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Picking up the New BSOTW Pace

For those of you who have been in deep quarantine/lockdown, our popular memoir *Both Sides of the Wall* will receive an addition – *BRIDES' SIDE OF THE WALL*. **Tony Ambrose** (aambrose1968@gmail.com) and **Andy Shaffer** (oldgrad68@swbell.net) have received almost a score of stories from a variety of brides who have been with us through thick and thin. Further, since it appears that 2021 is not going to turn into a time of rainbows and unicorns real soon, now is a good time for the rest of our learned ladies to settle down and also chip in. The timeline for input, editing, compilation, and publishing in time for our 55th reunion sets all contributions to be submitted by the end of this coming December – which is also a good time to cement plans for friends family touring in 2022 – while Tony & **Linda** and Andy & **Betty** work on what will surely be a masterpiece – but only with your help.

2020 Brought Strange Adventures

Chuck & Joan Petruska tagged along on a trip partially planned by their oldest daughter to the North Georgia Mountains. As Chuck was checking a map of the area (another 20th century odd undertaking for today), he discovered that they would only be about 45 miles from Dhlonega. Chuck & Joan's 14 year old grandson (both of his grandfathers are veterans) was intrigued by the practice, genuinely interested in what he had heard about Ranger training, and asked if they could go there. So, they did something that Chuck swore that he would never do again -- 52 years after earning his tab, he went back to Ranger School! Visiting day was perfect -- cold and rainy when they pulled up to the gate of Camp Merrill. After a bit of "sweet-talking," "old vet" flag waving, and whining, the guard let them through and directed them to the Camp Headquarters. Chuck swaggered into the orderly room, introduced himself to the CQ, told him that he was a graduate of Ranger Class 6-69 and wanted to show his grandson and his parents where he had trained. After the CQ explained that the School's Museum was closed due to COVID and the group could not get access to any training areas, the Camp Commander came out of his office after hearing Chuck's appeal and was fascinated that he would ever want to return. The CO introduced Chuck to his XO and a civilian trainer, and re-iterated that the Museum was closed, but offered to give Chuck's group a private tour – must have been a really slow day/week. As part of the price of gaining admission for the private tour, all three Ranger cadre members asked for Chuck's memories and -- most importantly – his "take-aways" from his training. The cadre members were very accommodating to all of Chuck's grandson's questions, and took and posed for a gazillion pictures with what appears to be a camera left behind by a Ranger class not too junior to Chuck's. After the tour, Chuck's contingent stopped at the PX for some souvenirs, and departed. Chuck reports that he is sincerely grateful for the decision to return, and

recommends such a visit to any of you who are ever in the area. The fact that they visited during 2020 have added to such a feeling.



[Photo #1 – “Chuck Petruska returns a special Dahlenega mountains hide-away”]



[Photo # 2 – “Chuck Petruska and his grandson at the Camp Merrill Museum”]

Holiday Greetings

As another sign of old graddom, snail mail holiday greeting cards and letters outnumbered missives dispatched through cyberspace – a practice that diminished the number of pictures I could post of folks in masks – which might have allowed me to throw any name or names I chose while showing groups in masks surrounding a birthday cake and one geezer holding up a can of compressed air aimed at the candles – but you’d catch on... Due to lockdowns and quarantines, adventurous class news consisted of events already reported in January and February of 2020 as well as small victories of zooming with family and an occasional social distancing gathering. **Bob Alexander** took advantage of the lockdown and curtailment of the West Point Society of Hampton Roads activities by helping **Tricia** through rehab after her stroke. **Gary & Patti Halstead** felt blessed that a branch of their clan (along with **Jim & Rene Orahoad**) is still attached to the Air Force Academy and the transition of military service. **Bill & Cheryl Jeffries** took 2020 in stride with a dose of the most stressful events in one’s life – death, birth, marriage, house sale, house purchase, cross country move, an out of the blue pandemic requiring quarantine, and the realization that they experienced far more blessings than disappointments. **Charlie & Janet Lieb** have adjusted to their new normal with biking, swimming, walking, golfing puzzles, reading and Clorox as a multi seasonal scent – as well as the discovery that they still like each other. After taking in Nats Spring Training in Florida, **Jack & Bobbi Munson** complained about losing their hearing because the primary word they would yell at each other was “What” through masks that Bobbie made in place of quilts. Despite the 2020 restrictions, **Bob & Carol Shimp** managed a two page Christmas poem in #8 sized font so

that they could squeeze in visits with **Dick & Kathy Shipley** and **GB Weeks**. Their pending trips in which travel agents are “graciously” holding their money until a future date when travel is safe. They are also learning how to share in the experience of Zoom wine blending and tasting in Mendoza, Argentina while in Houston. **Ralph Tuccillo** reports that he has not used his elbows for bumping this much since he quit playing hockey and discovered that, if you wear glasses, hearing aids, and a mask, the ears have become an essential organ. **Sandy** has become a Zoom and Facetime pro in an effort to stay connected with family. Since travel was shut down and remote working has become the 2020 normal, **Rick & Anne Wright** used their time getting their Continuing Care Retirement Community/Army Residence Community cottage constructed the way they wanted in a socially strategic spot, moved in in March, and Rick opted to work at IDA a bit longer while meeting their neighbors.

Hedleys Host a New Year’s Eve (Zoom) Party

In an effort to not allow families and classmates to leave 2020 with a whimper, **John & Margie Hedley** put together a zoom New Year’s Eve gathering starting at 9PM EST. We joined in to bid farewell to John’s & Margie’s daughter and son-in-law since they were young, had stamina, and had others to social distance with – which left us with the Hedleys, **Ray & Mary Jane Rhodes** in Kingwood (just outside of Houston), Texas, **Bob Hensler** in San Antonio, Texas, **Dutch & Megan Hostler** in Oahu, Hawaii, and John’s sister and brother-in-law in the Columbus, Ohio area. Soon, we were joined by **Charlie & Janet Lieb** from their home in DePere (just outside of Green Bay), Wisconsin, and **Dick & Kathy Shipley** also from San Antonio. Given our age demographics, many thought that the gathering would last about an hour – tops. As it turned out, after some Army-Navy and Army-Air Force chortling, small talk about what we’ve all been doing, remembering when, adult beverage show and telling, and who had the largest head gear collection with the funniest stories, the gang in EST got to wish everyone else Happy New Year while the sun was just setting in Hawaii... Talk about social distancing! This group was safe but kept a lot of neighbors up.



[Photo #3 – “New Year’s Eve from the East Coast to Hawaii – (from top left) Gerards, Liebs, Bob Hensler, Rhodes, John Hedley’s sister and brother-in-law, Hostlers, Shipleys, and Hedleys”]

Army-Navy Reflectiions

On the morning of the Army-Navy game, **Terry Wildrick** received the following from one of his daughter's in-laws, whose family is infested with Navy grads:

COVID-19 can't keep them down,
As Navy and Army pound the ground.
We know the Mids won't disappoint,
As they roll over Army at West Point.

Terry responded with:

I'm afraid your poetry only goes so far,
And a win at West Point is too high a bar.
The Mids might think they've escaped and landed in heaven.
But at the end of the day, they'll be three and seven.

As mentioned earlier, **Dave Martin** has made it to every Army-Navy game since 1981 (except for the 1983 game in Pasadena) along with family but, thanks to Mr. Covid-19, this year was a no-go. However, in keeping with family and Army-Navy tradition, all eight of the Martin clan ignored the NJ Governor's ranting, gathered on game day at Dave's & **Suzanne's** home, and held their usual pre-game tailgate with Suzanne's traditional chili and hot chocolate – and some beer. After the game, they also stood for to sing (Second) our Alma Mater. During the game, they (Dave supervised) even did pushups after each score. Traditionally, the family would go to an Italian restaurant for dinner right after the game (the red wine is sometimes more important than in other years). As a fill-in this year, they ordered pizza and pasta takeout. One benefit of watching the game at home is that they can have drinks immediately after the game.



[Photo #4 – “Dave & Suzanne Martin hosting an Army-Navy Tailgate for grandkids and more at their New Jersey home”



[Photo #5 – “Dave Martin ensuring post-game activities are lively”]



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A Benefit to Being Old – Priority to Vaccine

After a year, I'm feeling more and more like a dog – wandering around the house looking for food, being happy to go on a car ride, being told NO if I get too close to strangers, and seeing everyone happy because I've had my shots. In celebration of having shots, **Barbara & I** we got together with **John & Margie Hedley** for Sunday brunch at a favorite local watering hole. We felt that it was safe for the Hedleys to also invite their daughter, Marsha, to come up from Charlotte to join us since she has been in professionally imposed quarantine by her employer (an action that has netted her a Senior Vice Presidency). While this is not the first time we have shared a meal in public with friends or family, it was definitely one of those first fallout times – great to share with old friends that we have already shared and experienced so much with.



[Photo #1 – Marsha Feldman, Margie Hedley, Barbara Gerard, Orca, and John Hedley whooping it up and our first post-vaccination brunch”]

Malcolm Murray Enhances His Photographic Reputation During Lockdown

Malcolm Murray practiced law in Denver, Colorado for 32 years and created his own law firm. After retirement, he pursued his artistic side through photography. Not one to sit around even during the pandemic, he has stepped up by showing his work on regular basis.



