

West Point Parents Club of Illinois



Plebe Parent Handbook

Class of 2015

Table of Contents

2011-12 Officers.....	1
West Point Parents Club of Illinois Plebe Parent Handbook - Welcome to the Class of 2015.....	2
2011-2012 Calendar of Events For the West Point Parents Club of Illinois	3
1. Reception Day (R-Day)	5
1.1 New Cadet Candidate's Preparation for R-Day.....	5
1.2 Parents' Preparation for R-Day	5
1.3 What a New Cadet Should Have for R-Day	6
1.3.1 Mandatory.....	6
1.3.2 Optional: 1st Priority.....	7
1.3.2 Optional: 2nd Priority.....	7
1.3.3 Optional: 3rd Priority	8
1.4 Arriving on R-DAY for New Cadets	9
1.5 For the Family of New Cadets on R-Day.....	9
1.6 Places to Eat On Post for R-Day	11
1.7 West Point Association of Graduates	11
1.8 Presentations	12
1.9 The Oath Ceremony	12
1.10 One Last Chance.....	12
1.11 R-Day Closing Remarks	12
2. Cadet Basic Training (CBT)	13
3. March Back.....	14
4. Reorganization (Re-Orgy) Week.....	14
5. Acceptance Day (A-Day).....	15
6. WPPCI Annual Picnic.....	16
7. Academic Year	16
7.1 Army/Navy Game	16
7.2 Term-End Exams (TEES).....	16
7.3 Passes	16

7.4	Thanksgiving/Christmas Leave	17
7.5	All-Academy Ball.....	17
7.6	Plebe Parent Weekend (PPW).....	17
7.7	Promotion	18
8.	Class of 2015 – Plebe Year at a Glance	18
8.1	June	18
8.2	July.....	19
8.3	August.....	20
8.4	September	20
8.5	October	21
8.6	November	21
8.7	December	22
8.8	January	22
8.9	February.....	22
8.10	March.....	22
8.11	April.....	23
8.12	May	23
8.13	June	23
9.	Communicating With Your Cadet.....	24
9.1	Mail During Beast	24
9.2	Mail After A-Day.....	25
9.3	Telephone.....	25
9.4	Major Family Emergency During Beast.....	26
9.5	E-Mail/Instant Messaging	26
10.	Healthcare.....	26
10.1	Medical Care when off-post.....	26
11.	Boodle	26
12.	Traveling To and From West Point	27
12.1	Airports.....	27
12.2	Driving.....	28

13.	Lodging	29
14.	Restaurants and Dining	30
14.1	On Post	30
14.2	Highland Falls	30
14.3	Cornwall	31
14.4	Ft. Montgomery.....	31
14.5	Newburgh	31
15.	Shopping	32
16.	West Point Heritage	32
16.1	“The Alma Mater” (Song).....	33
16.2	Duty, Honor, Country	33
16.3	Cadet Colors	34
16.4	Mascots.....	34
16.5	“On Brave Old Army Team” (Song).....	34
17.	Interesting Links	35
18.	Handbook Comments/Suggestions	36

West Point Parents Club of Illinois

2011-12 Officers

President	Dan & Cathy Jostes '12
Vice President	Denise & Eric Gibson '14
Secretary	Julie Coley '14
Treasurer	Leo Delaney '13
Membership	Tamara Reichert '13
Alumni Rep	Kevin & Cete Rupprecht, '10
Web Master	Paul Fischl '14
Plebe Parent Coordinator	Laurie McDevitt '14
All-Academy Ball	Joe & Kathy Altonji '14
Immediate Past President	John & Marianne Calhoun '11
Liaison Officer	LTC (Ret) John Corey

West Point Parents Club of Illinois Plebe Parent Handbook - Welcome to the Class of 2015

www.wppci.org

Congratulations to you and your son or daughter on their appointment and acceptance to the West Point Class of **2015**. The next few months will be very exciting and you will have many questions. This Handbook will hopefully help you answer some of those questions.

Your son/daughter is a "**New Cadet Candidate**" until Reception Day (R-Day) when they report to West Point. He/she is then a "**New Cadet**" until the end of Cadet Basic Training (CBT, Beast or Beast Barracks) on Acceptance Day (A-Day) in August. New Cadets will be led by Cadet Cadre – the upper-class Cadets. After the New Cadets are integrated with the rest of the Cadet Corps on A-Day, they will be addressed by their earned title of "**Cadet**."

Specifically, incoming Cadets are the Fourth-Year Cadets (or Plebes). Next are the Third-Year Cadets (Yearlings or Yuks). After that are the Second-Year Cadets (Cows), and finally, the First-Year Cadets (Firsties).

The **West Point Parents Club of Illinois** (WPPCI) and your mentor family are great sources of information. We at WPPCI encourage you to call your mentor family with any questions, concerns, or just or support if you need a shoulder to lean on. We have all been through this, and we are here to help.

Also, **Deb Dalton**, the **Parent Communications Liaison**, can help greatly. Her phone number is **(845) 938-5650** and her email is deb.dalton@usma.edu. You can also access the Parent Information page <http://www.usma.edu/Dcomm/wppc.asp> and the West Point Parents Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/WestPointParents>.

For additional information, prior to R-Day you can sign up for Prospective Net at <http://www.west-point.org/parent/prospective-net/>. That will automatically promote you to Plebe Net on R-Day. WPPCI strongly encourages you to sign up for Plebe Net – a moderated email list for parents of New Cadets and Plebes. Prospective Net will give you information until R-Day and then Plebe Net will give you information from R-Day on. Or you can sign up for Plebe Net in person during R-Day at West Point, or at www.west-point.org/parent/plebe-net from R-Day on forward.

Note, though, that Plebe Net is not an official West Point organization. However, they do try to verify all information through West Point.

2011-2012 Calendar of Events For the West Point Parents Club of Illinois

June 5	Class of 2015 Family Orientation 5-9 PM	1 st Division Visitors' Center – Cantigny
June 27	R-Day (Class of 2015)	West Point
July 16	OSOT-IL Fundraiser Concert (Rockin' for the Troops 2011) www.osotil.org for tickets	Cantigny Parade Grounds
July 17	Sponsor Visit-Ice Cream Social (Class of 2015)	West Point
July	Letters to Plebes, Cadets & Soldiers Party; 4:00PM-8:00PM	Date/time/place TBD
August 8	March Back (Class of 2015)	West Point
August 8-12	Reorganization (Re-Orgy) Week	West Point
August 13	A-Day (Class of 2015)	West Point
August 15	Affirmation Day (Class of 2013)	West Point
August 15	Classes Begin	West Point
August 19-20	Ring Weekend (Class of 2012)	West Point
August 28	WPPCI – Annual Picnic 1:00-4:00PM	Great Lakes Naval Base
September 3	Football: Army vs. Northern Illinois @ NIU Pre-game social	Time/place TBD
September 5	Labor Day – no classes	
October	WPPCI – General Meeting	TBD
October 10	Columbus Day – no classes	
November 5	Football: Army vs Air Force General meeting	Time/place TBD
November 11	Veteran's Day – no classes	
November	Firstie Branch Night	West Point
November 12	Football: Army vs Rutgers	Yankee Stadium, NY
November 23-27	Thanksgiving Leave Classes end 1PM on 11/23	HOME
December 9	Classes end	West Point
December 10	Football: Army-Navy Game	Washington, D.C.
December 12 – 17	Term-end (final) exams	West Point
Dec. 18 – Jan. 3	Winter Leave	HOME
December 29	All Academy Ball	Westin Hotel in Lombard
January 4 – 6	Winter Re-organization	West Point
January 9	Classes Begin	West Point

January 16	Martin Luther King Day – no classes	
January 21	500 th Night (Class of 2013)	West Point
January	WPPCI – Board & General Mtg/ Boodle	Date/time/place TBD
February 4	Yearling Winter Weekend (Class of 2014)	West Point
February 20	President’s Day – no classes	
February 25	100 th Night (Class of 2012)	West Point
March	WPPCI – Board & General Meeting	Date/time/place TBD
March 9 – 11	Plebe Parent Weekend (Class of 2015)	West Point
March 10 – 18	Spring Leave	EVERYWHERE
April	Spring Tailgate or General Meeting	TBD
April 9	Corps Training Holiday – no classes	
May	WPPCI – Firstie Spring Brunch, 11AM-2PM	Date/place TBD
May 11	Classes end	West Point
May 14 – 19	Term-end Exams	West Point
May 26	Graduation (Class of 2012)	West Point

There are many links listed in this Handbook. Rather than type the various URLs, you can download the electronic version of the Handbook from our website www.wppci.org so that you can click on the links in the electronic version of the Handbook.

The Handbook can be accessed by clicking on “Links” on the left hand side of the home page.

1. Reception Day (R-Day)

1.1 New Cadet Candidate's Preparation for R-Day

R-day is the first day at West Point for you as a New Cadet. One advice on what to do during the days leading up to R-Day is to "just relax and enjoy yourself" so that the memory of a great vacation after high school graduation will sustain you in the challenging times to come. Arguably a better advice is to try to use a little bit of every day to prepare for West Point. Watching the video "Surviving West Point," a National Geographic film, is a good way to get an idea of what is to come. Note, however, that this video was released in 2002 and, hence, some portions may be out of date. This video may be found through your local library, video rental stores, or ordered through www.west-point.org. You may also want to ask your mentor family or others in WPPCI if they have a copy. You can better decide upon a personal course of preparation by watching the video and comparing what you see to your ability.

If you go the "prepare" route, you should look at the "Fourth Class Knowledge" or "Bugle Notes" material available via website download at <http://www.west-point.org/academy/malowa/inspirations/buglenotes.html> (this is the latest as of **May 24, 2011**). You need not memorize it now, but frequently reading it ("9 times to make it mine") before R-day will make actually memorizing it as a New Cadet much less stressful. Also practice the following phrase: **"Sir (or Ma'am), New Cadet (last name) reports to the Cadet in the Red Sash for the first time, as ordered."**

Daily push-ups and sit-ups are also recommended to increase stamina for Beast and the APFT (Army Physical Fitness Test) administered during Beast. Run, run, run and then run some more. Run up and down hills if they are available in your area. Try to run 3 miles at an 8 minute/mile pace. Also run wind sprints to develop lung capacity. Some previous Cadets have mentioned hiking/jogging carrying a backpack with 30-40 pounds of weight to help them get used to ruck (backpack) marches/runs. Climb ropes if you have access to that. It will also be helpful to toughen your skin by gradually tanning yourself.

