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Marchback Stalwarts Return

As usual, leave it to **Pres Miller** to carry the day by chronicling this year's Marchback pictures of classmates (none of whom were Rookies) who participated. From what I could make out from the almost score of photos, the overall event was much the same after last year's break: judging from moderately flat tummies, our marching reps did some prepping prior to the event. The march started at Camp Buckner (minus talent show), there was time for cadet mingling with grads along the route of march which was on dirt trails and hard top, and (judging from no wet or sweat stains on shirts) it was a good day for a walk in the woods. A new event (to me) at the golf course was the ringing of a bell by each cadet – not sure what it signified but I'm sure a rounds of drinks was not it...



[Photo #1 – “After the customary pre-marchback meal: Dale & Joyce Hansen, Jerry Holderness, Dave & Suzanne Martin, Tony & Linda Ambrose, Pres & Clem Miller, and Craig O’Connor”]



[Photo #2 – “Spruce up time at the ski lodge prior to the spiffy part of the March back: Pres Miller, Craig O’Connor, Tony Ambrose, Jerry Holderness, and Dave Martin”]

Cruden Gathering at West Point for Sharon's Memorial Service

Thanks to Gordon Tillery for contacting **John Cruden** to get permission to share the events at West Point regarding John's beloved bride, Sharon's memorial services and interment. The occasion began with a small family service on Thursday, August 5th. The public memorial service was held in the Friday morning, John reported that this service itself was quite moving where John and his daughters gave the eulogy, which was emotional for each of them. Classmates **Glen Hewitt, Bill Easton, Dick Flanigan, Paul Joseph, Bill Kunzman, John Morris,** and **Tom Margrave** (now an Episcopal priest who lost his own beloved **Marianne** last year). They knew Sharon from the time she was a teenager dating John. Glen, Bill, Dick, Paul, Bill, Tom, and John participated in the service. After the service, the Crudens hosted a reception in the Eisenhower Hall which featured the Hudson River in the large picture windows. Sunday morning, brought another family service at the grave site, and each of the grandchildren spoke. John knew that Sharon was watching, and was probably embarrassed with all of the attention directed at her – but she had to be warmed by the obvious love and affection of the participants. John is still struggling with the all too sudden loss, but this memorial event was helpful.

Bill & Cindy McCauley Celebrate Anniversary

Jim Orahood shared a photo taken of **Bill & Cindy McCauley** at their silver wedding anniversary dinner at a favorite restaurant on Key West. They live in Miami and met at the law firm of which they were both a part. They are both accomplished ball room dancers and spend a lot of time in Key West dancing and enjoying the wonderful cuisine that is there. Jim & Rene enjoy watching them because they radiate their happiness with being together. The Orahoods and McCauleys lived near to each other in Paris for a while and partied back and forth. The McCauleys have excellent French language skills and, while we were staring slack-jawed at the tube long enough to learn how to administer a COVID shot, the McCauleys worked on their Spanish before spending some months living in Madrid during the last year.



[Photo #3 – “Bill & Cindy McCauley at their Silver Anniversary supper prior dancing to the beat in the heat of Key West”

John & Margie Hedley Host Another Great 4th of July Bash

John & Margie Hedley's home was the headquarters of a great 4th of July celebration for their daughter's hubby and in-laws, John's A1 company/classmates **Tom Barnes** and **Ray Rhodes** and their brides (**Bonnie and Mary Jane**), the wayward **Gerards**, and **Henry & Karen**

Riser. In addition to that large gathering (which their lake home fit comfortably), we all also were treated to a local fireworks display and the patriotic music of Rockie Lynne and his band (he also entertained us at our 50th Reunion). As in most areas of the US, Lake Norman experienced above average temps, but the Hedley pool and bow rider kept us comfortable to reminisce, discuss West Point matters, and rejoice in our country's independence.



[Photo #4 – “Dave & Barbara Gerard, Mary Jane & Ray Rhodes, Margie & John Hedley, Bonnie & Tom Barnes, and Karen & Henry Riser rejoicing at Lake Norman”]

Grandpa Dwight Lee Organizes a Serengeti Safari to Further Bond with Grandson

In late July, **Dwight Lee** scooped up his grandson for some family male bonding on the plains of the Serengeti for a photo safari. Needless to say, in true F2 Zoo fashion, Dwight has been an exceptional role model to more than his grandson, but this is a high point. During the trip, they got to see a rare wildebeest water crossing as part of the great migration and all but one (rhino) of the “big five” – lion, elephant, water buffalo, leopard, and rhino (animals known for retaliation if you try to kill them – if you miss, they will kill you back). Safari outings start prior to sun rise and last until after sunset. It wasn't all roughing it – facials, comfortable sleeping accommodations, naps, and fine food were also available



[Photo #5 – “Dwight Lee and his grandson in their Safari Ferrari in search of adventure on the Serengeti”]

Jim & Lucille Swinney Visit Museum to Pay Respects to Dave Sackett

Jim & Lucille Swinney visited the Mercer County, West Virginia War Museum that is “Dedicated to Those Who Served” in the town of Princeton over the 4th of July weekend. The curator, designer, docent, and action guy of the museum is a Korean War vet himself. In the Memorial section they found **Dave Sackett's** tar bucket under a glass dome, his military medals, West Point Diploma, Regular Army Commission, Cadet uniforms and the draft chapter for **John Hedley's** *Grip Hands* project. Most of the items were given by Dave's mother, Dora Lee Sackett

to the Museum by her executor. In the corner next to Dave's stuff was an Army Football uniform with "12" on it and items from Gen Westmoreland. The items were donated by a WV benefactor who received them and other memorabilia from USMA after making a significant donation to the Academy. The football stuff was from the 1964 era when Army QB, Rollie Stichweh, beat Roger Staubach's Navy Team in our Plebe Year. The timeline fit with what information they had received from the Academy and donor.