[Photo 2 – “Proud photographer Malcolm Murray with

his photos at Core Art Space's "Love...or Something Like It" Exhibit last month in Lakewood, Colorado”]

Annual E-3 Golf Trip Has Change of Venue

Joe Henry reported that, instead of Palm Springs, California, the annual E-3 golf trip – and test to see how much associated brides really loved their hubbies – took place in Naples, Florida around Valentine’s Day. The outbreak of COVID in California was the major factor for the change in location. Noted missing due to various excuses were **Earl Newsome**, **Jess Gatlin** & **Mark Spelman**. As a non-golfer, this was Joe Henry’s first trip and he functioned well as an Uber driver, tourist, food shopper, and breakfast sous chef for **Joe Creeden**. Four of the guys went deep sea fishing one morning and caught about 20 fish each. The leader was Joe Creeden with the mostest and largest – not bad for a beginner. As for golf, they played on a daily basis at several courses in the Naples and Marco Island area (Sunday - Saturday). **Jack Bussa** did a tremendous job coordinating the golf courses, a place to stay, and the various restaurants for evening meals. He also gave the other guys an update on **Joe Mance’s** battle with lung cancer – he and **Rebecca** need our prayers. **Gordy Zophy** won the most skins (proof that a high handicapper can fleece the entire golf world), everyone had sunburns, improvement was minimal, and political discussions were limited. Next year intentions may result in February in Palm Springs and May in Naples.



[Photo #3 – “Most of the E-3 Naples golfers: Joe Henry, Joe Guignon, Jack Bussa, Bill Flowers, Joe Creeden, Gordon Zophy, and Chuck Jones”]

Another Excellent DC Area Classmate Zoom Meeting

On February 19, **Gordon Tillery** reported another excellent Zoom meeting with around 40 classmates participating which included members of the '68 Class Standing Committee for continued discussions on the Cadet Honor System. The last DC area’s classmate REAL area luncheon was on Feb 21, 2020, at Portofino’s. Last February’s meeting opened with **John Hathaway** sharing some of his life (and near death) experiences. I believe that John is the only classmate who served 30 years in the active Army, retired, and then was recalled to active duty for a 31st year. As a goat Infantryman, he was sort-of vindicated when the Army assigned Engineers as his alternate specialty! In addition to serving in six infantry battalions, one of John’s engineering posts was WallaWalla, Wasington (which got **Terry Wong’s** interest, as Terry lives out that way). The meeting transitioned to COL (Ret) Scott Halstead, **Gary’s** and **Patti’s** son and **Greg Camp’s** current neighbor – which is nothing new. Gary and Greg have

known each other for so long that Scott calls Greg “Uncle Greg!” Someone at the meeting noted: we might not want to acknowledge it, but our classmates have children that are now retired. And so it goes. Scott spoke and answered our questions about the Developmental Honor Model for almost an hour. He is a firm believer in the model, and that it fits cadets incoming from today’s society, and he had a close and personal experience in implementation. Expect more on this subject.

Texas Power Outage Brings Classmates Together

The mid-February Texas power outage (coupled with the never ending lockdown) gave me a chance to find out how many classmates we had in Texas and how they were faring. We have about 50 – second only to Virginia with 60. The first to check in were **Andy & Betty Shaffer** who are normally quite happy in Midland; however, they discovered that three of the four strands of barbed wire between them and the North Pole were down, outside temps hovered around 0°F and 40°F inside with no electricity. Since Betty is an avid quilter, her works of art were put to work for a number of days to keep Andy, Betty, and the kitties warm. In anticipation of the storm, **Dick & Kathy Shipley** left San Antonio early for Houston where Dick was to undergo more tests and treatment at M. D. Anderson. They stayed with **Bob & Carol Shimp** in their 35th floor condo for an extended period due to the total shutdown in Houston. Fortunately, the high-rise condo had a generator to run the elevator and water pumps which eased the PT issues of stair maneuvering, and the wine larder was well stocked with award winning reds and whites. Unfortunately, the generator was on the roof of the condo – 36th floor – right over Bob’s & Carol’s condo – and the pumped water still had to be boiled. **Joe Guignon** wondered out loud, “Why did I move to Houston TEXAS when I could have stayed in Fairfax Virginia?” He & **Pat** lost power and water early in the ordeal and the inside temperature dropped to 43°. During the outage Joe walked to their nearby lake to fill buckets of water for the bathrooms. Thirty hours later, intermittent power came back and water a day or so later. The first hot shower was great. **Bob & Randy Hensler** live in San Antonio and were the first to let the Shipleys know that they had two power outages and plenty of water. **Rick & Ann Wright**, who also live in San Antonio, experienced similar experiences as the Henslers. they got about 5” of snow, the power and water stopped early on, and they melted snow to flush the toilets. They had rolling blackouts and cell phone service was spotty. On a positive note, the retirement community they live in (an Army Residence Community) did a terrific job of taking care of the residents, providing meals and water, and keeping them informed, etc. **Dennis & Denise Rosenberry** also live in San Antonio and survived without too much calamity. They lost power early over the weekend; however, they have a gas fireplace insert they used to help fend off the cold and keep them awake with serenading smoke alarms. Fortunately, Dennis had decided to use the weather down time to clean ceiling fans, so he had a step ladder in the house and was able to shut off and reset alarms quickly. Water was boiled for consuming and cooking while dishwashing was put off for several days. Other San Antonio residents, **Ed & Stephanie Hobbs** rolled with the blackouts and dodged the broken pipes issue with the help of a gas cooktop that provided some heat and warm meals. Ed was the first to mention lack of communication availability which precluded any type of 911 access as well as social access to share dishes created on the cooktop or the latest outrage by those easily offended. **Ross & Margaret Irvin** reported a random week in the north Dallas area. While some neighbors had power all week, some lost it on at the beginning and didn’t get it back until four days later – and then it was variably intermittent so they couldn’t anticipate

anything. Happily, they had a gas fireplace, plenty of blankets, and three cats. **Tom & Barbara Banks** live a few miles east of Dallas. They experienced no power outages or busted pipes, and have a wood burning stove that kept them toasty. In Killeen, Johnny & Camille Johnston report having a relatively easy time. They never lost power, had enough firewood to have one room toasty, water need boiling but stayed on without breaking pipes, had and enough food to have three meals a day. Their son and his family moved in a couple of days into the state-wide power outage because they lost power on over the weekend, yet they still had drinkable water at their house in Belton (20 minutes away from Johnny & Camille) so he made daily runs to provide clean water. Their diversion was to watch large pelican that has taken up residence on the 5 acre lake behind their house. **John & Frances Dallen** live in Gerogetown (between Austin and Killeen), and managed the ward off the chill with a gas cooktop stove and a good supply of wine. **Bob Lorbeer & Belinda Gail** live in Magnolia -- about 40 miles NW of downtown Houston and reported, "YES IT WAS COLD – outside! Fortunately, when they bought their home 2 ½ years ago, it came with a generator that kicked on the instant the power went off (4am), so their home was toasty warm all of the time. Their water shut off for about a day and a half which didn't help Bob's frozen pipes that were easily fixed – once the plumber showed up. They melted snow for the toilet. In the three and a half decades that **Brian & Dianne Utermahlen** have lived a few miles from NASA-Houston -- about halfway between Houston and Galveston Island – they have never seen and felt cold weather temps drop this low. They never lost power or water but had to boil water for a couple of days. **Jim & Julia Bodenhamer** also live in the Houston area, foresaw record cold was on the way, and Jim reached back to a few concepts from Cow year Fluids. Prior to shutting the city water valve down, they filled one bathtub and several pitchers and buckets – enough for consumption and keeping commodes functional for four days. Rolling blackouts were enough to keep them warm and water drainage kept pipes from freezing. The **Milinskis**, other Houston residents endured by weathering the utility outages by staying with friends who had a generator while trying to find a plumber with access to parts to repair freezing. **Duncan & Jeanne Stewart** live in an old part of Houston that has seen a lot since the 1830s – including Howard Hughes innovations while he was growing up blocks away, updated Union Pacific Railroad trackage serving the Port of Houston and the industry around it, and engineering common sense that outplayed politics and "business friendly." Therefore, they got by with only a two hour power outage and low water pressure. **Ray & Mary Jane Rhodes** also reside in the Houston area and lost power for a day but always had water (from a well, so no boiling was required) and gas. Bill & Rena Brown live in Ft. Worth and report that they are did OK. They didn't lose power, which Bill attributes to the fact that they live near TCU and the Colonial Country Club. There were lots of water main breaks in their area of town with lots of intermittent shut offs during repairs. On the bright side, Bill had the chance to use the snow shovel that he brought with him from Utah 40 years ago. His skis remain at his brother's house in Salt Lake. Steve & Mary Frushour live outside of downtown Fredericksburg and went without power for two weeks, and had to go into town for their first shower in 11 days. Their rainwater harvesting filters exploded as did their well water filter exploded. He further reports that many pipes are broken and trees and limbs down. Since they have a fireplace, they invited a neighbor who had no heat to stay with them. Thankfully, everyone is helping everyone and weather had gotten warmer, but they're still waiting for power.

Texas Power Outage Reports Morph into Ranger Flashbacks

Bob & Helen Kelly, other Houston residents, endured the usual outages and rationing; however, he was the first to add, “but nothing like winter Ranger school.” That comment sparked a number of flashbacks (focusing on the Florida phase Yellow river crossing) and whole new round of emails. **Tom Banks** (Ranger 6) remembered that it was 17° and the rope broke. They had to wait for hours until they got us a new rope. His Ranger buddy, **Paul Lovett**, was the far shore lifeguard and had to swim the river naked to take the rope across the river. The R.I. TRIED to shimmy across the top of the rope without getting wet – had all his clothes on with his rucksack on his back. The rope broke. the R.I. fell in the river and would have drowned if it were not for Paul rescuing him. **Bob Lorbeer** recalled that it was the coldest he has ever been – and after the crossing came the ocean in rubber boats. **Bob Hensler** reflected in his class (Ranger 5) an R.I. noted that the air temp was around 35°, water was frigid, and he had cramped up (rigor mortis?) so fellow students pulled him up the bank on the far side of the river. After moving inland the temp dropped to 17 and they were allowed to build warming fires. His water proof bag inside his ruck had a hole in it, and the majority of any extra clothing was wet. When it was his turn to stand watch in a fighting position, every few minutes he would double time in place trying to generate some heat. As a result he sustained frost bite on his fingers and toes. While in the landing craft prior to boarding the rubber boats, (he didn't know it at the time) he was undergoing the very dangerous initial stages of hypothermia (uncontrollable shaking, and thought confusion – sort of normal for most of us during Cadet days classes). More classmates are reminded of frost bite.

