



USMA Class of 1965

Strength and Drive

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Annual Class Letter

6 July 2017

To: All members of the Class of 1965

This letter covers Class activities, news, and events from May 2016 through the present.

1. Leadership Team meetings

Meetings/Conference calls were held as follows:

Tuesday, 10 May 2016, 1100 hrs, Audio & Video conference call

Wednesday, 17 August 2016, 1500 hrs, Video conference call

Monday, 6 February 2017, 1600 hrs, Video conference call

Tuesday, 16 May 2017, 1730 hrs, Conference call & team meeting, Charlestown, SC.

2. Class Financial status:

Mitch Bonnett reports that there is approximately \$28,000 in the Class admin fund. Most outlays have been for periodic funeral expenses (\$200 for flowers or donations in lieu of flowers for our fallen Classmate's preferred charity and cost of shipping the Class flag to and from services). Our standard allocation is \$200.00. We are in good shape to cover any initial seed money that may be required to fund the 55th Reunion planning.

3. USMA Cemetery:

The moratorium on burials is still in place but will be lifted August 9, 2017 upon completion of the Phase 2 expanded area in the vicinity of the Molly Corbin memorial, which will provide 311 burial sites. The current demand for burial plots is about 100 per year. Moratorium does not apply to the placement of cremated remains in the Columbarium. Phase 3I is the expansion/reclamation of the old PX parking lot and gas station. This is a high priority project for the Superintendent and funding has been incorporated in the capital Construction funding budget request for FY 2018. Since any cemetery expansion will require considerable site preparation, there is not a quick or easy solution to the burial plot shortfall.

Some statistics for our Class:

On June 9th, 1965, we graduated 596 Classmates.

Currently deceased: 122 + or –

9 Arlington National Cemetery

38 Buried at West Point

10 Inurned at West Point

11 Known buried at other National, state, private, or VA Cemeteries

68

122 – 68 = 54 buried or inurned elsewhere

Since about one third of our Class deceased to date opted to be buried at West Point, we will likely require approximately 150 burial plots or Columbarium spaces over the next 20 years or so, presuming that the above trends continue.

The Leadership Team has made a serious commitment to stay on top of this sensitive issue on behalf of the Class. We sent a letter from the Class President to the

www.westpointaog.org

www.west-point.org/class/usma1965

Superintendent expressing our support to his initiatives to expand the cemetery. He acknowledged our concern and appreciated the support. Bob Axley has been especially valuable to us not only on the Cemetery issues but also as wise sage and counsel on a myriad of subjects. His thoughtful insights and contributions to the Team are and have been invaluable.

4. AOG activities:

We have two nominations in the works:

(1) Tom Barron for Distinguished Graduate Award (second submission), POC Fred Laughlin and (2) Joe DeFrancisco for AOG Board Chairman, POC Ric Shinseki.

The AOG annual Leaders Conference was held 10—13 August, 2016. Hurley, Frank, and I represented the Class. The next conference will be 16—19 August 2017. We will send two (TBD) delegates once again. Dave Hurley is also on the AOG nominating committee and is President of his West Point society in Florida.

On 2 February 2017 I met with Todd Browne, President and CEO WPAOG. This was an introductory meeting set up at my request to cover several subjects on behalf of the Class, a meet and greet if you will. Gene Manghi also joined us. I wanted to get Todd's view on fund raising, graduate access to WP, the 2017 AOG Leaders Conference, support for the cemetery expansion, planned giving, brief on the Polish Mission exhibit, and his thoughts on holding a major class reunion away from WP. On that last point, which has never been done before, he did not see why it could not be done, but that it might incur some logistic and cost issues beyond those that would occur with a WP based reunion. This was good input as we were preparing a reunion survey.

5. 55th Reunion:

In response to many inquiries from Classmates to consider other sites for the reunion, the LT decided to send out a survey to the Class covering such things as time of year, locations, amenities, logistics, access, etc. The inimitable Chuck Nichols offered to take a crack at it, and you know the rest. Your response was terrific and has provided a great framework for going forward. We particularly appreciated the offers to help. There will be more to come on this in future correspondence.

6. Center for Oral History:

LTC. David Siry, Director COH, continues to drive this program and has worked closely with Fred Laughlin on the Volunteer Interview Program '65 (VIP '65) to add more interviews from the Class. As of January 2017 the Vietnam Archive has 94 interviews on line of which 24 are from our Class. Other topics cover the Cold War, Gulf War, minority admissions, and many others bringing our classmate interviews to over 30 and six more that are approved and will be posted within the next month, and there are two interviews scheduled with Fred in the Fall.

Please consider doing an interview by contacting Fred. Remember, the COH is our major Class gift to WP and we are the most represented of any class.

7. Army/Navy Game, 9 December 2017, Philadelphia:

Wasn't that a sweet and long overdue victory last December! We are very grateful to June and Tom Fergusson who managed the Class admin and logistics for the game. They did a great job taking over from the amiable John Howell, who has relocated to the west coast. Once again we have a team in place to succeed the Fergussons. Chuck

Boohar and Fred Smith will be co- POCs on this one and you have already seen their messages.
Go Army BEAT Navy!

