. We currently have 15 articles still to be written/published, with 6 of them outstanding for more than five years. These are always the hardest to complete.

4. Caring for Others

Moving forward, caring for others will be of increasing importance as we assist Classmates and their spouses as they deal with illnesses and misfortune. Examples abound, too numerous to mention, of Classmates helping Classmates as a labor of brotherly love and compassion.

Skip O'Donnell spearheaded an effort with Rick Bunn to produce a valuable funeral SOP that we use as a starting point to manage matters when Classmates pass away. Experience shows that each situation is a bit unique and requires the agility of our Class POC whom we try to identify ASAP upon notification. Upon suggestion and participation of Terry Ryan, we now have two Class flags (one at WPAOG and one in Terry's keeping) that we use to ship expeditiously to locations where memorial services are conducted. We can be proud of our

POCs and their communications between grieving families and Classmates that has ensured Long Gray Line participation in nearly every memorial.

5. Affiliation with 2015 (For Those We Lead)

Our Class' response to this powerful program has been planned and executed over the entire four-year period that the Class of 2015 has been cadets by Pat Kenny. This was a model effort, contributed to by many Classmates, but led superbly all the way by Pat.

First Class Year

Graduation Exercises, 23 May 2015

We all remember that marvelous day when we bid farewell to cadet gray and donned the Army blue, and certainly the Class of 2015 will share that same emotional high. As each graduating cadet descends the ramp with diploma in-hand, a member of the Class of 1965 will present the graduate with a box that contains 2LT gold bars engraved with the crests of their class and our class, and a note from us which reads:

The Class of 1965, "Strength and Drive," takes great pride in the members of "For Those We Lead." You have earned your place in our nation's Armed Forces, and for that achievement we wholeheartedly congratulate you! We also "Grip Hands" with you as you join the Long Gray Line, an honor we attained 50 years ago, and enthusiastically now share with you for all time. Our affiliation with 2015 endures beyond West Point, and we anticipate your lives of selfless service will be guided by "Duty, Honor, Country." Take pride in your accomplishments while being ever mindful of "For Those We Lead."

Our 4 Distinguished Graduates, Bud Bucha, Dan Christman, Joe DeFrancisco, and Ric Shinseki will greet the graduates as they descend the stage. As the last graduate of the Class of 2015 receives his, or her, diploma, this will conclude our active affiliation with 2015 as cadets.

West Point 100/Years of a Century Told, 28 April 2015

The Class of 2015 was treated to a very special event connecting them with our Class of 1965, and in turn, with the Class of 1915 (the "Class the Stars Fell On" who became the leaders of WWII, including Generals Eisenhower, Bradley, and Van Fleet) whom we witnessed enjoying their 50th Reunion so many years ago. The idea to recognize our lineage across time was sparked by Gerry Buckosky, but adopted by present Superintendent Caslen as a forum of prior Superintendents discussing the values and contributions of West Point to the Nation and the Army and the changes they dealt with on their watches. Fox Sunday News host, Chris Wallace, moderated the event with great aplomb and our Dan Christman shined with his thoughtful responses. In addition to a number of Classmates attending was a granddaughter of President Eisenhower, a

grandson of the Class "Goat," and Joe McChristian who is the grandson of General James Van Fleet.

Class Officers' Dinner, 3 March 2015

The last Affiliation Program event prior to Graduation was the Class Officers' dinner conducted on March 3, 2015 in Eisenhower Hall. The purpose of the dinner was to acquaint the Class of 2015 with how a class is governed after graduation and their interaction with the Association of Graduates. The dinner was attended by the Class Officers of both the Class of 1965 and the Class of 2015, as well as executives from the Association of Graduates. Clair Gill provided a summary presentation on how our class functioned from graduation until today, 50 years later, to include governance, reunions, classmate deaths, and our relationship with AOG. Our participants were: Clair Gill, Bob Harter, Bob Frank, Joe DeFrancisco, Russ Campbell, Chuck McCloskey, Chuck Nichols, and Pat Kenny.

Branch Night, 20 November 2014

Another important milestone in a cadet's journey through West Point is Branch Night, the time when each cadet learns of the branch to which the graduate will be assigned. This event for the Class of 2015 took place on November 20, 2014. Our class was well represented at the event by: Sonny Arkangel, Steve Bliss, Russ Campbell, Denny Coll, Joe DeFrancisco, Bob Frank, Clair Gill, Steve Harman, Bob Roseberg, Joe Sanchez, Ric Shinseki, Fred Smith, and Jim Wood. Joe DeFrancisco provided appropriate remarks regarding their future service in their branches to the Army.