Dan Lynes Dodges Tornado in Coastal Carolina

As part of Mother Nature’s bag of tricks, she set off an early morning tornado that ripped through coastal North Carolina in mid-February, killing three people, injuring 10 others, and causing damage to homes and leaving residents without power. The tornado touched down near Ocean Ridge Plantation, a beach community about 45 miles south of Wilmington, North Carolina. The reports sounded way too familiar, so I contacted **Dan Lynes** who, in 2017 proudly reported that he & **Linda** built their final retirement home with no plans of ever moving again on the 16th fairway of an Arnold Palmer Golf Course in a Golf Club and Plantation community in Shallotte, North Carolina between Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and Wilmington, NC. Dan got back to us and further reported that they were lucky – the tornado hit another golfing community five miles to their west. As an active Rotarian and community leader, Dan knows three couples in the affected area – with one sustaining major destruction. He is among the community leaders asking why the area had so little (no) warning. All the weather apps sounded the alarm after the fact.

Meg Miller Bounces Back

Jack Miller had reported in earlier Class Notes that he and **Meg** were able to break out of isolation and get to Seaside, Florida for their annual beach excursion. But he failed to mention that while there, Meg decided to go for a bike ride with their grandson. Not more than several minutes into the adventure, she had an unfortunate bicycle mishap. While trying to avoid running into pedestrians, she swerved, hit a car and sustained a nasty gash over her left eye. Jack & Meg spent a stressful afternoon in the emergency room at a local hospital. But Meg bounced back

nically and the next day enjoyed a long relaxing day at the beach. Several weeks later, Jack solicited from Meg what she would like for Christmas. Jack was surprised by her answer - she wanted a bicycle. So Santa came through and delivered. Additionally, one of the Miller's daughters got Meg a T-shirt that depicted a person flying off of a bicycle with the statement, "I do my own stunts," maybe to serve as a warning to others. Jack said she wears it for every bicycle ride around the neighborhood. And he reports that she has had no accidents yet on her new bike....knock on wood.

Crecelius/Comrie Clan Struggles in Southern California

The first to come to the rescue after my whining about lack of news, **Allan Crecelius** and **Sandy Comrie** reported that they had plans and reservations to take the entire family to a beachfront home on the Big Island of Hawaii last August. No surprise that COVID travel restrictions and Hawaii lockdown dumped all over that plan. Luckily, they were able to get refunds on deposits and tickets, so they pivoted and leased a large estate in nearby Rancho Santa Fe which – not too far from the Crecelius/Comrie homestead but with a vastly different view -- could hold all 12 of the clan. They all quarantined ahead of the gathering and then spent a wonderful and safe 10 days together. After months of not being able to gather, everyone agreed that it was sorely needed. Four months later, they arranged to have a concierge health service visit all of their homes on December 23rd for COVID Rapid Testing. Since, thankfully, everyone was fully negative, Christmas Eve and Day were celebrated at Grammie and PopPop's house. They are fortunate to have all daughters and grandkids that can visit with only short drives. Now they are waiting for everyone to get vaccinated so they can return to more normal familial times – which includes that postponed family in Hawaii trip in August 2021!!



[Photo #4 – “The olds and the littles – Sandy & Allan with the grands”]



[Photo #5 – “The Crecelius/Comrie clan enjoying each other in Rancho Santa Fe”]

Robersons Used to Feel Blessed with Snow

Back in our black, gold, and grey days of our cadet youth, **Cookie** Inouye gave up the black, gold, and white beaches of Hawaii for the adventure of four seasons of university living in New England. **Bob Lemansky** introduced Cookie to **Gary Roberson**, Gary & Cookie fell in love and Cookie found snow fascinating, Gary wanted to give Cookie what she liked by choosing Fort Wainwright, Alaska as a first assignment. Cookie's love of ice and snow paled slightly, but they enjoyed four seasons – as long and there were breaks back to Hawaii and even Asheville, North Carolina (Gary's home town that's nestled in a valley that dodges extremely cold or showy weather). Upon Gary's retirement from the Army, Gary & Cookie opted for four seasons plus a place that has decent sports teams – Pittsburgh. This last year, with travel to Hawaii and most anyplace else curtailed, Cookie reported that even Gary's snow people lost their luster and they are both yearning for family and barbecue – but Cookie still looks cute as a snow bunny.



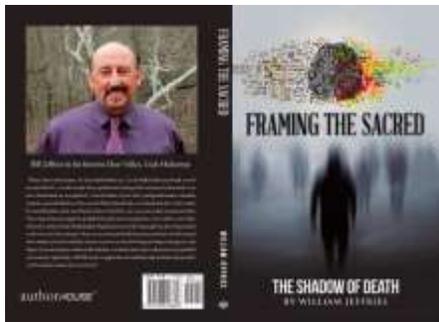
[Photo #6 – “Gary & Cookie Roberson as cold as they want to be in Pittsburgh”]



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Bill Jeffries Gets More Notoriety

Bill Jeffries just checked in with the delightful news that one of his adventure novels, *Framing the Sacred: The Shadow of Death*, is being used in an undergraduate course at Duke University, ONE of his graduate school alma maters. Like most of us, he figured that an alma mater forgets about us – until donation time. You can get your copy at Amazon Books or at the Bookstore at www.execustrat.com.



[Photo #1 – “Bill Jeffries’ latest big hit”]

Rick Rhoads is also a “Trail Angel”

As previously reported, Gary & Patti Halstead’s son, (COL Ret) Scott, got (way) out of town right after sharing his knowledge and feelings about revisions to our Honor Code. But even the Appalachian Trail couldn’t get him away from our class. When he hit the vicinity of Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia, he was met by Trail Angel Rick Rhoades who gave Scott reason to slow down and take a break. Thanks to his Dad, Scott seems to have memorized at least the Infantry ’68 drill roll and was genuinely happy to visit with Rick.



[Photo #2 – “Appalachian Trail Wanderer Scott Halstead (’91) with Rick Rhoades somewhere between the Trail and Harper’s Ferry”]



[Photo #3 – “Rick Rhoades, Gordon Tillery, Tom McNaugher, Mike Mears, and Lee Outlaw -- the DC area Class of ‘68 Wheezers) climb Old Rag Mountain – and confirm this is the last time!”

Don Roberts Emerges

On our way home from visiting our oldest grandson on his 21st birthday (I’m sure what every grandson wants), we took a detour to the town listed by the AOG as **Don Roberts’** residence. I have not seen a workable phone or email address for him in decades. Our GPS got us to a gated residence, which I opened, walked to the door and rang the bell – twice. When the door opened, I had to ask, “Donny? I’m Dave.” It was him – you can see it in the eyes! He did not have the body that I tried to get my arms around after the 1966 Army-Navy Game – clean living with a proper diet will do that – but he can slap and hug like he could 55 years ago and fit it all into a 34” waist. He and his bride of almost 53 are still love birds – she is a Duke Divinity grad and knows more about atomic particles and sub-particles than we ever got out of West Point and he has turned from a life of medical care to raising vegetables, relearning calculus (not just “specking it” this time, and enjoying precious time as a father and grandfather. The last time he had any contact with classmates was when he attended **Dave & Jeanie Clemm’s** funeral for their son. He asked about classmates and I felt like a Plebe reciting poop – only with lots of laughs. He told some good stories about the Zoo and the Army Team of our day – almost ready for our 55th reunion.



[Photo #4 – “With Doctor Colonel Retired Retired Don Roberts”]

Andy Silverthorn is Slowly Transitioning

We got a note from **Andy Silverthorn**, another Zoo physician, and Don Roberts room mate who attested to the hours spent in the sinks after Taps (that netted him hours in confinement thanks to a conscious OC) talking to his future bride. He’s still in practice but has cut it down a lot. He closed the office last summer and has been focusing on "telemedicine" for the past year.

Andy plans on continuing this practice as it gradually dwindles as patients move away, get all their care from specialists, or enter into assisted living.

Orahoods Break Out for Some Mini- Reunion Activity

Jim Orahood sent some photos (one usable, one questionable, and others looked like the camera had been used as a COVID or Ancestry.com testing vessel) of their mini-reunion break out from Indiana where they have been cautiously spending time with family. First, a USMAPS mini-reunion when **Bill & Cindy McCauley** drove from their home in Miami and Jim & **Rene** drove from our second home in Osprey (Sarasota), Florida to meet halfway on Chokoloskee Island in the Everglades. Bill & Cindy have been cautious and filled their time with online activities like sharpening foreign language and dancing skills. A little later, they met up with **Maurice Adams** and his bride, **Elizabeth** along with **Marty & Barbara Bowling** at their home in Osprey, Florida for a mini B-3 reunion. After that, Jim & Rene had lunch with **Mike Noonan** in Venice, Florida.



[Photo # 5 – Bill McCauley, Jim & Rene Orahood, and Cindy McCauley at Havana Cave on Chokoloskee Island (Everglades)]”



[Photo #6 – “Elizabeth & Maurice Adams in Osprey, Florida”]

Cliffs Head West in Search of New Vistas and Rejuvenation

Rich & Julie Cliff ventured out of their Low Country digs during mid-April to take in scenery at a higher altitude in Colorado Springs, Colorado. They attended and participate in a Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) Seminar honoring their son’s (Richie) life and ultimate sacrifice. TAPS Seminars bring together adult survivors for a weekend of hope and healing with peer professionals to meet survivors where they are in their grief journey. Appropriately, Rich & Julie found some time after the seminar to visit the beautiful nearby rock formation called Garden of the Gods.



