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Harrelsons Host Two Day Tailgate for Classmates

Elwood Cobey forwarded a photo of most of the classmates and brides **Keith & Jennifer Harrelson** hosted for the Army-Georgia State game in Atlanta. The only classmate couple not in the picture was **Dick & Sandra Bowers** who showed up late due to crowds around their seats and Atlanta traffic. For sure, back in the day, the group frightened any TAC or OC. **Bob Echols** and Woody had a non-aggression pact with their TAC. **Doug Cummings** had his TAC talking to himself just by leaving his “Things To Do Today” list on his desk during AMI: Over through a government; Adopt a child and keep it in the barracks.... During the two day event, there is no doubt lots of old stories were exchanged – with little embellishment...



[Photo # 1 – “Most of the Army-Georgia State classmate contingent at the Harrelson compound: Mary-Lou Cobey, Jo Echols, Doug Cummings and Elwood Cobey in front; Jennifer Harrelson and Joan Cummings in middle; Keith Harrelson, Mike Noonan, and Bob Echols in back”]

NOLA Classmates Survive Ida

While Hurricane Ida was mustering and blustering itself in the Caribbean, three classmates were assessing and making plans of their own. **Dan Adams'** condo and building in the warehouse district had no damage; however, without power, he drove up to Baton Rouge to ride out the storm with at his nephew's digs. Currently, Dan plans to wander around visiting folks until his electricity is restored. **Bob & Sabina Shaw** left New Orleans early the day before Ida was to make landfall – a trip they had planned weeks prior. They landed safely in Portland, Oregon. Shortly after arriving in Portland, Sabina moved on to Pensacola. **Vic Farrugia** and his bride, **Catherine**, elected to stay and are having quite an adventure. They made it through the night of the storm with no problem (except they lost power). They even cooked a full meal with

candlelight – and the help of a little wine. They built their house like a rock. They woke up to a lake around their house which got into the garage but not into the cars. The water receded late in the afternoon and they waded out into the neighborhood to see if there was an exit route and saw cars moving so they knew they could leave – as long as they had gas. The house remained fairly cool overnight but by midday was miserable. There was no electric power in the entire city and wouldn't be back any time soon. The worst part by, far, was having no cell service. They drove to Vic's rentals in the lower garden district — no flooding and decent cell service. After the assessment, they headed to Shreveport (with their dog, a very nervous cat, and all of their fridge and freezer food) to stay with family.



[Photo # 2 – “Vic & Catherine at their home in NOLA the day after Ida’s visit”]



[Photo #3 – “Vic Farrugia showing off his swamp phase Ranger skills by trolling for alligators and snakes the morning after riding through Hurricane Ida in New Orleans”]

Classmates Beat Ida for Some Fishing

Joe Henry reported that less than two weeks prior to Ida, he along with **Jack Bussa** and **Bill Flowers** ventured down to New Orleans for two days of annual red fishing in the Mississippi Delta below Venice. The group also brought along nine other guys including Jack's son, David. The lodging with Fish Intimidator was first class and the included meals of redfish, etouffee, gumbo and shrimp were outstanding. They usually had three folks per boat and a guide. Mornings tended to be dedicated to catching bull redfish (following Washington, DC and Los Angeles rules – catch & release) and the afternoons were spent casting for regular edible redfish from the weeds in the Gulf. Jack snagged a shark which proved exciting – especially the “release” part. They also reeled in their fair share of catfish for the alligators not far from the

Lodge. Anybody interested in joining this group of anglers, contact Joe. No info on the fate of Fish Intimidator.



[Photo # 4 –

“Jack Bussa, Bill Flowers, and Joe Henry showing off their bull reds prior to Ida”]

DC Classmate Couples Dinner – the Usual Success

Gordon Tillery and **Tony Ambrose** reported that **Joe & Pat Guignon** hosted a very nice couples dinner over the Labor Day weekend at the Fairfax Army Navy Country Club – great camaraderie and food. Joe enjoyed it so much that he offered to do it again, perhaps in January 2022. Unfortunately, several “usual suspects” were missed due to Labor Day travel or health issues – **Henry Riser** is suffering from shingles, **Rich Weatherspoon** and **Bob Alexander** were both recovering from recent surgery. **John Keane** reported that **AnneMarie** required a booster vaccine for her immunity system, but had not been able to get one yet. **John Cruden** was not able to attend due to struggles with the tragic accident that resulted in **Sharon’s** all too sudden death. John has commissioned a new bench in Sharon's honor to be placed near the entrance to the new Army museum. The plaque will read “In honor of Sharon Cruden and Dedicated to All Army Wives.” **Mark Spelman**, who lives in Buffalo, New York attended. He was in the area enroute to Pinecrest, North Carolina for golf with Joe and other classmates. Also joining the DC crowd were **Tony & Linda Ambrose** who live in a retirement community in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania; they have a daughter who lives in Annandale. Tony serves on our Class Committee and shamelessly solicited input from the ladies for the upcoming book *Both Sides of the Wall, Vol 4, the Distaff Edition* – which will focus on stories from classmates’ wives. Tony heard from recent and long term wives at the party and encourages the hundreds of spouses – intelligent, articulate and far-from-shy ladies – to put on paper (or into electrons) what they seem happy to discuss in person – how they met their future hubbies, how they and their hubbies continue to serve, and how families have intertwined and fostered continuing friendships. While begging for input, he has found that many wives believe that they have “nothing to say” (as if!) and many classmates are not pushing or even mentioning the idea to their spouses (come on, guys!) The goal is to complete the book before the 55th Reunion in 2023. Now is the time to talk to your best-mate to inspire her to write down observations as an Army wife or the spouse of a USMA ’68 grad. Besides book input begging, Tony also asked for classmates to join the stalwarts for next year's MarchBack (currently scheduled for 7 - 8 AUG 22).



