



The United States Military Academy

West Point, New York

Dear Society Members and Friends,

As we prepare to celebrate the 205th birthday of our alma mater, I am struck once again by how extraordinary “The Long Grey Line” is and by the way each class, from the most senior among us to the most junior, has sacrificed and prevailed in the name of duty and honor and country. There have been a number of funerals conducted recently around the United States for members of “The Long Grey Line” killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, one of which was for a young lady I personally recruited to be a cadet. Let’s resolve to be the ones who, even in the face of enormous public opposition to American military involvement in the middle east, keep humanizing for our civilian counterparts the soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines who are serving in harm’s way.

If it’s been a while since you’ve attended a Founder’s Day event, please try to make it to this year’s celebration on March 9th. Our speaker will be Colonel Mike Meese, the director of USMA’s Department of Social Sciences. That department gets involved in many real-world initiatives at the national and international level, so I’m sure Colonel Meese will be interesting and informative about cadets, graduates and our alma mater from a different perspective than we’ve heard in a while. We’re returning to the Albuquerque Country Club for this year’s Founder’s Day celebration, a place that has always welcomed us and served us quite well.

Many of you will be hearing from Jim Hickok soon as he goes about setting up our West Point Leadership Program lunches. Jim graciously accepted the supervisory role over that very worthwhile program when Norm Hubbard stepped down last year after 13 years at the helm. The program does not work without significant support from other members of the society, both in the form of monetary donations and personal involvement at the lunches and in the schools. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the West Point Leadership Program, it is an outreach effort to local high school juniors who have demonstrated leadership in their classrooms, churches, athletic fields, and places of employment. I am a testimonial to the marketing value of the award. I had never heard of West Point before one of my Eldorado classmates won this award in 1974 (yes, we have been conducting the program for over 30 years).

This year’s lunches will be held on March 7th, 8th, 20th and 22nd at the Sheraton Uptown, corner of Louisiana and Menaul. They will run from 11:30am to 1:30pm and we usually host 4 to 5 local schools at a single luncheon. We are adding Moriarty High School to the slate this year, trying to capitalize on its Army JROTC program. If you would like to participate in the West Point Leadership Program, whether just attending lunches or establishing a long term relationship with one particular school, please contact Jim Hickok at: jhickok@ntc.doe.gov or W: 845-5170x200/H: 275-3910.

West Point Society of New Mexico

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We had a good time with the Navy Alumni Association at this year's Army-Navy game party even given being handed our fifth straight defeat. The two alumni groups completely filled the party room at the Fox and Hound Pub and we actually had three grads (2 Navy, 1 Army) who were in Albuquerque that weekend on business who found us totally by accident. I think the Army grads in attendance were a more diverse group than the Navy alums in terms of representation across the class years and decades. The camaraderie among our group was excellent, in spite of the span of ages from 25 to 85. This year we also had several parents of recent graduates attend our Army-Navy gathering, in large part to welcome Andy Chavez, class of 2002, back home after his duty-related injuries and subsequent medical retirement.

I recently attended the winter holiday reception hosted each year by the Parents' Clubs of all five service academies. It was in the rotunda of the Marriott Pyramid hotel and very well attended by our local contingent of cadets and midshipmen. This is another outreach event for potential service academy candidates from New Mexico so if you know of a young person who wants to talk, in person, with someone currently attending one of the service academies, keep this annual All-Academy holiday gathering in mind. Our West Point cadets in attendance were a little peeved that their Navy counterparts seemed to get more microphone time, especially since they used that time to speak about Navy's upcoming bowl game (which Navy lost). Next year the Army Parents' club is the host organization so things should be different. One note of significance: Kurt Bujewski, La Cueva 2006, USMA 2010, a plebe, is now the voice of Army football on WKDT – the cadet radio station.

We are still in the hunt for someone to take over the helm of the annual society golf tournament. I know of several very energetic new arrivals to the West Point Society of New Mexico who could be enlisted to help with the golf tournament – if one of our “more seasoned” society members would take on the commander role. Maybe we could join forces with the Navy alums for a joint tourney.

A reminder to all of you – we do have a society webpage where I post all of the documents which are sent out in snail mail and other pertinent news items. The URL for our society webpage is: www.west-point.org/society/wps-nm. We also have an email distribution list serving the West Point Society of New Mexico. When I receive email items from the “mother ship”, I pass them along using the WPS of NM email list. I have changed the permissions so reply emails do not go to the entire list. I realize some of you got inundated with emails of this nature several months back. Hopefully that will not happen again.

Last year I formulated several action items for myself as pertaining to the West Point Society of New Mexico. Jim Hickok's willingness to step into Norm's shoes on the West Point Leadership Program took care of item number one on my list. Now the laser range finder is aimed at someone to get us out on the golf course at least once a year, preferably not in January. After that we'll try for someone to organize a summer gathering of some sort, possibly a picnic. Anyone who would like to put together some mini-gatherings, say a La Luz trail hike, a Jemez Hot Springs dip, or a Bosque bike ride, let me know. We are open to ideas. Also, in light of all this snow we've had lately, I'd like to offer the strong back and industrious spirit of my 13-year-old son for any of you who might need help clearing a safe walkway out of your front door. If you can't find some willing kid in your own neighborhood to man the shovel, call Jake. I'll bring him to you and we only charge a hot chocolate and a cookie.

I think that wraps things up for right now. See you at Founder's Day. Go Army!
Donna Alesch White