[Photo #7 – “Rich & Julie Cliff in the Garden of the Gods, Colorado”]

Mike & Anne Sheaffer Celebrate Retirement -- Again

Mike Sheaffer dropped a line to share that he has retired – for the fourth and final time. All four retirements were associated, in some manner, with his 38 years at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore CA, where he was initially assigned as a LTC in 1983 for what was supposed to be a three-year tour. After a little conversation, Mike mentioned that he was on one of the first – if not THE first trip the Labs took to Kazakhstan after the USSR fell apart. He said that the trip was interesting but very unpleasant -- Froze a part of his body off – minus 30 (doesn't matter if it was Fahrenheit or Celsius – COLD). The warmest location in his hotel room was inside the refrigerator. The meals were all the same except that at breakfast they usually didn't have vodka. He could eat most everything but horse... I tried to assure him that things hadn't changed much by 2005 when horse was still the specialty, the only way to heat was to keep the laptop on the lap or as a foot warmer. Could go on for pages but am glad I didn't have to go back.



[Photo #8 – ‘You can tell Anne & Mike Sheaffer are celebrating St Patrick’s Day in California by noting how close Mike is keeping his face mask to his face during the meal”]

John & Meg Miller Celebrate St Patrick’s Day in Isolation (again)

Jack Miller recalled that it was just before St. Patrick’s Day in 2020 when most everyone went into a stay-at-home/isolation mode due to the pandemic. The idea at the time was to wait for 15 or so days until the COVID curve flattened. Well, a little over a year later, Jack reported that they were still in quasi-isolation with another promise that the end is in sight. But, Jack said that with a "little luck o' the Irish" he and **Meg** have remained healthy through it all. On the special day, Meg serves traditional corned beef and cabbage. Jack indicated that she makes enough for a reinforced rifle squad to insure that there are sufficient leftovers for another dinner meal and Reuben sandwiches for several lunches. Jack’s only responsibilities are to provide the beer and decorate the tree (?). He said they hope that someday on the 17th of March they will be in Ireland to see how the real pros celebrate the occasion... Jack had planned another picture instead of them in front of their local Huntsville, Alabama river area which simulates the Chicago River, but couldn't find anyone to take it with he & Meg in it. They were planning to enjoy an upcoming cruise in June (1st since Feb '20), but it was canceled (again). Their backup is always a trip to their favorite Florida beach, so we can anticipate what their next input will be....



[Photo #9 – “Meg & Jack Miller – together still – in front of their St. Patrick’s Tree”]

Pres & Clemm Miller Continue to Set the Pace

In mid-March, after appropriate inoculations, **Pres & Clem Miller** once again broke out of COVID jail for a family trip. This time they visited all eight grandkids in three locations – Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Texas – in a meticulously planned tour. During their final stop in Austin, they broke protocol to meet up with **John & Frances Dallen** for lunch and some wonderful stories about the Dallens’ extensive and exotic travels – much the same as the Millers’. Although they had all had their shots some precautions were still maintained. This was only the second time the Dallens had ventured more than a few miles from their home for a meal in the last twelve months. Precisely one year earlier, the Dallens had boarded one of the last Virgin Australia flights out of Sydney to return to the US after a scuttled Southeast Asia Odyssey. For the Dallens, this is not their only contact with classmates. A major subset of company C-1 (plus the C-1 renegades exiled to D-1 our firstie year) have meet twice via Zoom, thanks to the initiative of **Don Hall**. More rendezvous are planned. Everyone is looking forward to getting out and being somewhat normal. Expanding beyond First Regt, **Andy Shaffer** (2nd Regt) and John hooked up to discuss model building of old sailing ships. It turned out that they have much more common. They were both at the National Rifle and Pistol Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio, at the same time during high school – and were probably in the same shooting school classes there – back in the days when it was OK to issue 14 year-old boys M-1s rifles for a week. Andy sent John some ship kits he had in reserve to keep John busy, off the streets – and out of the bars. Pres reported that the Dallens look terrific and they can’t wait to get back on those planes, trains, and automobiles, plus a few cruises.



[Photo #10 – “Two roses between two thorns – John & Frances Dallen with Clem & Pres Miller together for lunch in Austin”]



[Photo #11 – “Betty Shaffer took a picture of Andy as he toasted 51 years of wedded bliss with his bride at Historic Fort Davis, Texas”]

March DC Area Zoom Meeting Always Produces Good Grist

As usual **Gordon Tillery** put together a fun and informative Zoom meeting for our DC area classmates – which is ever expanding beyond the Northern Virginia, DC, and Maryland region. This time, **Jim Stanley** from Raleigh, NC, **Paul DeCoursey** from Indianapolis IN, **Jerry Cobb** from Hainesport, NJ, and **Bill Easton** from Saint Petersburg, FL checked in. This time **John Cruden** couldn't make it because his law firm had called a conflicting meeting. John's law practice now is three parts: (1) providing strategic advice to corporations on environmental issues; (2) serving as expert witness in courts on environmental matters (including one in High Court of London); and (3) representing groups in litigation – now representing a school district in CA; Arlington County; the International Joint Commission (US-Canada body regulating boundary waters); and a solar company putting solar panels on closed landfills. John is also teaching a masters class at GWU (remotely for now). He has moved to a new office in DC and his first act was putting up our class print of USMA with superimposed names of our fallen Vietnam-era brothers. **Tom Vollrath** missed the meeting by breaking out of the Virginia bubble to spend a long weekend at Sebring International Raceway in FL where Corvette's run in the 12-hour race. One of the meeting's guest speakers was **Bub Younts** who recounted his career in uniform at the USMA Prep School at Ft Monmouth and followed by "West Point Desk" in ODCSPER.

Classmates Attend Thanksgiving for Lives of Dan Gooding and Pete Paulson

Pete & Kathy Paulson's sons orchestrated a Zoom celebration and remembrance of the life of Pete, who passed away on April 13th. **Dave & Susan Ohle, Gordon Tillery, Henry &**

Karen Riser, Bill & Patty Marriott, Bub & Angie Younts, Chuck & Phyllis Giasson, and Les & Kathy Wright tuned in. After the main portion where a couple of Pete’s friends, his sons, and Kathy related some highlights of Pete’s life while a ton of photos scrolled by, we had the option to click on “break out rooms” for more conversation.

Steve Harper, John & Margie Hedley, Dan Taylor, and Barbara and I attended **Dan Gooding’s** celebration at Christ Episcopal Church in Charlotte, North Carolina last March. Dan passed away on March 13th. Steve & **Sherry** are relative newcomers to the Charlotte area and didn’t have a chance to get to know Dan. Dan Taylor was Dan’s XO when they were Firsties in C-4 and always held Dan in awe because he was so sincere and dedicated. Dan Taylor said that when he was goofing off, Dan Gooding was usually doing pushups and sit-ups. Dan is still practicing law in the Winston Salem area – now with his son. Dan Gooding had been an anesthesiologist in a practice of military veterans and was instrumental in getting John Hedley fixed up with a Naval Academy grad when John had to undergo surgery about 13 years ago.



[Photo #12 – “John Hedley, Steve Harper, Dan Taylor, and the ever shrinking (in height) Orca”]

Only One Founders Day Reported this Year Catrons & Rogers

Jeff Rodgers was the only classmate to check in with a Founders Day photo. He further reported that, since Florida was pretty much ahead of the rest of the US regarding COVID restrictions, masks were an optional part of the uniform.



[Photo #13 – “Grace & Al Catron with Jeff & Carlie Rogers at this year’s Melbourne, Florida Founders Day dinner”]



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Terry Wildrick Singled Out at Commandant of Cadets Change of Command

While trying to stay gray, I watched the you tube video of the commandant change of command between BG Buzzard ('92) and BG Quander ('95) last week (https://www.youtube.com/attribution_link?a=GgrfImZovSrOtWnZ&u=/watch%3Fv%3DRnhZl zKrA44%26feature%3Dem-lbrm), I was pleasantly surprised to note that **Terry Wildrick** was specifically mentioned by the outgoing Comm, which included his year group, branch and combat record. BG Buzzard also called out our class as an example that the "Corps Had" by noting that we were the first class to go home for Christmas... When Terry and I made contact, I asked him how he got such VIP treatment. He chuckled and explained that he regularly plays golf with BG Buzzard's father and Terry's golfing buddy invited him to ride with him and attend the Change of Command Ceremony in Eisenhower Hall. Terry said that he was as surprised as I was that the Commandant gave him such recognition at the beginning of his address. Terry's moment of glory came at about the 34 minute portion of the video.

Sadness During our Reporting Period

This has been a shattering reporting period. Three long time (but not long enough) brides passed away. **Charlie Beckwith** offered, "years [of marriage at our age] gets to be a comfortable fit... from good to not good, in the blink of a mid-70's set of eyes... the pain of loss... hope that[who is left behind] has loyal friends." **Larry Stevenson's** bride, **Cheryl** was attacked by a devastating and quick-acting disease. Among others, classmates rallied around him – and will continue to care and protect. Larry said that classmates at this time really brought home the concept of "grip hands." The disease that took **Frank Nader's** bride, **Connie**, took a little longer, but it was just as brutal and the Zoo is rallying – with each member having a specific duty according to need and ability. **John Cruden** got the word out fast regarding the terrible accident and untimely loss of his bride, **Sharon**. She will be interred later in the summer at West Point. As with our other classmates who have been stricken by catastrophic losses such as these, there are support groups of loyal, loving, and caring family, friends, colleagues, and classmates who help provide support and will not let these ladies go away. They remember and together have lots of others with which to share remembrances, and stories. For those of us who are blessed to still have our brides, hug them.