Also helpful for preparation are the suggestions in the West Point Fact Sheets "How to Prepare for Cadet Basic Training."

If you plan to walk-on for a West Point sports team, talk to a member of the coaching staff to see if they have any advice. In order to try out for a Corps Squad (Varsity) sports team you must have an NCAA Clearinghouse Certificate of Eligibility on file. Getting certified is *pro forma*, but there is a 6-week lead time for the paperwork. New Cadet Candidates should file for their certificate in May or June if they plan to try out for a fall sport. See website www.ncaaclearinghouse.net or phone 877-262-1492.

Learning how to make a bed with "hospital corners" would be helpful.

1.2 Parents' Preparation for R-Day

If you are attending R-Day, you may want to make reservations ASAP since hotels in the immediate area around West Point fill up fast. However, there are many hotels within 30-40 minutes of West Point that will have rooms available. Cost of room will vary considerably depending on distance

from West Point. Please refer to WPPCI's "Hotels Near West Point" list on our website www.wppci.org. Click on "Links" on the left hand side of the home page. The website will have the latest version.

(If you want to stay near West Point for A-Day in August 2011 or Plebe Parent Weekend in March 2012, make hotel reservations ASAP.)

Bring good, comfortable shoes for a lot of walking, tissues, sunscreen, water, and something light to use as rain cover. And, depending on your personality, you may want to bring binoculars, camera, telephoto lens, and/or extra batteries. Bring these items with you when you leave your car in the morning since you may not return to your car until after the Oath Ceremony in late afternoon.

Also bring a "fun" card (in a plain WHITE envelope with postage) with you to mail once you receive your New Cadet's address. This will be delivered to your New Cadet the following day that mail is delivered.

Some also make a vacation of the last few days before R-Day by taking in sights around West Point, as well as Niagara Falls and New York City.

1.3 What a New Cadet Should Have for R-Day

Wear a comfortable, casual shirt and shorts/slacks. You may also wish to use sunblock since you may be in the sun for many hours. In addition to the West Point packing list, you may want to bring the following items listed below (if not on the West Point packing list). It is helpful to have the items sorted, packaged, and labeled in zip-lock bags for easy transfer from your bag to a duffel bag that will be issued to you. New Cadets are only given between forty seconds and three minutes for this transfer, and it will be a much smoother process if ALL of the items are pre-packaged. With the exception of those items that you are mandated to bring, West Point will issue you all that you will need to survive. However, depending upon the individual optional items may be helpful. To eliminate any last minute anxiety, try to have your shopping done 2-5 days before R-Day. Note that some items may be bought at the Cadet Store (C-store). However, the New Cadets will need to be accompanied by a member of the Cadre. And though the Cadre try to accommodate, their duties are to take care of all New Cadets in their charge. So it may not be feasible to go to the Cadet Store when the New Cadet wants to go.

A 2010 New Cadet felt that all he needed were a knife, running shoes, and broken in low quarters and boots. A New Cadet must turn in all weapons, including knives. However, if the knife blade is one of many tools (like a Swiss Army knife), then they are allowed to keep the knife. Whatever the case, remember that you CANNOT carry that knife on to an airplane.

Please read all the material sent to you by West Point. Everything you need will be in those materials. In the judgment of WPPCI and in advance of the latest instructions from West Point, mandatory and optional items are listed below:

1.3.1 Mandatory

Please check the list that West Point sent you. Here are reminders of some important items.

- Running shoes (comfortable, broken-in; not "cross-training").
- Official photo ID/driver's license.

- Razor (if electric, bring a few disposable razors for field trips).

1.3.2 Optional: 1st Priority

- Money (recommend \$40). Any amount more than \$100 will be put in your Cadet account.
- Watch with alarm clock (you will be woken up during Beast with 10 minutes to spare for your first duties; if you need extra time, you will want an alarm)
- Black shoes (1 pair, military dress, regulation-style, leather soles, rubber heels, laced, broken-in; NO patent leather). Note: these black shoes may be allowed for use should you develop blisters from the shoes you will be issued. As long as they're not Corfam (the really super shiny looking) shoes you can wear them if you bought them from a store referred by West Point. If you bring these black shoes, try spit-shining them.
- Black toiletries bag (light-weight preferred)
- 8x10 inch picture frame for pictures (not glass; a clear plastic display stand inserted w/ collage of pictures on both sides would be good; you may want to laminate the collage for use outside frame)
- Penlight/flashlight (LEDs are good) and extra batteries
- Stamped, white, pre-addressed envelopes (with paper) to write to family & friends (saves time during Beast). You can bring pre-printed address labels for envelopes. Parents can also send a sheet of labels with the Beast address so that you don't have to write that address by hand. You will most likely not write too many letters since you may not have a lot of time.
- List of telephone/cell phone numbers and alternates for first-allowed calls to parents.
- Zip-loc bags (some large; some small; waterproof for field exercises – zipper-types are likely not waterproof).
- Contact lenses, if needed, for sports tryouts. Contact lenses can be worn after Acceptance Day.

Females:

- o Sports bras (nine white or beige. Some are issued on R-Day, however, they may not be as sturdy or comfortable as you would like for non-stop wear during Beast);
- o Coated rubber bands that match your hair color. Plain barrettes (transparent or that match your hair color - not patterned or sparkly);
- o 14-day supply of personal hygiene products in case the C-store does not carry a preferred brand.

1.3.2 Optional: 2nd Priority

- Q-tips (a few) - good for rifle cleaning especially during second detail (second half of Beast)
- Cotton balls (a few: for shining shoes & as ear-plugs for snoring roommates). Note that C-store gives out free ear plugs and you'll be issued ear-pro (to be used for shooting).
- Soft polishing cloths (several; can use old t-shirts for shining brass & shoes)
- Deodorant (if special brand is preferred; some standard brand will be issued)
- Stridex (individually wrapped)
- Gold Bond powder (to reduce chafing, friction. Some feel baby powder causes problems)
- Mosquito relief (lotion, "Bite Back," or "Chigger Rid")
- Towelettes (individually wrapped; little chance to bathe in field)
- Blister kit (include needle – sterilize in flame or alcohol before using), "second skin," antiseptics, Neosporin, band-aids, moleskin; small amount of duct tape wrapped on pencil (use pieces of duct tape to protect "hot spots" to prevent blister). Note: your unit will have a medic to attend to any blister problems you may get.
- Dr. Scholl-type shoe inserts (for tender feet. Put them in any shoes/boots you take to West Point)
- Camera (write only last name on them)
- Lighter(s) (for burning off stray threads on uniforms; do not carry on board airplane - purchase after landing)

- Leatherman-type tool, Gerber, or "Swiss Army" pocket-knife (do not carry on airplane; check with bag or purchase after landing)

1.3.3 Optional: 3rd Priority

- Briefs (several white cotton underwear for laundry-delay insurance; avoid boxer shorts)
- Boot socks (two or three pair, black, Therlo, if you can find them at a military surplus store)
- White socks (athletic, mid-calf; several pair for laundry-delay insurance)
- Musical instrument (if large in size, may want to keep it in your suitcase or checked in for storage for use after Beast)
- Check with your Corps Squad coach to see whether you need to bring any equipment.
- Religious reading material (religious groups offer free material at West Point)
- Fine sand paper or cardboard nail file (for brass smoothing, as preferred in some Cadet companies)
- Tweezers
- Zip-loc bag with toiletries (a separate bag just for Buckner with chafe cream, face cleaning pads, toothbrush, & travel-size toothpaste & deodorant)
- Saddle soap (softens boots; use before first shine) & waterproofing cream (use after "stand-in-shower" break-in but before first shine).
- Sunglasses (likely not needed or allowed during Beast)
- Sunblock or sunburn ointment (may also be issued, but get tan beforehand if possible)
- Cell phone (use allowed after A-Day; reception on post seems generally poor)
- Clear (see-through) plastic folder with ballpoint pen and sticky notes or tabs for forms
- Permanent marker: black, small, fine-point (Sharpie) (although the markers issued may suffice)
- One small piece of luggage tagged w/ full name (footlocker & hand luggage for travel/leave will be issued later, most likely after the start of academic year. On R-day your civilian bag will be taken from you and you can keep anything you don't/can't bring with you in that civilian bag – therefore it can pretty much be as large as you want)
- Set of comfortable clothes for first leave (keep seasonal weather in mind; keep in luggage during transfer). Note that you need to leave West Point in uniform. Some Cadets stay in uniform until they reach their destination.

Note 1: While the above listed items are recommended, West Point will issue you most of what you'll need. All you really need to bring are official ID, running shoes, and razor(s). Much of what West Point issues you on R-Day will also go in to an issued duffel bag. You will be carrying this duffel bag for the rest of R-day.

Note 2: To reduce blisters during field exercises, wear a pair of thin black dress socks under the required socks. If your boots get wet, dry off your feet and put on new socks as time allows.

Note 3: Storage space is limited, so the less that has to be stored the better. Do NOT bring stereos or radios, TV sets, coffee pots, & irons. New Cadets and Plebes are seriously limited in electronic/electric equipment they can have in their rooms.

Note 4: After Beast all New Cadets will receive a laptop, a printer, a personal digital assistant (PDA), and a portable memory device. West Point does not allow Cadets to use different devices other than those issued. Information about the specific computer equipment issued to various classes is on-line at <http://www.dean.usma.edu/ietd/cchall.cfm>.

Note 5: New Cadets will quickly be familiarized with the importance of "spit-shining" shoes. To help learn this skill, visit <http://www.cadetstuff.org/archives/000200.html#000200>, <http://usmilitary.about.com/cs/generalinfo/ht/spitshine.htm>, or other websites.

Note 6: DO NOT BRING towels, handkerchiefs, nightwear, civilian clothes (in excess of those needed for travel to West Point), rings and excessive jewelry items, bicycles, sporting goods, firearms, vehicles of any kind, alcohol, drugs, food, snacks, etc.