[Photo # 5 – “After 50 years of wedded bliss, Eileen Stroud has moving and interesting stories of sharing adventures with hubby, Bob”]

George Ziots Continues Travels

As reported a couple of months ago, **George Ziots** put his motor home into **Mike & Kathy Grygiel**’s property in Richland, Washington. From there, he proceeded to **Norm Miller**’s lakeside cabin at Lake Shafer, Indiana where he caught up with L2/E4 company mates **Don Davis** and Norm. George then moved on to explore highlights of the mid-west. His plan was to park at the **Gerard** dacha and visit **John Hedley**’s Welcome Home Vets museum and coffee shop prior to moving on to visit with **Ralph & Sandy Tuccillo, Jon & Aj Dodson** and other DC area classmates. However, we got crossways with COVID rules for travelers so George moved on to visit **Denny Johnson**’s brother, and from there they went to Bunkie, Louisiana to pay respects and Denny’s grave site.



[Photo # 6 – “George Ziots with Norm Miller and Don Davis at Norm’s lake house in Indiana”]



[Photo # 7 – “George Ziots with a 155mm towed howitzer in the town square in Marshfield, Missouri. He commanded 155 towed batteries in Vietnam and Alaska”]

Andy & Betty Shaffer Take a (Heat) Break to Fredericksburg, Texas

In an effort to escape Midland, Texas heat and cabin fever, **Andy & Betty Shaffer** went with friends to Fredericksburg for a few days at a Bed & Breakfast that modified itself into a Bed & Picnic brunch thanks to COVID indoor distancing. When in Fredericksburg, visiting wineries is a must – as is taking in the Museum of the Pacific, wild flower fields, and (for Betty) fabric shops. They got home just in time to experience one of the many earthquakes taking place around the Permian Basin.



[Photo # 8 – “You can tell by the smiles that Andy & Betty Shaffer enjoy Fredericksburg, Texas”]

Roommates Honor Pete Paulson

In early August, **Henry Riser** and **Dave Ohle** traveled to Kane Pennsylvania to pay respects to their old roommate, **Pete Paulson** and his family by being present for Pete’s interment at the Paulson Family plot. As happens when classmates congregate, memories are kindled for each other and to assure families that our classmates will live as long as we live and can tell stories.



[Photo # 9 – “Dave Ohle and Henry Riser at the Paulson family plot for Pete Paulson’s interment”]



[Photo # 10 – “A photo taken by Dave Ohle of Henry Riser boosting Les Wright to dismantle an annoying sleep interrupter in New South Barracks”]

Dallens & McKennas Keep Tourism Thriving

In early August **John & Frances Dallen** and **Brian & Karen McKenna** joined a handful of classmate couples to venture outside the USA during the COVID festivities and lockdown of the last year and a half. These folks did it in spades by hooking up with Stanford Travel (3rd for the Dallens and 14th for the McKennas) to tour nearly every notable city, town, museum, cathedral, observatory, five star hotel and restaurant, and penny arcade in Armenia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and France. Space does not allow sharing John’s magnificent blog, but you can reach, read, and see it at <https://dallen.posthaven.com>. You will not see many masks, but you won’t see many people either so social distancing did not seem to be an issue – until a crowded Paris metro which John describes as calmly and politely as anyone can. After reading the Paris blog, **Dick Shipley** observed that the Dallens and McKennas certainly have more patience and maybe Valium than he does. John’s description was expressed in a pretty dire and frustrating manner, but he also but sounded cheery enough. Dick reflected that he, Kathy, Barbara, and I were so fortunate to go when we did – in October 2019. Our memories will never require a mask.



[Photo # 11 – “Frances & John Dallen in Baku, Azerbaijan”]



[Photo # 12 – “Karen & Brian McKenna in Baku, Azerbaijan”]

Wallaces Take Full Advantage of Distancing in France

After reading the Paris portion of John Dallen’s blog **Peter Wallace** sent an email from their summer home in Paunat, France to express his sorrow for what the Dallens and McKenna had to go through. Peter said the **Barbara** had cracked the code on the Health Pass early – life is simple once you have it. They had just gotten back from their first trip to Paris since they got to France at the beginning of July. They too reflected on our time in Paris with the Shipleys in 2019 – cooler and wetter then, but without masks to fully enjoy the Brasserie Lipp. Like we did in Paris, they mostly used taxis and Uber. While in Paris, they linked up with a friend from Pete’s lawyer days and Peter & Barbara showed him some castles in the Loire valley. Now, Peter & Barbara have about two weeks before they return to Tampa where COVID seems much worse than anywhere in France.