[Photo #1 – “Colorado classmates Tom Martin, Robby Robinson, Marv Wooten, Chuck Canella, Jay Francis, Gary Halstead, Joe Henry, Les Krohnfeldt, and Chuck Jones rallying around Larry Stevenson at Cheryl’s Celebration of Life gathering”]

The number of classmates passing was also a shock – **Joe Mance** lost his battle with Agent Orange-attributable lung cancer first diagnosed three years ago in this non-smoker. The tissue obtained from biopsy contained Agent Orange “markers” identifying that as the cause. **Jack Bussa** volunteered to put something together so we can all be informed that Agent Orange exposure can lie dormant for all these years. Although **Bud Burrell** had his share of health issues, heart problems was not among them; however, he died quickly of a heart attack. Both had interment ceremonies attended by classmates

Old Rag Conquerors (Continued)

Last reporting period, I slipped in a photo from **Gordon Tillery** of five DC-area Classmates who, on April 28th climbed Old Rag –a “rock scramble” in the Shenandoah Nat Park. This time, **Rick Rhoades** added that it was “sort of hard” on 75+-year old bods, like one last patrol at the Mountain Ranger Camp, but outstanding camaraderie! At the conclusion, **Mike Mears** presented each of the “68 Wheezers” with a specialized T-shirt featuring a dinosaur (wearing glasses) with a walker, scrambling up Old Rag. Returning safely to the start point, the five classmates popped ibuprofen, declared this was their LAST trip up Old Rag, and watched Mike speed away in his cherry red 2021 Miata.



[Photo #2 – “Lee Outlaw, Mike Mears, Tom McNaugher. and Rick Rhoades surround the objective”]



[Photo #3 – “Lee Outlaw, Mike Mears, Tom McNaugher, Gordon Tillery, and Rick Rhoades in their special Ts in front of Mike’s Miata”]

Mike Mears Interviews Classmates Who Have Not Changed

A few years back – and again a few months back – **Mike Mears** proposed holding a contest to see who has changed the least since graduation. It appears that he is holding auditions under the guise of participating in outdoor adventures. A couple of weeks after the Old Rag climb, he hosted a three hour kayaking jaunt down the Rappahannock River. Not deterred by a breezy and chilly start, seven classmates, including Mike, met the challenge. After successful completion of the voyage, Mike further hosted a cookout on his river-front acreage.



[Photo #4 – “Bill Gardepe, Tom McNaugher, Rick Rhoades, Lee Outlaw, and Mike Mears warming up after their kayak adventure down the Rappahannock River”]



[Photo #5 – “Glen Hewitt, Ralph Tuccillo, Lee Outlaw, Rick Rhoades, Bill Gardepe, and host, Mike Mears gorging on barbecue after their Rappahannock River adventure”]

Golfing Grads Continue to Celebrate

After the Covid-19 hiatus in 2020, the Class of 1961 & 1962 sponsored Golfing Grads of USMA resumed with its 33th tournament at the Robert Trent Jones' Grand National golf courses near Auburn, Alabama in late April. About seven years ago, **Chick James** was the first to learn about the event and was the only classmate to participate for two years. Hence, he became the de facto '68 Class Captain since it was just him and his son, who had a great time. As time went on, **Bill Robinson** and **Hank Gregor** joined Chick and his son. Chick's son got a new job and only attended the first three events. This year, six classmates – Chick, Bill, **Joe Creeden**, **Joe Guignon**, **Ken Hauck**, and **Dwight Lee** – participated, enjoyed the good weather, and had an overall wonderful time. They were all inspired to see the classes of '61 & '62 still swinging – about 20 members from '61 and about 30 from '62 showed up and played. Although some of our classmates are dealing with replacement body parts, they keep moving, shooting and communicating.



[Photo #6 – “Best of all photos of this year’s Golfing Grads – Ken & Beth Hauck, Chick & Carole James, Joe Guignon, Dwight Lee, Joe Creeden, and Bill Robinson under April’s full moon “Super Pink” Moon”]



[Photo #7 – “This year’s ’68 mule swingers Chick, James, Dwight Lee, Ken Hauck, Bill Robinson, Joe Guignon, and Joe Creeden”]

Puffers Keep Marching Along

This is a busy time of year for **Ray & Robin Puffer**. While Robin tends her gardens, Ray has 25 fruit trees to prune, spray, and graft favorite varieties. They also had two large truckloads of wood chips brought in to use as mulch in the gardens and around the fruit trees. Besides their gardening, Ray also keeps very busy teaching woodworking, and preparing for the auto show season where he shows his 1967 Jaguar E-Type. He is also leading a memorial award program for his high school class in his home town in Vermont. The program gives out over \$2,500 cash awards to graduating seniors with financial needs to continue their education. So far, the program has raised \$50,000 for these awards. Not bad for a small Vermont high school class. Every student they have supported has been a huge success story, and has exceeded their expectations. Speaking of helping, Ray donated a paver to the US Army Museum -- a most worthy cause that we will soon see. Also, while Ray was stationed in Korea, and on a trip to Hong Cong, he had a jeweler resize his class ring – BAD decision. The jeweler pretty much destroyed Ray’s ring making it unwearable. Finally, after 40 years without a ring, he had a replacement ring made by Balfour, just like the original. Now, he’s a happy camper and looks forward to flashing his new crass mass of brass and glass around at next season’s Army football games – he’s a long time season ticket holder – U12, row E.



[Photo #8 – “Ray Puffer in his restored E-Jag”]



[Photo #9 – “Ray Puffer showing off his new class ring while holding a copy of the paver he donated to the U.S. Army Museum and giving his banjo prowess a plug”]

Jetlands Finley

The last we heard from **Bob & Elsa Jetland** last November, they had sold their home in Del Mar, California and suffered while enduring “homelessness” in San Diego while searching for new digs in Southern California in late February. After four months of living out of suitcases (not fun), staying with kids and friends, and cashing in a boatload of Marriott rewards points, they moved into their new (and final?) home in Laguna Hills. Now, they are pretty well moved in and ready to open up for house guests. So far, they do not have to endure the smell of brush fire smoke emanating from their furniture.



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Jim Greenberg Hosts Classmates for a Day of Sailing

Jim Greenberg sent an email with a photo he took of **Henry Riser** and **Bob Stroud** aboard his sail boat, *Pura Vida*, sparring with the fickle Severn River and Chesapeake Bay winds and shielding themselves from cancer producing sun rays. After an appropriate amount of time on the water, the guys returned to Jim's and Lisa's home for an hour or so on their deck recovering and rehydrating with some **Samuel Adams**. In typical Greenberg fashion, he said that they had returned with nothing of note to report – just another day with classmates enjoying the good life.



[Photo #1 – “Bob Stroud and Henry Riser aboard Jim & Lisa Greenberg’s Pura Vida on the Chesapeake Bay”]

High School Graduation – A Good Reason to Get Together

In late May, **Dan Adams** sent an email and photo to share that he had driven over to New Orleans from Pensacola Beach to visit **Vic Farrugia** and celebrate Vic's youngest daughter's high school graduation as the school's valedictorian. While Dan's guess that Vic's daughter may be the last child of our class to achieve both honors, we still have a couple of members of what **Jim Jennings** refers to as “The Old Grads and New Dads Club” that might have progeny still in the running. The closest I could come was to watch our second oldest grandson also graduate from a private school in NOLA on the same date as Vic's daughter. While Dan's guess that Vic's daughter may be the last child of our class to achieve both honors, we still have a couple of members of the Old Grads and New Dads Club that might have progeny still in the running..



[Photo #2 – Victor and daughter/ valedictorian Isabella Farrugia with Dan Adams at Isabella’s high school graduation”]

Classmates Pay Homage to George Heckman and More

Of **Gordon Tillery’s** many wonderful attributes, he discovered early that the reasons classmates give for not being able to attend monthly luncheons in the D.C. area are stories unto themselves. Recent examples are: **Tom Vollrath** (“Broke out of our VA bubble, spending long weekend at Sebring International Raceway in Fl. Corvette’s run in the 12-hour race Saturday”); **John Hathaway** (“TYPING THIS IN AN AMBULANCE TAKING ME TO MY LOCAL ER. HAVE BLOCKAGE OF MY COLON. PAINFUL, BUT SHOULD NOT BE MAJOR CONCERN. HAD SAME ISSUE 2 WEEKS AGO”); **Jess Gatlin** (“Won’t be able to make it – on a plane to Key West for a few days”); **Joe Guignon** (“My daughter is back in the USA from her two years in Turkey. We are going to our house in Duck, NC... The class dinner in September is still a go.”); **Bob Stroud** (“I’ll be out on the boat in the Severn River with kids and grandkids watching the Blue Angels fly around Annapolis for their USNA graduation week show”); **Dave Ohle** (“Susan and I returned from Mexico a week and a half ago. Last Saturday I was up at West Point “Swearing in and Pinning on” Cassidy Shrope as a newly graduated 2LT.... Today I have a HEROES To Education meeting from 2:30 to 4:00. We will send next week to the White House a DRAFT Executive Order for the President to sign which will direct the DEPT of ED to establish the HEROES To Education Program”); **Dave Hatcher** (“Several of us from companies E-3 and H-3 are attending a Celebration of **Joe Mance’s** Life, including burial in the Camp Nelson National Cemetery Friday May 28 in Lexington, KY”); **Mike Mears** (“Can’t make this one; daughter is flying in from London with her family. Haven’t seen her in 18 months”); and **Paul Joseph** (“Driving up to Long Island on 18th, headed to **George Heckman’s** service on the 19th”). Paul followed up with an email go Gordon with a photo at George’s interment at Calverton National Cemetery, New York (the largest by acreage veteran’s cemetery in the USA).”



[Photo #3 – “Julie Heckman flanked by Tay Yoshitani and Tom Margrave, and Pat O’Keefe and Paul Joseph – all contributors to George’s Memorial Article – at George’s interment”]

Paul & Claire Joseph Celebrate Golden Wedding Anniversary

On a brighter note, **Paul Joseph** reported that he and his bride, **Claire**, took a mini-vacation to Beaufort, North Carolina in May to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. As they prepared to leave the restaurant where they had dinner, their waitress informed them that their meal had been paid for by a couple they never met until that night. Where were those benevolent folks when we were cadets and always looking for someone to pick up a bar or meal tab?