Note 7: Items you forget to bring can be mailed by parents or brought by visitors at appropriate times. There may be an invitation for females to bring curling irons or hairdryers, but these cannot be used until after Beast. Common practice, however, is that these items are discouraged.

1.4 Arriving on R-DAY for New Cadets

Plan on arriving at West Point before your assigned reporting time. It is VERY important to report **ON TIME** in order to be able to process the New Cadets efficiently. As the Army saying goes, "To arrive early is to be on time; to arrive on time is to be late." Allow sufficient time to go through security, park your car in designated parking areas, and follow signs to **Eisenhower Hall** to report in. Briefing for the New Cadets and family will be at the Eisenhower Hall.

After the 10-minute briefing by an Army officer and a member of the Cadre, you will be given 90 seconds for a quick hug and good-bye to your family before you are led away to be processed. Cadre are upper-class Cadets in charge of the New Cadets during Beast.

Tips for the New Cadet: be aware but don't look around; pay attention to avoid making mistakes for which you will be singled out; do not smile or smirk in front of Cadre when confronted by humorous situations. Basically, do not do anything that will draw attention to you.

1.5 For the Family of New Cadets on R-Day

Once your New Cadet has left after the briefing, go to the main lobby of Ike Hall to **get your New Cadet's address and Beast company information** (tables are arranged in alphabetical order). This information includes Company, Platoon, Squad, PO Box, and TAC's (Tactical Officer's) name and phone number. (TACs are outstanding regular Army officers specially selected for this assignment and have special training for their duty of overseeing the Cadets in their charge.) This information is necessary for you to send mail, contact your New Cadet in case of an emergency, and to figure out where your New Cadet will be standing in the oath ceremony held in the afternoon. Upper-class Cadets will be available to answer questions.

The note card that you receive at the tables will list your New Cadet's name and their Beast Company. The card is intended to give you that information and is not always written in the format that must be used to address mail to New Cadets during Beast. Look at **Section 9** of this Handbook to see how to address letters and packages during Beast and after.

There will be a US Post Office table where you can buy stationery, stamps, postcards, and mail letters and postcards. **Address and mail the card** that you brought from home or bought at the US Post Office table. Remember to use only white envelopes – you don't want to bring extra attention to your New Cadet because that may lead to your New Cadet being "dropped" to do push-ups.

Once you have your New Cadet's address, go back upstairs to the Ballroom on the second floor where you will find exhibits about goods and services available to you and your New Cadet. Take your time to see everything. You will have plenty of time before the swearing-in ceremony. That's good because there will be lines everywhere you go on R-Day ... welcome to the Army world of "Hurry up and wait."

Next, stop by the **WPPCI** (West Point Parents Club of Illinois) table to say "hello." Join the Club if you haven't already done so. This table will be staffed with parents who are there to help you during R-Day.

Gift Shops – USMA-related gift shops will have selected merchandise available for sale. This is where you can purchase **the large felt USMA Class of 2015 flag**. You may want to purchase one for home or office or store it for later use by your graduated Cadet. This item may sell out early in the day. Note that vendors do not usually offer custom, class-specific items after R-Day.

You can also buy a **tote bag and T-shirt** with names of all the New Cadets of the **2015 class** – these items are in big demand and usually run out of stock early in the morning. If they run out of stock, you may be able to place an order (not guaranteed). If you can place an order, the item will usually be delivered to your house by October. The bags and T-shirt are items that your New Cadet may value after graduation from West Point. They also make good gifts for family members, too.

Army Athletic Association – You will have a chance to **purchase football tickets** for the upcoming season. Tickets for the games can be purchased individually or for the season. **Army-Navy tickets need to be ordered separately**. There is a small cost savings for a season ticket over single game tickets. Season tickets, however, include a parking pass allowing you to tailgate in a parking lot within walking distance of the stadium. Deadlines for purchasing tickets are shown on the ticket application. You are allowed to purchase eight tickets. **On R-Day only**, a parent can order tickets allowing you to sit with your Cadet. After R-Day, your Cadet will have to purchase the tickets if you want to sit together. In either case, the tickets will arrive shortly before the first game. Admission to all sports events is free for Cadets. Check out www.goarmysports.com or call 877-TIX-ARMY.

Boodle Box Companies - sign up at one of the many booths that offer **boodle (treats) boxes** for delivery to your Cadet during Re-Orgy Week. (Note that "Re-Orgy" is pronounced as "Re-Orghee" where the 'g' is a hard 'g' sound as in "good.") You can also bring a boodle box with you on A-Day filled with your New Cadet's favorite snacks. The companies represented have nice boxes to fit into your Cadet's closet. Boodle companies can send monthly refills or you can send your own.

Academy Photo - this booth explains the **photo and video services available to the Cadets**. The Beast Video will be on display and is highly recommended. You can purchase it on R-Day and it will be delivered after Beast. Don't forget to ask about the R-Day Presentations & Oath video. Full dress pictures are taken of your Cadet during the start of the academic year, and proofs will arrive in October, so that you can order and receive the pictures for the holidays. If you miss this exhibit, don't worry, as information will be mailed home to each Cadet's family explaining all of the services/goods. You can also visit <http://www.academyphoto.com/>.

Banks - Local banks may have representatives to discuss opening accounts and the services they offer. Note that your Cadet will have told West Point about a bank account (most likely in Illinois) in which to direct-deposit their pay checks. Cadets who have opened an Illinois bank account may also want to establish a “cash account.” This will probably be done after A-Day since they may be a little too stressed during Beast. Accounts can be opened at the Pentagon Federal Credit Union (<https://www.penfed.org/index.asp>) (PenFed) or at USAA (www.usaa.com). This account can be used to get an ATM card for access to cash throughout their four years at West Point. Also, using Illinois banks may become problematic once your Cadet graduates and is frequently relocated. However, USAA and PenFed work closely with the military and their services are normally quite convenient.

PenFed has a branch on post. USAA is opening a new office in Highland Falls near the Thayer Gate. ATMs are located at various places on post, including Washington Hall and the PX. USAA reimburses any ATM fees incurred at most ATMs in the country up to \$15/month. PenFed lets account holders use PenFed ATMs free of charge.

On-line banking is also an extremely effective way to get money to your Cadet. If the account you set up is joint, then you as a parent can add money to it from home, and your Cadet can withdraw wherever and whenever needed. USAA offers postage paid deposit envelopes and next-day, free overnighting via UPS. These accounts should also accept electronic transfers from other banks.

Treasurer’s office representative MAY be available to discuss Cadets’ accounts.

1.6 Places to Eat On Post for R-Day

Ike’s Riverside Cafe – Cafeteria/lounge on the 2nd floor of Eisenhower Hall – West Point’s “student center.” It is where informal Friday and Saturday night Hops (dances) take place for the Cadets. Both a full and continental breakfast will be served here until 10:30 am on R-Day.

Benny’s Lounge to the right of Eisenhower Hall at the main entrance level will serve a buffet.

The West Point Club near Cullum Hall also offers a buffet.

Deli In Grant Hall, near the Admissions Office, is normally “upper-class only,” and will be available to your Cadet in one year. It is open to parents on R-Day, and is about a 10- minute walk from Ike Hall.

Note that you will have to pay to eat at any of these places,

1.7 West Point Association of Graduates

The AOG will be hosting the Annual Parents Welcome Lounge in Ike’s Café on the second level of Ike Hall (near the entrance). There will be free refreshments for parents and a special slide show about Cadet activities. The Lounge will be open from 6:30 AM to 10:30 AM. In the past, they had members of the 50 Year Affiliation Program in the Lounge. For the Class of 2015, these would be members of the West Point Class of 1965. Please drop by.

The AOG gift shop will also be open during the day, and is along the Parents shuttle bus route.

A new event sponsored by the AOG this year is the BBQ Lunch at Herbert Hall from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Please register at https://www.westpointaog.org/netcommunity/rday_barbeque.

1.8 Presentations

In the afternoon, presentations on various aspects of the **Cadet Basic Training experience** will be given in the Cadet Mess of Washington Hall (which is not air conditioned nor is it wheelchair accessible through the front entrance). A satellite location will be available in Eisenhower Hall that is air conditioned and wheelchair accessible.

These presentations are EXCELLENT and provide an opportunity to hear from and question the Superintendent (Lieutenant General - 3-star), Commandant (Brigadier General - 1-star), Dean (Brigadier General), and other senior officers about items of concern. When asking questions, remember not to speak in specifics about your New Cadet – do not draw unnecessary attention to them by using their name. These sessions provide an excellent opportunity to get an overview of your New Cadet's life in the coming months. The briefings will conclude in plenty of time for the Oath Ceremony.

1.9 The Oath Ceremony

This is the **highlight of R-Day**. New Cadets, in white-over-gray uniform, exit from the sally ports in Washington Hall and march on to **The Plain** – the field in front of Washington Hall. The sight should be awesome – a definite Kleenex moment! A map of the ceremony will be part of the R-Day handout you will receive when you arrive. By knowing your Cadet's company and platoon (on the card you received earlier in the day), you can locate your Cadet's group. Each platoon, led by the Cadre, has a guidon (flag) with the company/platoon designation on it. The companies march in alphabetic company order. Thus, the sequence is A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, B2 ... H3, H4. The platoons are "sized" with the tallest New Cadet located at the front and closest to the review stand and the shortest New Cadet in the back and farthest from the review stand.

Bring binoculars, since all the New Cadets look alike in their uniforms and matching haircuts. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to recognize your New Cadet ("Where's Waldo?"). Although you are close enough to take pictures, if you have a telephoto lens for your camera, you may want to have it with you. Remember, though, the goal is to NOT draw attention to your New Cadet, so DO NOT call out their name.

1.10 One Last Chance

Although most parents leave after the Oath Ceremony, there is one unofficial opportunity to possibly see your New Cadet. It is at the Evening Retreat (flag lowering) Ceremony, which is held after dinner in the triangle in front of Washington Hall. Remember: if you see your New Cadet, DO NOT call out their name.

1.11 R-Day Closing Remarks

Your New Cadet's return to Washington Hall's sally port marks the last time you will see him/her for seven weeks. The drastic change of status, from "top of the class" high school graduate to "low person on the totem pole" presents a major adjustment for your New Cadet. And your New Cadet will be

isolated from you except for the very occasional phone calls. Families react differently to these changes, and WPPCI can help you understand and adjust to the new circumstances. The key is contact with parents of the upper-class Cadets. We have all been through this and are here to help. Information, advice, and just a sounding board discussion can go a long way toward dispelling concerns. Call your mentor family or a parent from the Yearling Class of **2014**. Discussing your concerns with someone who has recently gone through the same experience will help tremendously.