[Photo # 13 – “Peter Wallace and Barbara enjoying sunshine and each other in France”]

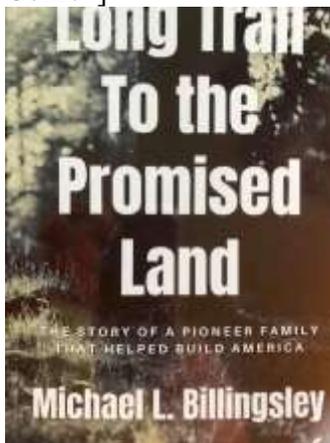
Mike Billingsley Publishes First Book

After nearly fifty years in dentistry, mostly in oral and maxilla facial surgery, **Mike & Diane Billingsley** are now retired in Milton, Georgia – close to their daughter and grandchildren. To stay active, Mike focused on producing a book about his great, great grandparents’ trek from Texas to New Mexico in the Army, fighting Indians, then Confederates in the Civil War, and finally settling in Council Grove, Kansas, earning a living as teamsters and wagon train guides, and helping to open up the West in the last half of the 19th Century. He finally finished it and got it published. It’s title is *Long Trail To The Promised Land: The Story of a Pioneer Family That*

Helped Build America by Michael L. Billingsley and can be found on Amazon Smile and Amazon.com.



[Photo # 14 – “Mike & Diane Billingsley at Lake Como”]



[Photo # 15 – “Mike’s book cover”]

Rolie Olivier Checks In

After dropping an email to shoot the breeze and muse over current events, I asked **Rolie Olivier** what he has been doing to stay busy and out of trouble. Since he rarely – if ever – checks in, he shared the digest version of his 50th Reunion Bio. He has been practicing Law since 1976, both as a lawyer in various corporations and in private practice. He retired from corporate life in 2012 after serving for 3 ½ years as General Counsel and VP of Real Estate for a publicly-traded water utility and service company in Merrimack, New Hampshire. He negotiated the sale of Pennichuck Corporation to the City of Nashua, New Hampshire, the first time a municipal company acquired a publicly traded company in New Hampshire. After retirement, he relocated back to northern New Hampshire, where he was born, and opened his own private law practice in Berlin and Milan, New Hampshire. He has been semi-retired for the past 3 ½ years, when his bride, **Joan**, retired from her position as Superintendent of Schools in Poultney, Vermont. Rolie & Joan grew up together at Cedar Pond in Milan, New Hampshire, and have known one another since Rolie was 10 and she was 8. They were married on Valentine's Day in 2019. They are looking forward to going back to West Point to celebrate our 55th class reunion. They currently live at Cedar Pond in the summer, and Heron Creek Golf and Country Club in North Port, Florida in the winter.



[Photo # 16 – “Joan & Rolie Olivier at their wedding in 2019”]

Bill McCauley Sends “The Rest of the Story”

After **Bill McCauley** read last month’s Notes positing, he thanked **Jim Orahod** for forwarding the McCauley anniversary announcement, but felt we should know a bit more about venturing into life in the Florida Keys. The photo previously posted was taken while Bill & **Cindy** were celebrating their 25th Anniversary in Key West. Not mentioned was that they were dining at Louie’s Backyard, one of the premiere restaurants on the Island. Bill & Cindy have been going to Louie’s since the late 1990s. Some years ago, when talking at a reunion about the Keys with his good friend — and fellow beast squad member — **Sam Brooks** (may he Rest In Peace), Sam mentioned that he had grown up in a house on the water in Key West and thought it might be the house that later became Louie’s. For several years, Bill meant to check out Sam’s story but didn’t get to it until this year, when the McCauleys walked past the Key West public library and they decided to go in. Inside, Bill saw a sign for the “Florida Room” and there Bill got the help of the resident Florida expert, a retired Navy lieutenant commander, who led them to some local property records. Sure enough, Louis’s Backyard is at the same address where the Brooks family resided in the early 1960s, when Sam was still in high school. So, if you go to Key West, enjoy a great meal and the awesome ambiance at Louie’s Backyard and wonder what it must have been like for Sam to have spent his youth in that house.



[Photo # 17 – “Bill McCauley at Louie’s Backyard and Sam Brooks’ adolescent home on Key West”]

Jeff Rogers Reports the LGL Continues to Stiffen and Straighten

After reading the last set of Notes **Jeff Rogers** remembered to forward a photo taken back in June of he & **Carlie** when they attended the change of battalion command ceremony for their son, Bryant (“Brant”) ’94. Shortly after Brant relinquished command of the 3-348 Training Support Battalion which has its headquarters at Camp Blanding, Florida, he was promoted to COL.



[Photo # 18 – “Jeff & Carlie Rogers with their son, Brant and his bride, Zee, at Brant’s change of battalion command ceremony”]