[Photo #4 – “Claire & Paul Joseph in Beaufort, NC celebrating their 50th”]

Mike & Kathy Grygiel Host George Ziots and Celebrate Family at Three Academies

I don’t know if it was the climbing temperatures at Lake Havasu City in Arizona, but I’m sure that it was part of the reason that **George Ziots** decided to climb into his motor home and head north as part of his extended summer vacation throughout the USA to visit friends and family. **Mike & Kathy Grygiel’s** home in Richland, Washington was one of his first stops. What could be better? An old L2 company mate who lives close to a winery. So far, George is rather vague regarding his travel schedule but he reports that he’s booked through July and he’ll visit New Orleans prior to being in Oklahoma City in late September. Keep on the lookout.



[Photo #5 – “George Ziots enjoys a bottle of wine with Mike & Kathy Grygiel at a winery near Richland, Washington during George’s recent visit”]

Mike also shared a photo taken on June 27 of himself, his son, Sean (USCGA '94) and his and Kathy’s grandson, Jack, prior to Jack reporting to USNA as a member of the class of 2025. Mike reflects that Army-Navy games will be a lot of fun from now on! We wish Jack well as he enters his Plebe Summer!



[Photo #6 – “Mike, Jack, and Sean Grygiel – three generations and three Academies”]

Jerry Crawford Also Moving on

Since **Jerry Crawford** lost **Dorothy** in 2014, he has spent more and more of his time away from home exploring the country in his motorhome. Florida was very appealing to him during these last couple winters, so he ended up there for several months. He found that there were other widowed singles there with their own motorhomes and found traveling together to be fulfilling. Then, he found an interesting place in Polk City, Florida – a small house on a lake in an over 55 community that had a garage that is 73 feet long and 18 feet wide – plenty big enough for his 45 foot motorhome and a few other toys. In April 2020, he sold his house, hangar, and airplane in South Carolina and moved there permanently – except when he’s traveling... Since COVID-19 took care of a lot of travel and other activities, he too has come down with cabin fever. As part of the great American break-out, Jerry has used in lock-down time to plan embarking on a big western odyssey that will include Rapid City, Devils Tower, Yellowstone, Butte, Montana (home town prior to West Point), Glacier, Heber City, Utah, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Canyonlands, Arches, Mesa Verde, Albuquerque Balloon Festival, and Carlsbad

Caverns, New Mexico. He promises lots of pictures to follow. He is looking forward to meeting up with classmates if anyone is traveling to those areas in August and September. After the big trip, he plans on getting back to flying and will be working at the nearby Sun 'n Fun Aerospace Expo in Lakeland, Florida next April and would be glad to see anyone who attends. His email is gecrawford68@aol.com

John & Margie Hedley Host Graduation Anniversary Gathering for Local Classmates

Since our 53rd graduation anniversary fell on a Saturday this year, it become evident to **John & Margie Hedley** that, as time passes, any opportunity to be with classmates is a blessing not to be ignored. So they put the word out to local classmates that they wanted to host a gathering of local classmates at their home on Lake Norman on that day. The invitation drew **Hank & Maggie Gregor** from Boone, **Steve & Sherry Harper** from Charlotte, **Jim & Lucille Swinney** from their summer home in Maggie Valley, and (of course) the **Gerards** who live 20 minutes by jet ski or 30 minutes by road from the Hedleys. While our numbers were slight, we found lots in common – three of four regiments represented, three from one regiment, two original infantrymen, two tankers, three poopschoolers, a practicing physician, a lawyer and judge, and two corporate VPs, – it sounded like a paragraph out of the Supe’s letter trying to explain the diversity of last year’s honor scandal – we all had much in common – we were loyal and caring classmates who brought stories of other classmates that we knew. Not to sell the distaff short, we were also blessed to have two college professors, a primary education teacher, and two caring administrators who all keep us straight.



[Photo #7

– “Infantrymen John Hedley and Steve Harper and tankers Jim Swinney and Hank Gregor with the Redleg in the rear”]



[Photo #8 – “Sherry & Steve Harper show their pride of the year Steve graduated and his cadet company”]

Bill & Cheryl Jeffries Measure Highs and Lows in Altitude

As a wrap-up to their 2020-21 (so far) adventures, **Bill & Cheryl Jeffries** referred to them in highs and the lows. As for the highs, Bill had a chance to ski Chamonix, France again – a spectacular place where he could ski at 3,800 meters and have Mt Blanc—the 7th highest mountain in Europe – tower over him. He reported that no masks were required – just guts at that altitude – lots of avalanches this year but ALWAYS spectacular skiing. From a lower perspective, Bill & Cheryl had a chance to gather all the kids and grand kiddoes down at sea level at Bubba Gump’s Seafood (with she crab soup to die for) in Virginia Beach for a birthday celebration. Bill offered thanks to all of our classmates who tuned in to the various webcasts and Zoom meetings he presented last year to discuss his book, *Chewing the Wafer: Living a Christian Worldview*. He actually recognized some of them —must have been the ostentatious rings. That book, certainly a departure from his previous adventure novels and books on leadership, culture change, team building, and emotional intelligence, is a guide to “practical Christian apologetics.” It has attracted a lot of attention, particularly from the evangelical community. Amazon and other groups normally notify subscribers of his webcasts, but if anyone would like to be alerted individually regarding future ones, or even in-person events now that some of the pandemic fear is subsiding in more enlightened states, they can always contact him at esipres6@earthlink.net. Now that all of their children are “free electrons,” after living with them for 21 years, Bill & Cheryl have sold their prairie mansion in Indiana and will be camping out with a petulant cat in cardboard boxes under overpasses for a few weeks. After the first week in July, they can be contacted at their new digs in a gated community — to keep the riff raff (e.g., Navy folk) out — in Northern Virginia, right next to the Shenandoah Trail. They will be closer to kids and grandkids as well as their numerous coaching clients in the five-sided day care center in Arlington and various three-letter agencies in the DC area. Their door will be open to all who bring any spare money, fine cabernet, and future Christmas cards. Contact Bill or me for an exact address.



[Photo #9 – “Bill Jeffries at Chamonix, France with Mont Blanc in the background”]



[Photo #10 – “The Jeffries population explosion at Virginia Beach”]

Bill Mulvey Stays Busy Outside

After I had pressed the Send button to post our last set of Notes, I checked my email and found a message from **Bill Mulvey** bringing us up to date in words. In 2014, he was inspired by **Marv Wooten** to start hiking sections of the Appalachian Trail. To hear more about the inspiration, we need to hear from Marv. Bill began that year at Springer Mountain, Georgia and headed north toward Maine. He has hiked a section each year since then except 2017, when he had back surgery, and 2020, because of guess what... This May, he hiked 85 miles on the Trail from Erwin, Tennessee, where he finished in 2019, to Hampton, Tennessee, just south of Watauga Lake. The hike took him nine days. On the eighth day of this section hike, he hit his 500-mile mark on the Trail. At this pace, he should finish the entire trek when he’s 93. It appears that the reason he is lagging is that he also spends time on lionfish safari in the depths surrounding Bonaire. Five days after he hit the 500 mark on the Appalachian Trail, he and **Suzie** ensured Bonaire was stocked with Guinness and were on Delta Airline’s second flight to that magical island. They were also on Delta’s next to the last flight out of Bonaire in March of 2020. He ended his email with a bit of an understatement – “Great to be back.”



[Photo #11 – “Bill Mulvey at his 500 mile mark on the Appalachian Trail”]



[Photo # 12 – “Bill Mulvey on Bonaire back in the hunt”]



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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”]



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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”]

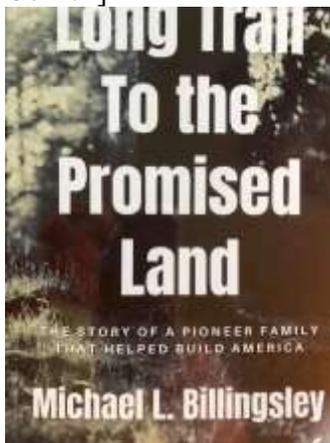
Mike Billingsley Publishes First Book

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”]



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Update on Our Latest Memoir Volume – From the Ladies

Tony Ambrose sent an email to our Company Reps soliciting (begging for) input for our latest Memoir Volume of Both Sides of the Wall. He related that on the outskirts of this effort, it was envisioned that we were looking for compositions about distaff experiences as the “ladies left behind” during our tours in Viet Nam. There have been many submissions in that vein, and they make for intriguing and, often, profound reading. However, there have been an equal number of stories submitted about other experiences (first dates, the fun of moving across oceans, even some entertaining stories from women who did not climb aboard the Class of '68 train until decades after graduation). Sadly and tragically, we've lost almost as many spouses as we have lost classmates. Along with that pain, it is hard to grasp that their stories dim over time and are lost to generations to come. Unfortunately, Tony reports that they have only about half of the number of pieces necessary to assemble a publishable volume. It appears that our brides have picked up some of our habits cultivated since cadet days – put stuff off until first draft=final draft=final submission. We have only a few weeks to submit stories and recollections to ensure they are all properly edited, correlated, collated, and published in time for our 55th reunion. We all know that the lady across the kitchen table, besides her other countless virtues, is bright, articulate, and generally not hesitant to share what's on her mind. Tony is asking you to remind your better halves and persuade them to create and submit an essay (more than one if possible) about their experiences as a Class of '68 spouse. This is all of our times to shine – to produce a meaningful tome well worth reading.