You can best help your New Cadet by sending positive, encouraging mail often. Even just mailing cartoon clippings can bring a smile. Many Cadets say the mail they received during Beast is the one thing that kept them going through the summer. Have friends and family send mail also. It makes a big difference. I have heard of a football player type cadet who broke down crying one day after not finding any mail during the first week of Beast.

There is a specific set of rules to send mail during Beast so that your New Cadet will not have to do push-ups. Please see **Section 9** on Communicating with Your Cadet. But do not get too hung up on these rules. The most important thing to remember is that your Cadet will want to receive mail and lots of it. They will have to do plenty of push-ups regardless – the Cadre will see to that!

2. Cadet Basic Training (CBT)

CBT (informally known as Beast Barracks or Beast) begins on R-Day. Within two hours of arrival, New Cadets report to the "Cadet in the Red Sash" for in-processing instructions, where the practiced phrase mentioned earlier will come in very handy. In just eight short hours, the Cadre and West Point personnel (military and civilian) will in-process approximately 1300 New Cadets, who will receive vaccinations, gear, and clothing. They will begin to learn to stand, march, and behave like a West Point Cadet. The day concludes with the New Cadets Passing in Review and giving the Cadet Oath.

New Cadets start their day at 0530 hours (5:30 AM) with physical conditioning (stretching, running, close quarters combat, and conditioning road marches). The first five days also include further in-processing, Sports Orientation, and a tour of West Point. It is a busy first week. This training orients New Cadets and introduces them to general military instruction.

The remaining weeks of Beast include:

- Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Training (NBC)
- Mountaineering
- General Military Subjects
- Warrior Competition
- Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM)
- Individual Tactics And Techniques
- Squad Tactics And Techniques
- Hand Grenades
- Leader Reaction Course (LRC)
- Confidence Obstacle Course W/ Squad Miles
- Individual Proficiency Training
- 1st Aid Training

By the end of Beast, New Cadets will have completed several 3-mile, 6-mile, and 8-mile road marches with full equipment to prepare them for the 12-mile road march out to Camp Buckner and a 15-mile March Back.

3. March Back

The New Cadets make a 15-mile march from Camp Buckner to West Point, signifying the end of six weeks of Beast that began on R-Day. The New Cadets march into West Point through Washington Gate. They stay on Washington Road until they pass the Reviewing Party in front of the Superintendent's (Supe's) Quarters.

They are timed out so that the first New Cadets pass the reviewing party at a precise time that is published in advance so that all will know. Check www.west-point.org and www.usma.edu for this information. The best place to observe the march is from the sidewalk of Washington Road as near to the Supe's Quarters as possible. The first company in is the Honor Company that did the best during Beast. After that, the companies will march alphabetically. And, as usual, within a company the tallest will be in the front closest to the review stand, and the shortest will be in the back and farthest from the review stand. You can find your New Cadet's company by looking at the guidon (company flag) that the lead Cadet is carrying.

It is an incredible sight to watch them march back in their uniforms carrying their rucksacks and rifles. You may want to have a brightly colored sign to hold up as they pass by. Have a previously agreed-upon color and word/phrase that they will know to look for (such as a pet's name, nickname or city that cannot be traced back to them – do not use the New Cadet's actual name). They are not allowed to talk or to turn their heads, but they can scan the blur of faces on the sidewalk and spot you by looking for your sign. You may even be lucky enough to have them spot you and give a big smile. Remember not to call out your New Cadet by name. The march concludes with all the New Cadets and Cadre assembled in formation in front of Washington Hall (lots of photo ops – just remember, DO NOT call out their names) before going inside for lunch. After lunch, they leave to set up their room and meet the rest of the upper-class Cadets for the first time.

4. Reorganization (Re-Orgy) Week

This is arguably the toughest time to date as New Cadets. The rest of the upper-class Cadets have just returned from their summer assignments and the ratio of New Cadets to upper-class Cadets shifts from 3:1 to 1:3. Since classes haven't started yet, the upper-class Cadets have plenty of time to "pay attention" to the Plebes. This can be extremely stressful for the Plebes. Traditionally this time period includes the entire week between the Marchback and A-Day. The academic year begins on **Monday, August 15**. During this time they will move their belongings into the room they will occupy for

the first semester. Plebes will be two or three to one room. They are extremely busy getting their books, computers, more uniforms, and reciting "knowledge" to upper-class Cadets. Each Plebe is assigned a Team Leader (a sophomore/yearling/yuk) who will help them throughout this time and the rest of the semester. They may have time to make phone calls at night. One of the happiest days of the New Cadet's life is probably when they receive their computers and are once-again connected to the outside world.

During this week it is important to **obtain your New Cadet's Academic Company assignment**. You will need this to find them during the A-Day parade. Sometime this week, you will also want to identify a place to meet your Cadet after the A-Day parade.

5. Acceptance Day (A-Day)

The A-Day parade marks the formal integration of the New Cadets into the Corps of Cadets. Their "Basic Training" is complete and the academic work is about to start. In a very impressive ceremony, the New Cadets arrive at the grandstand side of The Plain in their newly assigned Academic companies (not their summer Beast companies). They turn and face the Corps of Cadets (away from the grandstands). They march forward towards the Corps of Cadets who open ranks and accept them into the formation — it is a real goose bump moment!! The parade is normally in the morning and your Cadet (they transitioned from New Cadet to Cadet when they were accepted into the Corps of Cadets) will be allowed to visit with you afterward. After the parade, the Plebes are frequently delayed before being released. But don't worry, your Cadet will eventually be at the appointed meeting spot. **Be sure to agree upon a meeting spot prior to A-Day.**

Once you meet up with your Cadet, he/she will want to eat, talk, and sleep (mostly sleep)! Most restaurants in the area don't take reservations but work on a "first come" basis. You should remember that the Plebes will be restricted to the Walking Privileges area and cannot go beyond its bounds.

When Cadets have Walking Privileges, they can leave West Point but they have a very short tether. Basically, the Cadets can go to Highland Falls and Fort Montgomery, but not up to Newburgh, Windsor, or New Windsor, nor down to Nyack, Nanuet, the Palisades Mall, etc. While your Cadet may well fall asleep in your hotel room, the Cadet must return to post by a specified time. There are no overnights when taking Walking Privileges.

In 2009, the Plebes were granted extended Walking Privileges for A-Day. Even if your hotel was not within the normal Walking Privileges area, you were allowed to take your Plebe directly to your hotel (within a reasonable distance from West Point) with no stops anywhere. However, the Plebe was not allowed to go to any public area unless it was to a restaurant located within the hotel. And, of course, the Plebe must be in uniform whenever outside the hotel room. You can also bring a blanket to spread out on the grass in West Point to have a picnic. If your Cadet wants to bring along a fellow Plebe who doesn't have visiting parents, encourage it. You will be amazed at the conversation that ensues, full of interesting information you might not otherwise extract!

Whether you and your Cadet celebrate at a restaurant, in the hotel, or on the grounds with a picnic, A-Day marks the end of Beast, and is a welcome milestone for everyone! If you arrive the day before, you may have a chance to see your Cadet practicing for the parade, probably around 5 pm.

6. WPPCI Annual Picnic

On **August 28, 2011** the West Point Parents Club of Illinois will host a picnic at the home of a member who resides at the Great Lakes Naval Base. The picnic will be from 1PM to 4PM. An invitation will be sent later. This is a great opportunity to meet with other parents, share your R-Day stories and pictures, and have your questions answered by parents of upper-class Cadets. Please plan to join us.

7. Academic Year

Classes begin **Monday, August 15**. The Cadet schedule is exhausting, and it may take a while for your Cadet to adjust. They learn to live on very little sleep in order to meet the many demands placed upon them. Be sure to send Boodle (treats) to keep them smiling!

Encourage your Cadet to participate in social and athletic activities since it gives them a fun outlet apart from their academic studies and military duties. A two-hour stint on West Point's ski-slope may seem like a vacation to them! So, too, can attending the various entertainment events brought in for performances at West Point. Religious services can also offer support. Various religious groups meet throughout the week and give the Cadets a chance to relax a little. Teams, clubs, and/or societies can give welcome support to the Cadet.

If you hear your Cadet say he/she is struggling with a class, encourage them to attend AI (Additional Instruction). Instructors are available to help, but Cadets must take the initiative. Cadets also find that it is beneficial to form study groups to prepare for tests.

7.1 Army/Navy Game

Once the Cadets return from Thanksgiving leave, West Point resounds with the cry of "BEAT NAVY"! This year, the football game is scheduled for Saturday, **December 10, in Washington, D.C.** You will receive more information in the newsletters. If you are not planning to attend the game, WPPCI sometimes plans a local get-together to watch the game.

7.2 Term-End Exams (TEES)

As soon as the Army/Navy game is over, Cadets focus on TEEs. Just like any college student, Cadets enjoy a little encouragement in the form of a care package (boodle). Communication with your Cadet may decrease at this time as they spend all of their time studying for exams.

7.3 Passes

Plebes are granted one weekend pass each semester, although they may earn additional passes for jobs well done. For example, every Plebe in the Honor Company earns an additional pass for the Fall

semester. Honor Company is the company that did the best during Beast. A pass allows your Cadet to leave West Point after his/her final duty, to return by Sunday night Formation.

Many Plebes in the past chose to use their pass over Labor Day weekend. They have gone through a rough summer, and many want to return home for a quiet weekend. Some Cadets prefer to have family members come and visit them. Cadets are not usually granted passes on home football weekends, but since the 2011 Labor Day weekend football game is an away game, the **Labor Day weekend can be a pass weekend this year**. Cadets will be given **Columbus Day and Veteran's Day off in 2011** and so some Cadets may choose one of these weekends for their pass weekend.

7.4 Thanksgiving/Christmas Leave

A pass is not needed to go on these planned Leaves such as Thanksgiving leave and Christmas leave. Most Cadets return home for the holidays. They will enjoy being able to visit with friends and family, and of course, catching up on sleep! Watch for deals on airfare and book as soon as your Cadet has given you their release time. Buses are available to bring Cadets to and from Stewart, Newark, LaGuardia, and JFK airports.