Ring Weekend, 22-23 August 2014

On Friday, August 22, 2014 the Class of 2015 received their class rings. At the conclusion of the ring presentation ceremony, the Class of 1965 hosted a reception in Eisenhower Hall for those who had donated rings to the Ring Melt. Tom Barron provided appropriate remarks that were well received. Other members of the class in attendance were: Russ Campbell, Emery Chase, Gene Manghi, Bob Radcliffe, and Joe Sanchez. Joanne Plotkin also participated. Those same individuals attended the Ring Banquet the following night as guests of the Class of 2015.

Second Class Year

500th Night, 18 January 2014

Roger Frydrychoski who was instrumental in developing and getting approval for a 500th Night event in our days, consulted with Will Goodwin (Class president) and other members of 2015 on their version of 500th Night that is quite different from our celebration fifty-one and a butt years ago. The Class of 2015 had a Dining In at Washington Hall with featured speaker, ADM Wm McCraven, then Commander of US Special Operations Command. Many of us may have read his on-target message of service to 2015.

Professional Military Ethics Education (PMEE)

In roughly two sessions per academic semester over the past three years, more than 20 Classmates participated in guiding and supplementing the ethics (read that honor plus) education of our affiliated Class of 2015. Paul Schultz did a marvelous job as PMEE coordinator, working between our volunteers and the Academy's Simon Center, to a point where we gained significant influence in helping shape this important program to be even more relevant. Doug Gibson pitched in when Paul became ill and carried the program to complete success.

6. Distinguished Graduate Award, 20 May 2014

The Class of 1965 was proud to nominate and have elected as a Distinguished Graduate, Bud Bucha who had this most prestigious award presented on the Plain and in the Mess Hall on May 20, 2014. Bud later hosted a reception for Class members at the Arvin Alcove in the gym that also contains memorabilia from his days as Swim Team Captain and his having received the Medal of Honor for exceptional bravery during the Vietnam War. Kudos also to the team of Bob Radcliffe, Bill Birdseye and John Howell who gathered the materials and developed the successful nomination packet.

7. USMA Recognition

The Class of 1965 has been blessed by having four of our members selected as Distinguished Graduates, reflecting their contributions to the Nation and to the Academy. These include Ric Shinseki, Dan Christman, Joe DeFrancisco and Bud Bucha. They earned this distinction and should know how proud we are of having them as our Classmates.

Another important recognition program has been the Army Sports Hall of Fame. I did not realize how gifted our entire Class was in A Squad sports until we began delving into this program of special significance. We now have Walt Oehrlein (Tennis), Rollie Stichweh (Football) and Jose Gonzalez (Soccer) who have been recognized for their athletic achievements, and beyond. Thanks to those who participated in researching, documenting and preparing the winning nomination packets, particularly Nate Kantor and Tom Fergusson.

The Bob Arvin Wrestling Award is presented annually to a wrestling team member who best exemplifies the qualities shown by Bob in his days as Team Captain and our Brigade Commander. Uniquely, this awardee (selected by the wrestling coach) is often not the star wrestler, but one whose spirit has inspired the team. The award is presented at the Awards Convocation that follows the Graduation Parade and has been an honor for several of our Classmates to present. Among them have been Tom Abraham, Jack Jannarone, and this year Paul Schultz will be doing the honors.

8. Class Events

Thanks to the efforts of a number of Classmates who have stepped up to organize groups of Classmates, we had quite a few opportunities for “gatherings.” I would like to recognize a number of them, and encourage similar gathering in the future.

Army vs. San Diego Mini (Dave Kuhn, John Seymour, Bob Bradley)

Army vs. Hawaii Mini (Tad Ono and attendees Bob Frank, Gordy Larson, and Dave Hurley)

Army vs. Navy, 14 Dec 2013 in Philadelphia

Army vs. Navy, 13 Dec 2014 in Baltimore (John Howell organized both of these gatherings that were enjoyed by 30 – 40 Classmates and family members). 2015 should be a victory—Go Army)

Arizona Gathering (Rick Bunn, Fred Laughlin, et al)

Northwest Gathering (Bill Sherrell)

Golf Outings Columbus, GA, Pinehurst, Williamsburg, Pawley’s Island. This series began in 2001 and has been spearheaded by Bob Radcliffe all the way. He has had some help from the “Committee,” allegedly staffed by Barry Zais, John Malpass, Jack Thomasson, Bob Selkis, and others who wish to remain anonymous. Kudos to Bob for providing this wonderful entertainment for the 40-50 who managed to escape each spring and fall.