[Photo #6 – “Jim & Lucille Swinney with curator/docent Tony Whitlow in front of Dave Sackett’s display at the West Virginia ‘Those Who Served’ Museum”]

F2 Rallies Around Frank Nader

As reported back in June, **Frank Nader** lost his bride, **Connie**. What was not reported was how company mates from the F2 Zoo rallied around him. **Jim Jennings** and **Jim Swinney** essentially screened his calls and gave Frank whatever alone time he needed to grieve and reassemble his plans for the future. When Jim Swinney informed him that he and **Tom Beierschmitt** would be attending Connie's celebration of life in Minnesota to support him and represent the Zoo at the celebration, Frank (true to form) responded that they must have “drawn the short straws.” Jim stayed straight by ensuring Frank that there were 20 plus guys that were supporting and cared very much about him. To underscore Jim's statement, those 20 guys had dug through their keepsakes for photos of Frank & Connie together and Jim collected them and had bound books prepared, as the Zoo's way of recognizing her. The books were presented to Frank and Connie's kids at the celebration. Uncharacteristically, Frank got a little choked up, collected himself, and said it was a very thoughtful thing for his company mates to do. The books did not contain Connie's obituary, but rather collective recollections including stories and pictures during Zoo mini reunions. Jim and Frank spoke about Frank's car and housing situation. Frank tried to have the social services people get him a new car with the new safety bells and whistles because he was “not a quick as he once was,” but that led them to a discussion about taking away his driver's license. Frank is not ready to pack it in and will fight for his license – for the time being. Since housing to accommodate Frank is limited by a lack of staff to support more clients, Frank plans to stay put for the time being.



[Photo #7 – “Tom Beierschmitt and Jim Swinney flanking Frank Nader at Connie’s Celebration of Life event”]



[Photo #8 – “Tom Beierschmitt, Frank Nader, and Jim Swinney on equal footing at Connie’s Celebration of Life event”]

Chuck Mahan Keeps On Keepin’ On

With all the news about the F2 Zoo in this posting, it may be time to share a Facebook posting about **Chuck Mahan** by his son, Kevin: “War stories. He will not mention any of them. He won’t even wear his “Vietnam Veteran” hat like half of my patients do because that’s asking for attention. He doesn’t care for recognition. He suffers from Parkinson’s disease and dementia but still to this day will not complain and continues to fight. ‘It is what it is, son.’ ‘Just keep moving forward.’ I have yet to meet a better man in this life and doubt I ever will. If there is anything admirable in me, it comes from him. All respect in the world goes to you, sir. If they only knew.”



[Photo #9 – “Chuck Mahan kicking back at the beach last June”]

Dan Adams Is Present for Dan Bunnell's 77th Birthday in Iowa

Dan Adams dropped an email to tactfully inform me that he had moved from Florida to New Orleans over two years ago – a fact that I had overlooked when reporting on his attendance at **Vic Farrugia's** daughter's graduation from high school last month. After the graduation appearance, Dan traveled from New Orleans to Grinnell, Iowa to join **Danny & Vicki Bunnell** to celebrate Danny's 77th birthday. Dan and Danny were F1 company mates all four years and roommates yearling year. This was Dan's third trip to Iowa to visit Danny and coax him to visit The Big Easy and partake in some of the best and most unique food in the US; however, "Buns" continues to resist all efforts.



[Photo #10 – "Birthday boy Danny Bunnell and birthday helper Dan Adams in Iowa – photo courtesy of Vicki Bunnell"]

Tom Pence Keeps Patriotism Going

Tom Pence reported that a couple of months ago, he and **Doris** were looking for something interesting to do for their 53rd wedding anniversary and they recalled the annual motorcycle run in DC over Memorial Day weekend – Rolling Thunder. Continuing with the Eastwood, Keith, and Pence motto, *Don't Let The Old Man In*, he and Doris rode their Spyders from Florida to DC to lend their support. There was a little more rock throwing between the Pentagon and AMVETS this year over the staging area which has for 30+ years provided the assembly area. It was finally resolved to use the old RFK stadium. While it was a small gathering compared to past years of over 100,000 bikes, Tom reports that it was a good feeling to be among patriots who still love this great country. The theme of resolving POW and MIAs still remains with the added emphasis on the high number of veteran/active suicides. On the way up, Tom's nephew, an Air Force SSG at Pope Field (currently hosted by the US Army Fort Bragg Garrison) asked Tom to pin his Master Jump wings on him. Years ago, Tom gave him his Army jump wings (which are prettier!). He pinned his basic wings on him nine years ago at Ft Benning. Always an honor to stay involved! There was no mention of any bloodshed and judging from the smiles during the ceremony, I infer that the Air Force does not condone "blood wings."



[Photo #11 – “Tom Pence pinning Master Jump Wings on his nephew”]



[Photo #12 – “Tom (black helmet) & Doris (white helmet) Pence at this year’s Rolling Thunder rally”]