7.5 All-Academy Ball

The WPPCI combines with Parent Clubs from the other four Academies (Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine) to host an elegant All Academy Ball. This event will be held on **December 29, 2011** at the Westin Hotel in Lombard. Be sure your Cadet brings home the full-dress uniform (including shoes and white gloves) for this spectacular indoor evening. Female Cadets may wear their dress mess uniform. You must be a WPPCI member in order to be invited. Watch for details in the WPPCI newsletter, in your email, and on the club website.

7.6 Plebe Parent Weekend (PPW)

Plebe Parent Weekend (PPW) takes place **March 9 – 11 of 2012**. If you can only attend one activity at West Point this year, this is the one. You will have the opportunity to see your Cadet's room (there are only two times in your Cadet's career at West Point that you can see their room — PPW and Graduation), meet instructors and TACs, go on a tour of the Superintendent's Quarters, the Uniform Factory, and purchase the ever-popular black Cadet Parka. Sometime (probably) in February, you will receive official information and a schedule of events. Make your hotel reservations early, as this is a very popular event.

The most elegant affair of the weekend is the Banquet and Hop (Cadet dances are called Hops) where Cadets are dressed in full dress gray and guests wear formal attire. You and your Cadet will go through the Commandant's Reception line (mandatory for the Cadets) and also have the opportunity for an optional family picture taken by Academy Photo (long lines but worth it when you get the picture in the mail). Even in formal attire, guests are advised to wear comfortable shoes, as there is a lot of standing and walking involved. You may want to bring bubble wrap to wrap the commemorative stemware you will receive at the Banquet. If you do not want to miss any activities, you should arrive on Friday.

The Cadets have Walking Privileges all weekend, so you can go back to your hotel room to visit if it is within Walking Privileges. The Class of 2013 was given extended Walking Privileges during PPW.

7.7 Promotion

Promotion for the **2015** class takes place during Graduation week in May **2012**. Promotion is the point in time when a Plebe (Fourth Class Cadet) is promoted from Cadet Private to Cadet Private First Class. Promotion, however, has a much deeper meaning than this. Promotion is a rite of passage. It is the moment in time when a Plebe ceases to be part of just his own Fourth Class, subject to constant correction from upper-class Cadets and becomes a full member of the Corps of Cadets.

8. Class of 2015 – Plebe Year at a Glance

8.1 June

Attend the West Point Parents Club's **June 5** meeting at Cantigny. Our Cadet/Cadet-parent panels will speak on various aspects of Plebe year at West Point. This is a welcoming party for the New Cadet Candidates and their families.

Join the West Point Parents Club of Illinois. Annual dues are \$35.00, which includes name tags.

Make travel and hotel reservations for R-Day. Think about hotel reservations for March Back, A-Day, and Plebe Parent Weekend.

Have an "upbeat" card (in a white envelope) ready to put in the mail upon receipt of your New Cadet's address at R-day.

If you're not going to West Point for R-Day, prepare a letter for your son/daughter and send it as soon as you know his/her address.

Encourage your son/daughter to apply for a major credit card to use in case of emergencies. Cadets can apply through the West Point Credit Union, or through any number of banks via the Internet.

Continue to encourage your son/daughter to RUN, RUN and RUN some more. Push-ups, pull-ups, and sit-ups are also good to do.

Be sure your son/daughter has registered to vote before they leave for R-Day. This is also a good time for your son/daughter to get a passport. Although West Point will make provisions for your Cadet to apply for one during the academic year, spare time will be precious.

Check with your car insurance agent to determine if your Cadet should be removed from the policy or can be moved to part-time driver status.

For men, it is a good idea to get a short haircut before departing for West Point (but not a buzz or crew cut, and definitely NOT a shaved head) to reduce the shock on R-Day. For women, hair must be either up in a bun or cut short enough so it does not touch the shirt collar.

Create a collage of pictures of family and friends and put in a PLASTIC picture frame. An 8x10 display stand can give you two-sided viewing. Laminating the photo collage may also be a good idea.

Get your New Cadet's address card from Eisenhower Hall on R-Day.

8.2 July

Write your New Cadet as often as possible. Humor helps a lot! Marching can be creatively viewed as strolling across a grassy field with your friends while being serenaded! Your letters are also their only contact with the outside world so you might want to put in news tidbits.

Don't expect telephone calls for a while. The New Cadets are usually only allowed one ten-minute phone call (and you will hear someone in the background calling time near the end of the 10 minutes) during each half of Beast (Detail 1 or Detail 2). Generally, your New Cadet can call only when the squad leader gives permission, though this varies from squad to squad. If you have a cell phone available, have your New Cadet call that number. This way you will not miss your New Cadet's call. Be prepared for a very tired and perhaps upset New Cadet. Let your son/daughter do the talking. You do the listening. Remember to be upbeat and positive.

On **Sunday, July 17**, between Detail 1 and Detail 2, the New Cadets go to their sponsor's house for an Ice Cream Social. During this day, they will have a break from the Cadre, eat, sleep, and also be able to make a more relaxed phone call home with no time limits. You will find, however, that your New Cadet will probably self-impose a time limit so that the other New Cadets can also call their parents. They may call back a second time after all the other New Cadets in the group have used the phone. Remain upbeat — you are their support.

Do NOT send any treats until your Cadet tells you that food packages are allowed. This will be after A-Day.

Keep a pad and pen handy to record requests made by your Cadet. Make notes of items that you intend to discuss with your Cadet. Try to keep any discussion upbeat. Now may not be the best time for worrisome questions about minor items that could distract him/her from major goals.

Prepare yourself for a "downer" communication after the change in leadership for Beast Detail 2. They have all new Cadre and must learn how to respond to a new set of leaders. The Cadre from Detail 1 that they may not have liked may now seem much better in retrospect. Better the devil you know ...

You will receive a second ten-minute phone call in late July or early August. Be prepared for an emotional roller coaster, they are very tired at this point. Listen and always be upbeat.

A word of caution – some New Cadets may choose to call their significant other rather than their parents.

Keep in contact with your mentor family. They understand what you are going through.

On **Saturday July 16**, be sure to meet with other members of WPPCI at OSOT-IL Fundraiser Concert (Rockin' for the Troops 2011) with Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band at Cantigny Parade

Grounds. Go to <http://www.wix.com/osotil/rockin-2011> for concert information. WPPCI specific information regarding this concert will be sent out later.

In July WPPCI will hold a Letter Writing Party to send letters to your Plebes. You can also send letters to other Cadets or military personnel.

8.3 August

Keep sending notes of encouragement and news from home.

You may hear what sounds like the worst from your New Cadet. Remember, you are the outlet for all their frustrations. Most times your New Cadet will feel much better after these phone calls while you will feel worse. Do not hit the panic button if your New Cadet mentions quitting at this point. Be a good listener. Encourage the use of humor to get through tough times. Be positive, be understanding, be encouraging. Don't ask how they like it ... postpone this question for about 20 years!

Reorganization (Re-Orgy) Week is immediately after Beast and the upper-class Cadets have returned to West Point. The ratio is now three upper-class Cadets to each Plebe. They are stressed to the max at this point. Keep sending encouraging mail.

If possible, make arrangements to see the March Back on **August 8** and stay to watch the A-Day parade on Saturday, **August 13**.

If you didn't order a boodle box at R-Day, prepare to send a boodle box (or bring it with you on A-Day). The first box should include an airtight container to hold future food items. Check <http://www.west-point.org/parent/parent-forum/boodle.html> website if you want one of the boodle companies to send one for you.

Send "civilian" clothes if your New Cadet requests them. You might send a favorite pair of running shoes as well.

Encourage frequently. Classes begin creating stress of another type. West Point uses the Thayer method of instruction, which involves study/application first with explanations later. Homework is done before class, not after! It is a unique approach that may create frustration until adjustment is made. Your Cadet will learn the most efficient way to manage time.

Keep in mind the WPPCI picnic on August 28. Information and directions will be sent in a newsletter, email, and posted to the club website.

8.4 September

Your Cadet may be able to use a pass for the Labor Day weekend to come home. This year is particularly good because Army plays Northern Illinois at DeKalb on September 3. Your Cadet can request a Spirit pass to see an away football game. The Cadet can then visit home before and after the football game.

If your Cadet cannot visit home, you may choose to visit West Point. If a choice has to be made between visiting West Point on Labor Day or attending the Plebe Parent Weekend (PPW) in March, PPW may be better because of the variety of activities available for you. When visiting, encourage your Cadet

to bring along a fellow Cadet or two for outings. You may be able to learn a lot more by listening to the Cadets talk to one another as opposed to just asking questions of your own Cadet. Be attuned to your Cadet during visits. Let your Cadet gauge how much they want to do. Do not expect your Cadet to spend every minute with you.

Phone the County Clerk's Office to learn of any upcoming elections and the procedure for requesting an application for an absentee ballot. Cadets are made aware of national elections, but there may be local elections for which the Cadet wants to vote.

Each Cadet is assigned a sponsor for the Academic year. The sponsor is typically an Army officer stationed at West Point. Encourage your Cadet to accept invitations to visit in the homes of their sponsors. This provides a welcome and needed place for some relaxation. Your Cadet can also talk to their sponsor to get advice on matters military or other things in general. A visit with the sponsor usually includes a meal. Therefore, a thank you note from your Cadet is appropriate and always appreciated. Sometimes, a Cadet may go to the home of a friend's sponsor. Please clear the visit with that sponsor unless an open invitation has been extended.

Keep up with the Army football games. All extra-curricular activities play a big part in the Cadet's education experience, however, the football games serve as good conversation starters.

Attending church may be another good outlet for your Cadet. Time for visiting and cookies and doughnuts!

About this time your Cadet has completed one-quarter of the Plebe year.

8.5 October

Encourage your Cadet to join clubs. These clubs frequently have weekend field trips that provide the Cadet with an opportunity to "get away." While your Cadet may be close with his roommate(s) or friends he made, a club can provide additional source of support.

Begin making plans for Thanksgiving. Check with your Cadet before making flight arrangements. Schedule flights with ample time for ground transportation as well as unexpected delays.