E-3/H-3 Classmates Make the Most of the Army-Wisconsin Game

Joe Henry reported that back in June, **Jack Bussa** sent out an email to coordinate a K-1/E-3 company gathering (including spouses) for the Army-Wisconsin game in Madison in mid October. The plan was to meet in Janesville, WI, where Jack lives. Some drove to Janesville, while others flew into Chicago or Madison. **Tom Vollrath** took the train to Chicago with the goal to imitate the cadet train ride we took to Chicago for the Army-Air Force football game. On Friday, they all met at the Cobblestone Hotel and then ventured to the Buckhorn Supper Club along the shore of Lake Koshkonong, in Edgerton, WI. The gathering consisted of about 20. The next day, they met at Jack's & **Marilyn's** home for lunch and to share old stories. There were a few exaggerations but lots of laughs and of, course, various medical issues under discussion. About 4 PM, they took off in a huge bus for supper in Madison. Kudos to the restaurant staff at Buck and Honey's Monona restaurant – they served everyone quickly and even did separate bills. Joe noted that all meal festivities were moved inside to avoid any harmful medical adjustment issues for **Earl Newsome** due to temperature acclimation from Houston, Texas to Wisconsin. Extra gloves, scarfs, warmers, beanies and thermals were provided. For **Dave Hatcher**, the

journey “Mad-town” was an informal "homecoming" weekend with two Alma Maters opposing each other. After fulfilling his military obligation, he enrolled in the alleged arch-conservative Mid-West University of Wisconsin where he dazzled a variety of faculty, graduate co-equals, and awestruck undergrads in communication arts and other departments. He also played a key role (midfield) in the newly formed lacrosse club there, with overly lopsided defeats at U of Michigan and Ohio State. Then, it was off to the game at Camp Randall stadium with tickets that Jack was able to acquire. The place was packed and finally Army picked up the pace in the 4th Quarter, only to lose by one touchdown. It was a long ride back to the hotel by bus. Future planning calls for a golf outing at Palm Springs, California in February 2022 and then a company gathering in Naples, FL in early May 2022.



[Photo #1 -- Outside the Buckhorn Supper Club along the shore of Lake Koshkonong, Edgerton, Wisconsin the evening prior to the Army-Wisconsin game, E-3/H-3classmates Dave Hatcher, Joe Henry, Jack Bussa, Bob Stroud, Mark Spelman, Joe Creden, Bill Flowers, Earl Newsome, Al Catron, and Tom Vollrath”]



[Photo # 2 – “Once again – only prettier: Dave Hatcher, Joe & Carla Henry, Marilyn Bussa, Eileen Stroud Jack Bussa, Bob Stroud, Mark Spelman & Spelman, Judy & Joe Creden, Gail Newsome, Bill Flowers, Earl Newsome, Grace & Alan Catron, and Sheryl & Tom Vollrath”]

Company Mates Pay Respects to Tom McConnell and Family

Jimmy Walsh reported that about half of C-1’ classmates came to **Tom McConnell’s** funeral in Chattanooga on Oct 9th. **Pres Miller** said that it was an emotional weekend as Tom had done so much for the community. At the Friday Vigil at the Chattanooga Basilica, the Bishop gave an informal and personal tribute to Tom for his wonderful leadership in developing youth activities, especially for the Hispanic community, and his founding of the prison ministries.

There was a tremendous turnout for the funeral on Saturday. On Friday and Saturday evenings the eleven C-1 classmates plus **Rick Hawley's** sister, Meg, got together at Tom's & Brenda's home reflecting on Tom's military and civilian accomplishments. Of course, there were many stories about Tom that kept all chuckling. Tom's family was extremely gracious and certainly appreciated the West Point presence. Tom was a special person as a cadet, an officer for 26 years, and an educator and deacon for over 20 years.



[Photo # 3 – “Classmates and brides mix in with Tom McConnell’s family – top to bottom: Chuck Canella, John Dallen, Lee Outlaw, Bill Robinson, Jim & Peggy Walsh, Harold & Kay Yager, Brenda McConnell and family, Pres Miller. Ron & Bonnie Yasukawa, and Jack Cochran. Not shown: Ron & Kathy Feher and Brian McKenna”]

Bachmans, Pirnies, and Greeby Gather in Massachusetts

During the last week in September, **Skip & Joan Greeby** were in Boston pretending to be there on business. To stay true to our Honor System, they really accepted **Bill & Jane Bachman's** kind invitation to visit them whenever in town. In town means South Natick, Massachusetts, some 30 miles to the west of Bean Town. While there, Bill called **Lyle & Margot Pirnie** and asked them to join them for some big bites at a local restaurant. Bill is “somewhat” retired after teaching at Boston University, and Lyle is still working as Economic Development Coordinator for the Town of North Attleborough nearby. After a few adult beverages, the stories, as usual, began to flow, both about cadet and Army days. As it should be, it seemed that all remembered the good times better than the bad.



[Photo # 4 – “Bill Bachman, Lyle Pirnie, and Skip Greeby in the People’s Republic of Massachusetts picking up where they left off during cadet days”]

Classmates Solve World Problems

As mentioned earlier, in an effort to remain social (and occasionally civil), during the lockdown, classmates got together virtually via media such as Zoom. One of the more prominent call clusters was put together by **Ron Warncke** for his A-1 classmates; however, it quickly expanded as other classmates were invited to participate in weekly sessions. As time passed, quarantine directives ebbed, and they started to venture out with old and new found friends. One such sojourn formed when Fr. **Mike Cerrone** mentioned that he had a time share upgrade and asked if anyone cared to visit in person to continue Zoom conversations in person in Destin, Florida. Coordination was easy – **John & Margie Hedley** drove down from North Carolina and **Ray & Mary Jane Rhodes** flew in from Texas, and the conference began. After three grueling days enduring bright sun, salt air, and diminished crowds as a result of kids being back in school, the guys came to the conclusion that there were far more people working to screw things up, and for every problem they'd solve, five more would pop up. In all, they declared victory because sun, salt air, and friendship prevailed.



[Photo # 5 – “Mike Cerrone, Ray Rhodes, and John Hedley enduring Destin, Florida last September”]

“West Point Four” (Minus One) Travel Through Canadian Rockies

Bob Sweeney took the helm to report that , after a one-year hiatus (for obvious reasons), the “West Point Four” – **Jim Thome, Mike Hart, Jim Kelley**, and Bob – as they have become known internationally over the years – and their lovely brides – **Pat Thome, Janean Hart, Kathy Kelley** and **Ann Sweeney** – were ready to travel again for their Annual Fall Mini-Reunion. Delayed from last year, this trip – lasting from early to mid-September – was a Rocky Mountaineer Train Ride through the Canadian Rockies. When it came time to pull the trigger for tour payment, Jim & Kathy Kelley had just moved from their San Jose, California home of 40 years further north to Healdsburg, California to be closer to the grandkids (a familiar refrain) and found themselves surrounded by boxes in their new house. They decided that they just couldn't make the trip and turn the boxes and house into a home in a reasonable period. The remaining six gave Jim & Kathy a bye, carried on without them, were able to face-time them on the trip and, afterwards, provided them a DVD with all of the beautiful photos. The trip was arranged through the AAA Travel folks and all agreed that it was fabulous – restful, inspiring, and executed without a care thanks to AAA. It started with a few days in Vancouver, Canada – a great city with warm and welcoming people. While there, they made the trip up to Grouse Mountain and took a walk on the Capilano Suspension Bridge – something everyone should experience! Then, they were off on a two-day train ride through the Canadian Rockies to

Kamloops and then on to National Park in Jasper, Alberta, Canada. Everyone could not get over how absolutely breathtaking the scenery was – US Rockies are nice but the Canadian Rockies are majestic!! That leg of the journey was followed by a four-day Motor Coach trip through the Jasper and Yoho National Parks and the Columbia Icefields where they got to walk on a glacier. The next stop was beautiful Lake Louise and Banff, and they finished up in Calgary for the trip home. As usual, there was lots of visiting, plenty of stories, some true, some might raise an eyebrow of an Honor Rep but he'd let it slide under the category of Social Honor, and plenty of laughs. Needless to say, they all had a wonderful time and are looking forward to next year's adventure – wherever it may be!



[Photo # 6 – “I am assured that this is a real setting and not a photo-op backdrop – Jim & Pat Thome, Mike & Janean Hart, and Ann & Bob Sweeney at Lake Louise and its Glacier in the background’]

Summer Wrap-up

In our mid-August Notes, I reported on **Tom Beierschmitt** and **Jim Swinney** going to support **Frank Nader** at Frank's bride, **Connie's**, celebration of life in Minnesota. In mid-September, Frank dispatched a deeply moving thank-you note to Tom and Jim and the remainder of the F-2 Zoo for their continued personal and spiritual support and for assembling an album of photos of Frank & Connie taken at F-2 events. Without intruding too much, the note did more than express his thanks and deep appreciation and respect for his company mates – it reflected the love and personal interaction between Frank and Connie during their marriage in a measured, strong, and romantic way that reflects a side of Frank that few outside the Zoo knew. He certainly is true to his motto from cadet days: “I can stop being gross any time I want.”

In mid-September, I reported on how New Orleans inhabitants **Dan Adams**, **Bob Shaw**, and **Vic Farrugia** and their families coped with Hurricane Ida. I based my research on our 50th Reunion Bio Book. After I hit the Send button to AOG and you all, I checked a recent AOG class drill roll that noted **Marvelous Marvin Markley** was also listed as an NOLA resident. After a mea culpa email, MMM explained that Katrina was enough for him. After Katrina in 2005 (where he had a great place on Royal St in the French Quarter), he retired and moved to Shreveport (in NW Louisiana). There is still a Petroleum Club there and it is somewhat rare for a hurricane to get that far north (although Hurricane Laura was strong enough to blow-down BIG trees last year). He is keeping busy doing some oil and gas consulting and playing lots of golf.

Bob Stroud Conducts Amphibious Operation on West Point

Back in July, **Bob Stroud** and his two sons trailered his power boat (stink potter) from the Annapolis area to West Point and (as a member of the West Point Yacht Club) launched it at South Dock. With the help of his sons, they made a trip down river to NYC, and then a trip up river and thru the Champlain Canal for several days of beautiful cruising on Lake Champlain. They had a terrific bonding time seeing the historical sights such as Fort Ticonderoga, Valcour Island, and Crown Point. Once they finally made it safely back to West Point, they retrailered the boat and drove back to Maryland.