9. Class Forum and Class Tree

After years of damages from snow plows, contractors and Mother Nature, the Class has paid to have the necessary repairs made to the Class Forum prior to our 50th Reunion. We have also endowed a maintenance fund to keep it up in future years. Our Class Tree marker that was removed (along with the tree!) for the construction of Jefferson Hall has been found and relocated—in front of a beautiful Japanese Lilac “teenage sapling” that is located just next to the Forum—well done Ross Wollen.

10. Center for Oral History (COH)

Resulting from a thorough vetting process five years ago, led by Fred Laughlin, the Class elected to contribute its 50th Reunion Gift to three endowments that had been identified by the Academy: the Center for Oral History (COH), the Fallen Graduates Scholarship and the Long Gray Line endowments. With a series of personnel shifts of Department of History leadership and within the

COH, including the release of the founding director, we discovered that the COH was somewhat adrift, all the while we were raising funds to support it. Through a series of interactions with the new leadership of D/History and COH, we have been able to convince them to accept our offer of expertise in strategic/business planning and organizational effectiveness that, if accepted, could better align them for future success. Most credit is due to Tom Barron who has been accepted into their inner circle and now meets regularly with COH and D/History to assist them to be all they can be—and all we expected them to be. We have a good number of Classmates' interviews that are worthy of your viewing at westpointcoh.org. Among them are interviews with Bud Bucha, Bob Jones, Russ Campbell, Harry Dermody, Dan Christman and Dave Mastran. Check it out.

11. Communications/Connecting

Our dynamic duo of Rick Bunn (Class Scribe) and Chuck Nichols (Webmaster) continually provides the information, knowledge, stories, notifications, contact info, and so forth that is the glue of our Class. I am continually amazed at how much they accomplish, and how our network of reporters continues to grow.

Our Cullum Files are a unique part of the lineage and history of our Alma Mater. But they are only as good as you make them, so I encourage you to review your information on line, and work with the WPAOG Archivist, Marilee Meyer, who maintains the database. The Register of Graduates and our own fifty-year old Howitzer continue to provide key information for your Class leadership and researchers of military history.

And of course, please keep Rick and Chuck advised when you relocate or change your various emails and phone numbers. We really do need your inputs to keep in touch with you.

12. New Class and WPAOG Associate Member

Jack Jacobs (a non-grad, MOH recipient) has been approved by the AOG Board and is officially an Associate Member of WPAOG and an Honorary Member of the Class of 1965. Jack began his association with our Class back in the early Seventies when he taught in SOSH, alongside several of us. His association with our Class has continued over the years and he has continued to teach and serve the Academy wherever needed. His personal interactions with cadets are particularly well received. We are happy to have Jack join our fold.

13. Financials

Skip O'Donnell has done a fantastic job in executing and controlling our financial assets in both the Admin and Gift Accounts. He has led our transition of both accounts to get under the umbrella provided by the West Point Association of Graduates. WPAOG now holds and invests all of our resources, and executed

our financial transactions as Skip has directed. We are fully transparent, though at times it may take a degree in accounting to understand the reports.

USMA 1965 Admin Account

CY 2014

1/1/2014		12/31/2014
\$34,344.84		\$23,890.61

	Reimbursement	Expenses
Reunion/1	0	\$7980.00
Mailings	0	\$1139.34
Teleconferences	0	\$126.56
WPAOG Fund/2	\$512.36	\$333.52
Funerals/3	0	\$923.11
Books/4	\$2240.00	\$2704.06

- /1 The Class Admin Account for 2015 is quite fluid with all the pre-registrations, deposits and ordering. Most reunion costs will be recovered through the pre-registration payments, with final results reported in next year's report.
- /2 All West Point Class admin accounts under the WPAOG are part of a short term investment pool split equally between two large funds. Reimbursements cover such things as dividends, interest, etc. Expenses cover fund management costs, losses, etc.
- /3 The WPAOG has done a great job in getting the checks out for the flowers and charities within a week of verification. Other expenses were for Class flag shipments.
- /4 Army football team inspiration – “Every Army Man is With You” books – largely reimbursed through the generosity of Classmates.