Discuss with your Cadet the All Academy Ball in **December**. The Chicagoland Parents Clubs of all the service academies jointly sponsor this yearly event.

Plan to attend the WPPCI October meeting. This is a good meeting with lots of good information, a relaxed feeling, and food, too!!

By mid-October, your Cadet has finished one-third of their Plebe year.

8.6 November

Prepare for a Happy Thanksgiving! Let your Cadet's mood dictate your plans. Your Cadet may just want to spend "quiet" time at home. Continue sending notes of encouragement and home news.

Get Christmas gift ideas from your Cadet. Money is always popular.

8.7 December

Attend the Army/Navy football game on **December 10**, or watch it with other WPPCI parents.

Plan for Christmas leave by asking your Cadet for their schedule. When scheduling the return flight, schedule a late morning or an early afternoon arrival so that they can be back at West Point in time for the evening formation. Being late to this formation or missing it can lead to “Hours” – marching back and forth for hours at a time. The Cadets will move to a new room after arriving back at West Point as well as complete homework that is due when class starts. The earlier the arrival, the better prepared the Cadet will be for resuming Cadet activities. Cadets will have new roommates for the second semester.

If you are attending the All-Academy Ball, your Cadet needs to bring their full dress uniform home. Females may choose to wear their dress mess (long skirt) uniform.

Your Cadet has now finished half of their plebe year.

8.8 January

Be aware that this is the beginning of “Gloom Period” – the sky is overcast and gray, it is cold, and they just came back from two weeks of “freedom.” Your Cadet may experience an emotional roller coaster and may start to second-guess their decision to attend West Point. Adjusting to new roommate(s) may also cause additional stress. Keep up the positive encouragement.

Prepare to receive a letter from West Point requesting a donation to the special activities of Cadets. You are NOT required to make a donation or pledge.

Be on the lookout for special airline fares. President’s weekend may be another time that your Cadet wants to take advantage of a pass for a trip home.

Keep up with the correspondence from home. E-mail, letters, cards, boodle!

That leads to the WPPCI Boodle meeting in January. We will be filling boodle boxes with goodies and sending them to the Cadets.

8.9 February

Plebes will be invited to the 100th Night Show. 100 days until the **Class of 2012** graduates.

Everything is gray at this time of year! Keep up the encouraging words and correspondence.

Send boodle – Valentine cookies, chocolate (doesn’t melt in winter), hot pots with soup mix or hot chocolate.

Make travel arrangements for spring leave.

After the first week of February, your Cadet will have completed two-thirds of their Plebe year.

8.10 March

Class of 2015 crest is unveiled.

Attend Plebe Parent Weekend **March 9 – 11**. There are special activities and tours for parents as well as visits to the Cadet Store, Uniform Factory, etc. It is a great weekend with a formal Banquet and a Hop (dance) in the evening. Spring leave for the class of **2015** begins after PPW.

After the first week of March, your Cadet will have completed three-fourths of their Plebe year:

8.11 April

Continue encouragement. Academics are in full swing.

Attend the Sandhurst Competition if your schedule permits. This is a great weekend where West Point companies compete against each other, various ROTC teams from universities, the Royal Military College in Canada, and the British military academy Sandhurst in areas of military maneuvers.

Check with your Cadet for their summer schedules so that you can make summer plans. Cadets must remain at West Point until after graduation exercises on **May 26**. Permission to leave early may (or may not) be granted to attend the high school graduation of a sibling.

Keep up the writing, e-mails and boodle boxes. They are always hungry.

8.12 May

Attend WPPCI Spring Brunch, honoring the families of our graduating Firsties.

Talk with New Cadet Candidates and their parents to assist them with making their transition easier. Send cards/notes of encouragement. Exam time is tough. Send a boodle box to help get your Cadet through those study sessions for exams.

Breathe a sigh of relief – your Cadet has survived Plebe year!

8.13 June

Encourage your Cadet to attend the WPPCI **Class of 2016** Family Orientation if their schedule allows. New Cadet Candidates need the advice that can only come from someone who has just experienced life as a Plebe. It is an important part of the West Point experience for Cadets and parents to pass on their knowledge to the incoming class.

Be aware that your Cadet may be required to take a class in summer school if their academics are not up to par. Don't be discouraged. Your Cadet won't be the first one who's done this and will certainly not be the last.

Be unselfish. Your Cadet may be more eager to spend time with friends than with you.

Going back to Camp Buckner for Cadet Field Training (CFT) is another difficult time and may be a time of inner searching on the part of your Cadet. Support your Cadet in whatever decision he/she makes but, as always, be certain it is for the right reason.

You have survived Plebe year...congratulations on a job well done!!

9. Communicating With Your Cadet

9.1 Mail During Beast

Your mission during Beast is to **write as often as possible** – the letters are their only contact with the outside world. You will receive your New Cadet's Post Office Box number and address during R-Day, or if you are unable to attend, it will be sent to you shortly thereafter. **Write as soon as you have the address.**

During Beast, the bottom line is, don't let your New Cadet suffer from the dreaded "Arctic Air Syndrome" – nothing but cold air in their mailbox! There are stories of New Cadets that break down and cry from the feeling of "abandonment." Send funny cards, letters, post cards, cartoon clippings, local news items!! **But no Boodle** – New Cadets cannot receive packages!! You can share the writing campaign with other family members and friends – just make sure that your New Cadet gets a lot of mail regularly. Send your New Cadet's address to his/her friends. You may want to print out address labels for your Cadet and pass them around to his/her friends.

Mail should contain news from home that is reassuring. Write positive letters and encourage your New Cadet to think in positive terms. Urge your New Cadet not to take the unwanted attention from the Cadre personally, and above all else to **maintain a sense of humor**. Emphasize taking one day at a time, and that the Cadre can make it harder but they can't make it longer!

Urge your New Cadet to attend voluntary functions. Religious or not, he/she may enjoy the free food and fellowship at get-togethers sponsored by various religious organizations. Later in the year, joining clubs will also allow for free trips and time off-post. Beware that anxious postings to Plebe Net (join at www.west-point.org/parent/plebe-net) may make it sound as if large numbers of Plebes are dropping out of West Point, but that's not what really happens. If your New Cadet is really down on West Point, however, please try to have them think rationally about their options. Arrangements to transfer to a school of their liking may take up to six months or more. As time passes, it is quite likely that just thinking about their options will convince them they are already in the best school in the world.

Do not expect many letters from your New Cadet. West Point will instruct your New Cadet to write home on R-Day, but don't expect to hear much after that. They are very busy learning to be soldiers. One creative way to get letters back is to send your New Cadet letters with questions and multiple-choice answers, along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. If you'd like some entertaining clip art and form letters to mail to your Cadet, check out www.west-point.org/parent/parent-forum/letters.html.

Some guidelines when sending mail during Beast:

- Use a plain WHITE envelope (normal card or business size is ok).
- NO writing on the outside of the envelope other than addresses.
- NO stickers on the outside of the envelope other than address labels.
- No perfumed stationery or anything that might prompt Cadre curiosity.

- Plain first class stamp. If you don't have a plain flag stamp send it anyway!!! Getting mail to your Cadet is the most important thing. They will be dropped for push-ups regardless – the Cadre will make sure of that.
- Last name only—NO first name (they cannot use first names in mailing addresses during Beast!).
- Be aware that the Cadre may read postcards out loud – so if you are sending one, you may want to send it inside an envelope.
- No packages unless requested by your New Cadet with the approval of the Cadre. Note that all packages are opened in front of the Cadre.
- No food. The Cadre will eat it, and your New Cadet will never see it since permission will not have been given by the Cadre for the package of food.
- The Cadre does not open letters, so you can write whatever you want, as long as it can't be read through the envelope.
- Include self-addressed, stamped envelopes with your letter to make it easier for your Cadet to write.

Address Beast mail as follows:

NEW CADET (last name)	New Cadet Smith
P.O. BOX # ____ (on address card from R-Day)	P.O. Box 1234
CBT CO. ____ (on address card from R-Day)	CBT CO: H-3
WEST POINT, NY 10997-(PO Box number)	West Point, NY 10997-1234

9.2 Mail After A-Day

After A-Day, letters and packages can be sent by Regular, Priority, or Express United States Postal Service (USPS) mail and should be addressed as follows:

Cadet (First name) (Last name)	("New" has been deleted and first name added)
P.O. Box # _____	(same PO Box as before)
West Point, N.Y. 10997- (PO Box number)	

Non-USPS letters and packages can also be sent via FedEx, UPS, etc. They may also refuse to accept packages because of the PO Box. In that case, some parents have said that replacing "PO Box" with "Room" or "Suite" has worked. These packages are delivered to the Central Guard Room.

Cadet (First Name) (Last Name)
PO Box # ____ Company __ (Include letter and number)
745 Brewerton Road
West Point, N.Y. 10997

Note: Do not send USPS mail to the Central Guard Room. It is not USPS certified for mail handling. It will be returned!

Cadets will keep the same Post Office Box number for all 4 years at the Academy. Your Cadet will be in one company for Beast and most likely in a different company for the academic year. The only time that you will need to address mail with a company designation is if you are sending packages using a non-USPS service like UPS or FEDEX.

9.3 Telephone

During Beast, the only phone calls made will be from your New Cadet to you. You might want to have your New Cadet call your cell phone number since you can carry the cell phone around with you and will not miss his/her phone call. Please be aware that Cadets may be using the Cadre's cell phones during Beast and you may not recognize the number on caller ID. **Always** answer the phone on Ice

Cream Social Day even if you don't recognize the number!! On the phone, encourage your New Cadet to talk. Be prepared with a list of questions if your New Cadet is quiet. Or, it may be that your New Cadet just wants to hear you talk. Use his/her first name as often as possible, as last names are all New Cadets usually hear.

After A-Day, your Cadet will be allowed to use their cell phone. Reception at West Point varies with carrier. Be aware that phone calls from the barracks at West Point frequently show up as "caller unknown." So, again, **always** answer the phone!

9.4 Major Family Emergency During Beast

In case of a major emergency at home, contact the **Red Cross (845) 938-4100**, or your New Cadet's TAC. You will receive the TAC's name and phone number on R-Day. Emergencies are handled through the Red Cross and your New Cadet's TAC. The TAC is the regular Army officer who will assist with arrangements to get your New Cadet home in the event of a death in the family.