8. Polish Mission:

As part of the 72nd anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps the US Polish Mission has traveled the US with their "Forbidden Art" exhibit culminating with the display at West Point. It gets its title from the fact that all the art, carvings, and sculptures were secretly made by the inmates at great personal risk. Many of the items were found after the liberation and no doubt were the works of inmates who were killed. So how did '65 get involved? Well, it turned out that Walter Oehrlein knew one of the members of the Mission, heard about the exhibit and offered to assist in getting it to West Point. Through Walter's initiative and anonymous contributions from the Class the Polish Mission selected the Class of '65 as a patron for the exhibit. He helped facilitate the arrangements for the installation at the Jefferson Library and the gala kickoff event held in the Haig room. The exhibit ran for four weeks and was well attended by Cadets, staff, faculty, and friends.

9. Golf Outings and mini Reunions:

Bob Radcliffe and his distinguished golf committee once again put together two wonderful outings; the Fall 2016 event was held 15—19 October at Pine Needles Resort, Southern Pines, NC the Spring 2017 event was 14—17 May at Charlestown, SC. Both events attracted about 10 wives and 40 Classmates, and everyone had a wonderful time thanks to "The Committee".

A note: After over 50 years of golf, Bob wants the Class of '65 to know that he scored his first and only (so far) hole in one on 9 June 2017, with a seven iron 127 yards out on the third hole at the Cameron Nine Thistle golf course. 9 June is , of course, our date of graduation! Congratulations Bob!

The next Golf outing will be in the Fall, 8—11 October 2017 at Pawleys Island, SC.

Throughout the year many of you link up with each other in both small and moderate size groups. You share activities together, enjoy lunches and dinners together, and tell tall stories about each other and days gone by. Your reports and pictures are immensely popular and we encourage you to keep those messages, reports, and photos coming in. Step Tyner is the man, get anything you want to share to Step and he will be sure to distribute it.

10. For the Good of the order:

I want to welcome once again and thank Step Tyner for joining the Leadership Team and taking over the role of Class Secretary/Scribe under difficult circumstances. He has really contributed to the Team and the well being of our Class. Thanks Step.

Tom Abraham did our Class proud at the West Point Annual Awards Convocation, Eisenhower Hall, Thursday evening, 25 May 2017. Once again he was honored to present the Arvin award for outstanding leadership, scholarship, and wrestling to a wrestler from the Class of 2017.

The Alumni Glee Club continues to expand in performances (over 50 per year, including Carnegie Hall) and success no doubt due to some really committed Classmates. Terry Ryan, Jim Ferguson, Chuck Nichols, Peter Linn, Terry Tutchings, Tom Fergusson, and

Pete Cahill. I believe that Terry R, and Jim F., are founding members, and Chuck is the Executive Producer.

Class '65 Tribute Project was an outstanding effort by Chuck Nichols as POC, with support from the Leadership Team. It took a couple of months to complete and the result was an incredible tribute to our fallen brothers, who gave all. Chuck's personal goal was to have the tribute ready for viewing by Veterans Day, 11 November 2016. Mission accomplished!

On Monday, 22 June 2017, NY City and the Borough of Brooklyn honored our Classmate Cpt. Michael E. Berdy, KIA Vietnam, in a ceremony renaming a major intersection next to his High School in his name. The ceremony was attended by several dignitaries, friends, and many family members and even his former football coach and school principal. Mike's brother Andy was the master of ceremonies. Bob and Mary Frank and I were pleased to attend and represent the Class at this very special event.

On Friday 21 October 2016 our Classmate Tony Clay was inducted into the Army Sports Hall of Fame recognizing his unbelievable All American swimming record breaking accomplishments. Buddy Bucha, Tony's close friend and teammate, was the POC for the nomination. The award was presented to Cala Clay, Tony's wife, on his behalf. And two tables of '65 were on hand at the dinner to honor Tony.

11. Now the hard part, TAPS

Each year we pay tribute to and grip hands with those Classmates and wives who have passed on. It is always hard as we recall our times and friendships together. This year is no different, especially in the case of our dear Classmate, Scribe and Secretary, Rick Bunn, who left us so abruptly after many years of service to the Class. As a member of the Leadership Team he was instrumental in bringing the Class together and stay connected. We will never forget his last message to the Class as he slipped away from us on 6 January 2017. Our list of losses follows:

Spouses deceased 2016 to date: (Note: this list might not be complete, as we depend on family for notification.)

Ina Abraham 11/25/16 (spouse of Tom Abraham)
Barbara Madden 3/30/17 (spouse of Jerry Madden)

Classmates deceased 2016 to date:

Classmate	Date of Death	Cadet Co
Ed Abesamis	3/17/16	F2
Bob Selkis	4/3/16	M1
Jerry Ledzinski	5/9/16	A2
John DeVitto	6/19/16	A1
Tony Clay	6/30/16	I1
John Seymour	10/21/16	H2
Fred Scruggs	11/29/16	D1
Rick Bunn	1/6/17	K1
Don Nowland	5/10/17	I2
Steve Leach	5/21/17	I1

Be thou at peace.

This concludes the highlights of activities and topics covered this past year. Obviously I can't cover everything but hopefully this letter provides a good consolidation and historical record for the Class. I particularly want to thank all of you that have served in the role of POC for funerals, memorial services, and special events. We could not possibly accomplish all that we have without your help.

On behalf of the Leadership Team it is an honor for us to serve this amazing Class.

Strength and Drive,


Russ Campbell, your '65 Class President