Gift Account and 50th Reunion Campaign

Some highlights of the campaign are:

- Largest 50th Reunion Class gift ever. Old record \$3,000,000. Our gift about \$3,300,000
- This is an endowment, so we continue to give in perpetuity
- Largest participation rate for any Class Gift. Old record 80.5%. 435 out of 497 Classmates (87.5%) participated in our gift
- 121 Friends of the Class contributed, to include 30 widows

- Four companies had 100% participation: L1; A2; D2; M2
- Every deceased classmate was memorialized via a contribution to Class gift fund

Here are the financial basics

Total Available \$3,328,286

Gifts Designation (per class campaign pledge)

- Center for Oral History - \$2,000,000 cash (naming of “The Class of 1965 Film Production Studio” and “The Class of 1965 Vietnam War Archive”)
- Long Gray Line Endowment - \$300,000
- Fallen Graduates Memorial Scholarship endowment - \$300,000 (directed gifts totaling \$200,000 cash enabled naming of a portion of the endowment as “The Robert C. Jones ’65 Endowment for Fallen Graduates Memorial Scholarships”)

Other Cash Gifts

- Class of 1965 Maintenance Endowment - \$100,000. This is to ensure maintenance of Class’ brick and mortar gifts in perpetuity—and remove them from competition with cadet barracks and classrooms for scarce federal funds
- Summer Leaders Experience Endowment (1 cadet) - \$36,000 *
- Cadet Public Relations Council Endowment (1 cadet) - \$59,000 *

*Endowment to be named after Harry Dermody ’65 and earmarked to cadets from Massachusetts

The original letter when we began stated a campaign objective of \$2,600,000, with any surplus being split evenly between the Long Gray Line and Fallen Graduates Scholarship endowments. The maintenance and Dermody allocations reflect fact-of-life changes. In keeping with the original objectives, the additional \$533,000 above the \$2,795,000 will follow the original intent and be split evenly between the LGL and Scholarship endowments.

Quoting the WPAOG Class Giving leader, “The final class participation for your 50th reunion gift campaign is **87.5%**. Simply amazing!”

14. Transition and Class Meeting

We will conduct our one and most important quinquennial Class Meeting at 4:30 pm on Monday, 18 May in the Ballroom of the Westchester Marriott. Please come and vote for your new Class Leadership Team (Officers) and minor amendments to our governing Bylaws. I promise not to bore you, and will provide as much open forum time as possible to allow you to get answers to

questions, or suggest ways we can improve our service to and representation of the Class.

We will seat your the new Leadership Team immediately following this meeting. In anticipation of your positive vote, newly nominated and past serving officers have been sharing time together in person and via phone/internet to ensure a seamless transition.

15. Closing

I have greatly enjoyed leading our Class Officers for the last ten years, and cannot thank YOUR team enough for their dedication and commitment to the Class, and for their cogent advice. I wish to thank Bob Frank for his maintenance of our Class History and support of our Affiliation program, Bob Radcliffe for his work on recognition nominations and Class Golf outings, Bob Harter for his tireless work to achieve new standards for Class Giving, Rick Bunn for propelling Class Notes to new levels of excellence and recording of Class Teleconference meetings, Skip O'Donnell for keeping our finances transparent and in the black, and former officers Ross Wollen and Joe Sanchez for their long and dedicated services to the Class. And we all miss Harry Dermody's physical presence every day as he was the ember of commitment that never cooled off when it came to commitments to our Strength and Drive Class of 1965.

In addition to the elected officers, we have had many additional volunteers who have done the key work to get whatever it took to get the job done. These include guys like Pat Kenny who took full charge of the Affiliation Program, Chuck Nichols who maintains the Class website and database, but has also managed to archive most or all of our history in a retrievable form, Chuck McCloskey who has been our link to the sensitive work of memorializing fallen comrades, writers/authors such as Bill Birdseye, Rick Sinnreich, and Tom Fergusson who have created the compelling narratives to have our most distinguished Classmates recognized. And finally, Ken Yoshitani (45th reunion) and Tom Kovach with the indefatigable Marilyn, who have cheerfully and skillfully managed our 45th and now 50th reunions.

For sure, I have forgotten to mention many others who played a part in making our Class one that is admired by Academy and WPAOG officers. For all those I have omitted and others behind the scenes, please accept my apology and sincere thanks for all you have done.

Please give as much, or more, support to your new Class Leadership Team led by Russ Campbell.

Thanks for the memories. Strength and Drive

Clair Gill