Should you call the TAC if you are concerned about your son or daughter during Beast? **NOT** unless it is a **MAJOR** emergency. Remember your New Cadet is in the Army!

9.5 E-Mail/Instant Messaging

Cadets will have access to their computers during Re-Orgy Week and will be given their email address. Email and text are probably the primary means of communication between most parents and their Cadets, especially during Plebe year.

10. Healthcare

Your Cadet is in good hands at West Point and will receive good medical and dental care. West Point has excellent facilities (Keller Hospital), and if a problem is serious they are sent to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C.

If they have an illness that requires they be apart from the other Cadets, they are admitted to the hospital. So don't be too disturbed if the phone rings and your Cadet says "Hi Mom/Dad, I'm in the hospital."

10.1 Medical Care when off-post

Cadets should follow instructions on the medical card that will be issued to them. They can use all military facilities and may use civilian facilities with prior approval. The health plan is TriCare.

11. Boodle

Cadets cannot receive boodle until AFTER A-Day! If you visit your Cadet during A-Day weekend, you will be able to purchase a Boodle container at one of the drugstores in Highland Falls or at the PX. This container can be used to store food throughout the year. Boodle can also be ordered from the following companies:

Love-A-Cadet -- Delivery 845-446-0037 loveaCadet@aol.com info@loveaCadet.com	A Piece of Cake & Company -- Dlvry P. O. Box 97 West Point, New York 10996 (845) 446-5747 pieceofcakeandco@aol.com	Schades Deli Restaurant -- Dlvry 54 Main Street Highland Falls, NY 10928-4016 Phone: (845) 446-2626 schade3@aol.com
Main Street Florist 441 Main Street, Highland Falls, NY 10928 845 446-4749	Cadet Activities Restaurant Eisenhower Hall 845-938-4453: Call for order form Floyd.allen@usma.edu	Ice Cream Shop – Delivery 90 Main Street Highland Falls, NY 10928 845-446-2380
Spectacular Sweets 945-581-3288 http://www.spectacularsweets.com/ shashana@spectacularsweets.com	Cadets, Cakes & Cookies 845-534-0500 Cadetscakesandcookies@yahoo.com	Post Exchange – on post Gift certificates http://www.milexch.com/default_s.aspx
Giftworks 845-534-0500 http://www.shopgiftworks.com/	Cadet Store/Book Store http://www.usma.edu/uscc/dca/stores/academystores.htm 845-938-2121 / 845-938-5193	

12. Traveling To and From West Point

West Point is located just south of Newburgh, NY on the west bank of the Hudson River, about fifty miles north of New York City. The town of Highland Falls is just outside the main gate of West Point. The nearest major highways are Interstate 84 to the north, the New York State Thruway (I-87) to the west, and the Palisades Interstate Parkway to the south. From these highways, Routes 9W and 218 lead to West Point. The following site has great info on visiting West Point <http://www.usma.edu/visiting.asp>.

A way to get perspective on some of the locations you will be seeing from the ground is to use Google Earth.

12.1 Airports

There are several airports in the New York metropolitan area that serve West Point – JFK and LaGuardia airports in New York City (about one and a half hours southeast of West Point), Newark Airport in New Jersey (about one hour and fifteen minutes south of West Point), the Westchester County Airport in White Plains, NY (about forty-five minutes east of West Point), and Stewart Airport in Newburgh, NY (about 1/2 hour north of West Point).

Albany airport is a good alternate for those who will be able to rent a car to get from the airport to West Point but not for Plebes since there is no bus or train service available. It is a longer drive but often less hectic than the New York area. For a Plebe's return to West Point, it is advisable to avoid "last flight in" situations as travel delays may result in late arrival at West Point and possible punishment for the Plebe.

Your Cadet will need transportation to any of the above airports. Sometimes they can get a ride from an upper-class Cadet, but most of the time they will take a bus that West Point charters for major holiday weekends and planned leaves such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and spring leave. GMK (845-429-9290) is the company chosen for the chartered buses. Look for GMK on the left hand side menu at

<http://www.west-point.org/parent/wpp-net/> for travel schedules. The buses are scheduled to leave throughout the day, and the times for leaving West Point for the various airports as well as the times for returning from the various airports will have been approved by the West Point command. Tickets for these buses must be purchased **in advance** with cash or check. It is best to schedule flights that allow a minimum of two hours for your Cadet to travel between the airport and West Point – especially in the winter. Remind your Cadet to listen for announcements or watch their email for the dates and times of bus tickets on sale – usually a week before the corresponding bus runs. Transportation to airports at other times has to be arranged by each individual Cadet.

JFK. LaGuardia (LGA), Newark (EWR) - Buses are scheduled for Leaves and major holidays.

Westchester County (White Plains) Airport (WPN) - Check for availability of GMK buses. You may need to hire a taxi.

Stewart Airport (SWF) - Buses are usually scheduled for Leaves ONLY. Cab fare is about \$30. There are fewer flights going into Stewart, and they are usually more expensive than flying into Newark, but the location makes this a popular airport as it is only a half-hour from West Point.

Airport Taxis

Academy Taxi – Highland Falls 845-446-8294

All Budget Taxi 845-446-2400

There are other taxi/limo services available.

12.2 Driving

Newark Airport to West Point

Take 95N/New Jersey Turnpike North to Exit 18 (Fort Lee, N.J.). DO NOT go across the George Washington Bridge. Follow signs to Palisades Parkway North (first right after the CNN Building). Stay on the Palisades about 40 miles to the Bear Mountain Traffic Circle. Go north on Route 9W to Newburgh/West Point. Take the first West Point exit after passing through Fort Montgomery.

Stewart Airport to West Point

From the terminal turn left to get to the main exit. At the main exit out of Stewart, turn left onto Route 207, which merges with Route 300 at the first traffic light. Continue on Routes 207/300. At the next traffic light Route 207 turns left. Remain on Route 300 for two more traffic lights until it intersects with Routes 32 and 94 at the Five Corners intersection in Vails Gate. Continue on Route 32 to the next traffic light. Turn left toward Cornwall. Enter Route 9W South (right exit before overpass) before entering Cornwall. Take 9W South and follow signs to West Point.

Westchester County Airport to West Point

Take I-684 South to I-287 West. Stay on I-287/I-87 West across the Tappan Zee Bridge to Exit 13, the Palisades Interstate Parkway North. Go north on the Palisades Interstate Parkway until it ends at the Bear Mountain Traffic Circle. Go north on 9W to Newburgh/West Point. Take the first West Point exit after passing through Ft. Montgomery.

Albany Airport to West Point

Albany Airport is north of West Point but is another option for traveling to the Academy. A few of our members have flown into this airport and enjoyed the convenience of a smaller airport. It's a straight drive down I-87 to Newburgh and then to West Point. It's a little over two hours but a more relaxed drive than from the south.

For most up-to-date maps, you should check on-line map sites. Also note that your Illinois I-PASS should work in NY and NJ or wherever you see E-ZPass. I-PASS also works in Indiana and Ohio. If you drive to West Point, your I-PASS should work on all toll roads en route.

13. Lodging

The earlier you make your hotel reservations for any trip to West Point, the more choices you will have, especially for those hotels that are close to West Point. Lodging for R-Day, A-Day, and Plebe Parent Weekend should be made as early as the hotels will accept reservations for hotels close to (within 10 miles) of West Point. Determine your first and second choices and then start calling.

Generally, the West Point area motels within 8 to 10 miles are mostly 1950's or older buildings that for the most part have not been upgraded. There is limited room security, no electronic "keys," no safety chains, and some are even missing deadbolts. Also, most current owners have been there for many years and don't see the need to remodel, especially with a "captive audience." Some exceptions are Thayer Hotel and Holiday Inn Express in Ft. Montgomery.

Rates at the West Point area motels will vary from weekday to weekend, so check the rate prior to making your reservation. You can usually count on the price doubling or more during a home football weekend or for a special occasion like Plebe Parent Weekend. Some require a two-night minimum stay during these special weekends. Many hotels in the West Point area offer AAA, AARP, military, or corporate discounts. Ask for discounts.

If you plan on staying at a motel that you don't have personal knowledge of, ask to see the room before you give them your credit card. You may be pleasantly surprised. Or horrified.

WPPCI has also compiled a list of hotels (**Hotels Near West Point**) with comments from WPPCI members. Please refer to the "**Hotels Near West Point**" list on our website www.wppci.org. Click on "Links" on the left hand side of the home page. The website will have the latest version. Beyond this, the WPPCI feels formally constrained in endorsing any of the various lodging options.

For other hotel information, check out <http://www.orangetourism.org/>, <http://www3.westchestergov.com/>, <http://www.visiontownofhighlands.com/>, <http://www.dutchessny.gov/>, and <http://www.visitputnam.org/>. Also look for reviews at sites such as Google.com and Hotels.com.

14. Restaurants and Dining

Listed here are some local restaurants and those in nearby towns. Please also refer to “**Restaurants Near West Point**” with comments from WPPCI members. The restaurant list can be found on our website www.wppci.org. Click on “Links” on the left hand side of the home page. The website will have the latest version.

14.1 On Post

Hotel Thayer
845 446-4731

Comments: For Sunday Brunch, will likely need to make reservations. Cadets in uniform get 1/2 off for Sunday Brunch.

Grant Hall

Comments: West Point’s fast food restaurant for our Cadets.

Eisenhower Hall (Ike’s Riverside Café)

Comments: The Cadet cafeteria with burgers, fries, salads, soft drinks, etc. Very large dining area with an open view of the Hudson River.

Burger King (West Point PX)
845 446-5404

14.2 Highland Falls

Schades
457 Main Street
845-446-2626

Comments: Sandwiches and pizza. Cadet gift certificates available. Open an account for your Cadet with cash or credit card. Your Cadet can place an order, have it delivered, and Schades will let you know when the account is running low.

Dong Fong
78 Main Street
845-446-0763

Comments: Full Chinese menu, all-you-can-eat buffet. Delivers to Cadets.

Hacienda
145 Main Street
845-446-0406

Comments: Mexican restaurant at the far end of Main Street.

Ice Cream Shop
90 Main St
845-446-2380

Comments: Old fashioned ice cream shop – many choices, however limited seating

McDonalds
Main Street
845-446-4935

Comments: Only McDonalds in US that delivers (to Cadets). Gift certificates for weekend.

Old Tyme Dogs & More
421 Main St
845-446-2130

Comments: Cadets love junk food after Beast

Park Restaurant
451 Main Street
845-446-8709
Comments: All meals, good for small groups of four.

Sushi King
323 Main Street
845 446-1458
Comments: fresh sushi bar and deli sandwiches. Caters.

Tony's Pizza
505 Main Street
845-446-4000

West Point Pizza
282 Main Street
845-446-5544

14.3 Cornwall

Painter's Tavern
266 Hudson Street
Cornwall, NY
845 534-2109

14.4 Ft. Montgomery

Barnstormer Barbeque (next to Holiday Inn Express)
1076 Route 9W
Ft. Montgomery, NY
845- 446-0912

14.5 Newburgh

Applebee's
1205 Union Ave (Route 300)
845-567-0910

Banta's Steak & Stein
935 Union Ave / Route 300 (next to Days Inn)
845-564-7678

CB Driscoll's
1400 Union Avenue (Route 300)
845-566-1300
Comments: ribs, seafood, and pasta

Cosimo's on Union
1217 Route 300
845-567-1556
Comments: Italian specialties, brick-oven pizza

Johnny D's Diner
909 Union Ave (Route 300)
New Windsor, NY
845-567-1600
Comments: diner; food & pies

15. Shopping

Wal-Mart SuperCenter

1201 Union Ave, Route 300; Newburgh, NY
845-567-6007

This store is located closed to Interstate 84, Stewart Airport and many of the Newburgh hotels.

Newburgh Mall

1067 Union Ave; Newburgh, NY
(845) 564-9300

<http://www.shopnewburghmall.com/>

Newburgh Mall is at the crossroads of Interstates 84 and 87 at the intersection of Route 300. The center is anchored by Sears, The Bon-Ton, Bed Bath and Beyond and Old Navy.

Palisades Mall

218 to 9W South to Bear Mountain Traffic Circle

Pick up the Palisades Parkway South

Take the Palisades Parkway South to Exit 8E (Route 59 East – Nyack)

Go approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the exit for the Palisades Mall on the right.

In the mall are all kinds of restaurants such as Macaroni Grill, Legal Seafood, Outback Steakhouse, Don Pablos Mexican, Rainforest Café, and a big food court.

The Galleria Mall

2001 South Rd; Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
(845) 297-7600

http://www.poughkeepsiegalleriamall.com/content.asp?contentType=Mall_Info

Directions – The Galleria Mall is located on Route 9, approximately 7 miles north of Exit 13 on Interstate 84 or approximately 5 miles south of the Mid Hudson Bridge.

Stores of interest include: Dick’s Sporting Goods, Best Buy, and Target. Restaurants include Ruby Tuesday’s and Tuscan Bar & Grill and Houlihan’s (opening soon). Regal Cinema is located next to the mall as well as several other fast food restaurants such as Red Lobster and Applebee’s.

Woodbury Commons (upscale outdoors outlet shopping center)

Route 218 to Route 293.

Route 293 to Route 6 West.

Woodbury Commons is on the west side of the New York State Thruway at exit 17 – Harriman.

16. West Point Heritage

Much of West Point’s heritage can be found in books available through your library. Also instructive are entertaining movies about West Point such as “The Long Gray Line” and “The West Point Story.” Useful Army heritage and information can be found in the “Soldiers Almanac,” available free at local Army recruiting offices.

“Alma Mater,” the most beloved of all West Point songs, had its beginning in a very inauspicious manner. In the fall of 1908, Cadet P.S. Reinecke attempted writing a furlough song in an effort to pass some time while walking punishment Hours. Finally, he began to march to the tune of “Treuebeliebe,” an old favorite composed by Kuecken in 1827. Reinecke gradually developed the words into what we know today as the “Alma Mater.”

The song was not sung at the graduation of Reinecke's class in 1911. However, on June 9, 1912, "Alma Mater" was sung at the Baccalaureate Service and took its place as a musical expression of the feelings of every West Pointer toward his alma mater.

16.1 "The Alma Mater" (Song)

Hail, Alma Mater Dear,
To help us be ever near.
Help us thy motto bear
Through all the years.

Let Duty be well performed.
Honor be e'er untarned.
Country be ever armed.
West Point, by thee.

Guide us, thy sons, aright
Teach us by day, by night,
To keep thine honor bright,
For thee to fight.

When we depart from thee,
Serving on land or sea,
May we still loyal be,
West Point, to thee.

And when our work is done,
Our course on earth is run,
May it be said, "Well done,
Be thou at peace."

E'er may that line of gray
Increase from day to day
Live, serve, and die, we pray
West Point, for thee.

16.2 Duty, Honor, Country

Three attributes of paramount importance to a soldier are Duty, Honor, and Country. Each is equally important.

Duty is the sense of obligation that motivates one to do, to the best of his ability, what is expected of him/her in any assigned position or situation.

Col. Sylvanus Thayer, the "father" of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, determined that West Point should produce leaders whose foundation was built on honor, integrated with a strong sense of discipline and excellence of knowledge. Since his day, an Honor Code and System have been fostered by the authorities of the Academy and maintained by the Corps.

Service to country is primary to the professional officer. The Oath of Allegiance that is taken upon entrance to West Point enjoins the Cadets to declare loyalty to the nation. The professional soldier then becomes the guardian of our nation in times of strife or war.

Duty, Honor, Country – together these three words form the motto of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

16.3 Cadet Colors

The significance of the Cadet colors of black, gold, and gray is that they are the colors of the components of gunpowder. Charcoal, sulfur, and saltpeter (potassium nitrate) are black, gold, and gray in color.

16.4 Mascots

Since 1899, mules have served as mascots for the Corps of Cadets. The choice of the mule as a mascot reflects the long-standing usefulness of the animal in military operation – transporting guns, supplies, and ammunition. Strong, hearty, and persevering, the mule is an appropriate symbol for the Corps of Cadets.

At one time, Army's mule roster numbered four, but that total was reduced by one in 1994 when Spartacus was retired in midseason. That promoted 22-year old Ranger, who weighed in at close to 1200 pounds, to the role of elder statesman. Ranger was retired in 1995. Traveler and Trooper joined the "Army Family" during the summer of 1990 and were retired in September 2002. The current mascots are named Raider, Ranger II, and General Scott. You can find more information at <http://www.westpointmwr.com/>.

16.5 "On Brave Old Army Team" (Song)

The Army team's the pride and dream
Of every heart in gray,
The Army line you'll ever find
A terror in the fray;

And when the team is fighting
For the Black and Gray and Gold,
We're always near with song and cheer
And this is the tale we're told;

The Army team . . .
(Band accompaniment)
(Whistle)
On, brave old Army team,
On to the fray;

Fight on to victory,
For that's the fearless Army way.

17. Interesting Links

Our website www.wppci.org offers many links (e.g., <http://www.usma.edu/>, aka <http://www.usma.army.mil/>), and you are encouraged to explore them, especially www.west-point.org, the entry-way to a number of helpful services, including Plebe Net (join at <http://www.west-point.org/parent/plebe-net/>) and Parent Forum (<http://www.west-point.org/parent/parent-forum/>). For interesting links for Plebe parents, try www.west-point.org/parent/plebe-net/links.htm. For various list servers see www.west-point.org/lists.

The "Search/Reference" section at www.usma.edu is a very useful tool. Note that the reference to WPS is "West Point School" – the elementary school on post – NOT the United States Military Academy. For a link to valuable West Point Parent Club information, you can also check out www.usma.edu/publicaffairs/club.htm. The local Association of Graduates (AOG) society can be found at www.aogusma.org/soc/chicago. A site that highlights specific Cadet achievements is: www.westpointcadets.org. The following sites relate to USMA sports: <http://www.goarmysports.com/> and <http://army.scout.com/>.

The following sites include West Point-related gift items: www.westpointgiftstore.com, www.dusagiftshop.com, www.shopthepoint.com, www.goarmysports.com, www.thecorpshas.com, www.loveaCadet.com, www.vasily.com, and www.usma.edu/uscc/dca/stores/academystores.htm.

The following sites link to numerous other sites providing military information: www.aogusma.org, www.moaa.org, www.military.com, www.army.mil, and www.army.mil/soldiers, and www.vfw.org. Military items can be found at www.supertrooper.com, www.uscavstore.com, and www.aafes.com. The Military Channel videos can be found at <http://military.discovery.com>. Casual web searches on appropriate keywords will lead you to still more interesting sites.

18. Handbook Comments/Suggestions

Please note that event dates can change year to year. Before making final plans, please confirm with your Cadet. Your Cadet should be the final source of information if dates and times change. Confirm all dates and times with your Cadet prior to making travel plans since your Cadet may be specifically affected. Before making airline reservations at the end of a semester, parents must know their Cadet's individual class and term end examination (TEE) schedules. Individual Cadet TEE schedules will not be adjusted to accommodate transportation requirements.

Aside from this Handbook, another helpful tool for you and your Cadet is the "Parent's Almanac," which should already have been sent to you by West Point.

If you have any recommendations for updating or otherwise improving this Handbook, including resolving any apparent conflict between this Handbook and observed facts or official instructions from West Point, please contact WPPCI through our website, www.wppci.org, where club officer and member contact information is listed. If you need immediate conflict resolution, please contact your mentor family. Mid-year revisions of this Handbook may be posted on our website for WPPCI members. However, in all cases, WPPCI defers to official instructions from West Point, especially those outlined in "Instructions for Candidates Offered Admission."

Finally, WPPCI would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to the long line of Plebe Parent Handbook contributors, past, present, and future.

GO ARMY! BEAT NAVY!!

WPPCI New Cadet Candidate Orientation
June 5, 2011 at Cantigny Park Visitors' Center, 5:00 pm

Disclaimer: The information provided in the WPPCI Plebe Parent Handbook is to be used for informational purposes only. While WPPCI has tried to provide accurate information, there may be inadvertent technical inaccuracies, typographical inaccuracies, and typographical errors, for which we apologize. WPPCI expressly disclaims all liability for the use or interpretation by others of information contained in this handbook or in referenced materials.