[Photo #7 – “Bob Stroud in a favorite setting – being chauffeured away from West Point”]



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Andy Shaffer's Ships Prominently Displayed in Texas Museum

As mentioned earlier, **Andy Shaffer** is a wooden ship replica craftsman extraordinaire. As noted on his website (<https://www.shaffers-ships.com/>), over the last 29 years, he has constructed over 15 replica ships (warships and merchant vessels) dating back to the 1600s. These are not your Revell plastic models from our childhood. While museums in Texas have asked him to display his ships, he has been reluctant to put them out for permanent display until now. Two of Andy's ships now have a permanent berth in the City By the Sea Museum in Palacios, Texas. One is the *Invincible*, the flagship of the Texas Navy, and the other is the *Triumphant*, a ship of the French Royal Navy.



[Photo #1 – “Andy Shaffer at the acceptance celebration at the City by the Sea Museum in Palacios, Texas”]

Dallens and McKennas – Last Back and First Out for International Travel

As mentioned earlier this year, **John & Frances Dallen** and **Brian & Karen McKenna** were among the last to return to the US and hunker down after “Series of Unfortunate Events” encountered that shortened their last trip and the latest variant and booster warnings.” It didn’t take long for the wanderlust bug to overcome the frustrations of previous events and the discomfort of masks and boosters. Last month, they boarded a relatively small SilverSeas cruise ship (that had been out of service for over 16 months) in Santiago, Chile and set out for a two and a half week adventure to Antarctica via various not-guaranteed islands, straits, and passages to (possibly) see numerous species of seals, whales, penguins, other exotic birds, fishes, and animals. Since the ship was fully staffed (albeit with somewhat rusty hospitality industry personnel) and not all of the cabins were filled, passengers were treated to various levels of service and care. On the plus side, this is an adventure where a tourist rarely encounters pick-pockets. If you are thinking about breaking out of lockdown, read John’s blog at Dallen.posthaven.com for an exciting, informative, well written, and candid review. John summarized the journey as, “A stress-filled start and a stress-filled end, and a marvelous, once in a lifetime adventure between. International travel in the COVID era is not easy, but we remain glad we are struggling through it. Life is short, and for those of us staggering through the victory

lap of life, however exhausted and exhausting, it feels good to still be creating memories to hold and to share.”



[Photo #2 – “Brian & Karen McKenna and Frances & John Dallen chilling out in Antarctica”]

B-4 Mini-Reunion

Ralph D’Alessandro reported that, in mid- November, he and his bride, **Linda Bacigalupi**, teamed up with **Rick & Pat Goodell** to invade and party at **Pete & Cathy Swan's** villa in Paradise Valley, Arizona in a repeat of earlier mini-reunions. This time, because of COVID concerns, **Jay Johnson** & his bride **Marian** were not able to join the gathering from their home in New Hampshire. Rick & Pat drove from their home in Portland, Oregon and Ralph & Linda sailed south from their home in Western Colorado. Pete & Cathy hosted the two couples with great food, bountiful wine, and lots of Arizona sunshine. The guests reciprocated with many tall tales of past and current adventures. While the ladies enjoyed massages, the guys played a round of best ball golf, with Rick and Ralph – who had not played golf in many moons – teaming up as one team against Pete, who plays multiple times every week. On the 18th hole, thanks to a great drive by Rick and a birdie putt by Ralph, the twosome was able to pull out a hard fought win. Pete had returned a short time earlier from an overseas trip promoting his and Cathy's pet space project of space elevators, so he could claim residual jet-lag, despite having played a round a day or two after he returned to Arizona. Prior to this gathering, Rick & Pat had just returned from an East Coast trip where they saw Jay & Marian and took a cruise on the Chesapeake Bay. During a stop near Annapolis, Rick gleefully and publicly advised the guide, who was touting to the tour group the attributes of the USNA and its football team a bit too glowingly. Rick reminded the guide – and all others on the tour – that Navy and its star quarterback, Roger Staubach, lost the last game Staubach played at Navy to Army in the 1964 Army-Navy game. That timely bit of information seemed to move the guide on to other topics... On a past and current subject, Ralph mentioned that he has a long running annual bet with a law school classmate who was Navy’s ‘68 track team captain, Phil Katauskas. USMA track team captain, **Greg Camp**, also stays in touch with Phil, so when Phil’s son, Alex, service transferred into the Army, Greg swore him in at Ft Benning. Alex is now enroute back to West Point for his second instructor tour – this time as a Juice P after getting his PhD at RPI. Alex and his wife, both Navy grads and ex-Marines, enjoy the rivalry being Navy grads at West Point, especially at this time of year.



[Photo #3 – “Rick & Pat Goodell, Linda & Ralph D’Alessandro, and Cathy & Pete Swan creating a food shortage in Paradise Valley, Arizona”]

Bob & Randy Hensler Fend Off COVID by Driving a Lot

In an effort to cure their cabin fever, **Bob & Randy Hensler** set off from their home in San Antonio for a road trip that included a reunion with Bob’s War College work group in the Central Atlantic area, and a stop to visit A-1 company mate **John Hedley** at Lake Norman, North Carolina. They also visited their son at Fort Benning. Bob’s work group had the reputation of immediately “clicking” and essentially took over the War College. While at Lake Norman, the Hedleys took the Henslers to Richard’s Welcome Home Veterans Coffee Shop and shared them with us. After Benning, Bob & Randy returned to San Antonio just long enough to do laundry and then drove over to New Orleans to tour the WWII Museum with **Jim Stefan, Tommy & Bonnie Barnes**, and **Jim & Suzanne Hargis** – all members of a pretty large group that gets together on Tuesday evenings for a Zoom call to reflect on our class’ legacy. While Bob & Randy were with Hedleys and us at Lake Norman, we agreed that two places vets need to go are the beaches at Normandy and the WWII Museum. The group stayed at the Higgins Hotel – not cheap but very convenient. They spent one evening atop the Higgins Hotel at "Rosie's," (as in Rosie the Riveter) where the waitresses wore red bandanas wrapped around their heads just like the famous poster of "Rosie." At the museum, the group sat in on a "4 D" presentation in a small theater that covered the entire War – like a Military Art Cliff Notes – narrated by Tom Hanks. At one point, a German Tiger tank cut loose with its main gun and the noise and blast of air in the theater, simulating the gun's muzzle blast, was quite realistic. Then, the seats started vibrating as the tank moved on. Bob recounted that the presentation was VERY emotional, and he admitted to “blowing ‘OD snot” by its conclusion!



[Photo #4 – “Randy Hensler, Margie Hedley, Barbara Gerard, John Hedley, and Bob Hensler at Lake Norman”]

When the Henslers departed Lake Norman, so did the Hedleys. They headed to Hilton Head Island to meet up with **Ray Rhodes** and **Tony Mathews**. Tony lives there and is THE go-to guy regarding anything about the Island.”



[Photo #5 – “John Hedley, Tony Mathews, and Ray Rhodes on Hilton Head Island”]

Claude & Tina Johnson Check In

Moved by the recent losses in our ranks, **Claude Johnson**’s bride, **Tina** wrote to offer encouragement and news. She shared that **Nick Nahorniak** had called Claude this summer to chat and lift Johnson spirits. Recently Tina lost a sister and Claude lost one of his brothers to COVID. Claude is physically in great shape and still a dear. He goes to a day program one day a week. Tina calls it “Post K” – if you’re four years old, you go to Pre K – after 75, it becomes Post-K. All of his garden work, and other weekly volunteer commitments ended during 2020. The Johnsons hosted their children and grands for Thanksgiving. Claude once reflected, “Grandchildren really are named aptly! They ARE grand! AND give meaning to ‘the rest of your life!’”



[Photo #6 – “Claude & Tina Johnson with their grandchildren during Thanksgiving”]

Loss of John Ryneska Brings Reflections

A few years back, **Andy Stratton** reflected, “As I read about our classmates passing away (**Steve Williams** and **Larry Fulton** from our wedding party are deceased so that is 1/3 of them) or suffering from terminal illnesses, I am thankful for our situation.” When he heard about **John Ryneska** passing, he wrote, “In our Howitzer, the F-4 section of all four classes lead off with, ‘... we’re about as close friends as any group of guys can be.’” These are tough times. Our losses will grow for those of us blessed to live longer. I hope that your friendships have endured and that you can pool your memories for the task or writing Memorial Articles.

Jock Merriam and Peter Hanson

Jocko Merriam shared that he and **Peter Hanson** met for lunch on Veterans Day in Stuart, Florida -- mid-point between Jock's & **Malena's** year-round compound in Palm Beach Gardens and Peter's winter digs in Vero Beach. They had a nice (and free) lunch at a local pub. They were charging for beer so they pulled a cadet summer trip move (no money in their pockets) on them and stuck to Arnold Palmers. The summer trip move originated when Jocko, Peter, **Bill Bachman**, and **Jack Swaney** caught a hop to Europe the summer of 1965. They learned the "cadet summer trip move" (CSTM) as they explored the continent on a zero-dollars-based budget (ZDB2). At lunch, Jock and Peter reminisced about their shared artillery careers, Vietnam, life after the Army and those classmates we have lost recently. They agreed that they would see each other again soon to watch the navy game (deliberate lower case). Jocko further reported that his and Malena's daughter just retired from the Army (LTC- Military Intelligence) and their son is at Carlisle for the War College experience (Col, JAGC). Malena and Jocko are linking up with the kids and hoping for enough snow and airline cooperation for a ski week in Breckenridge over Christmas.



[Photo #7 – Peter Hanson & Jocko Merriam

at a pub in Florida honoring Veterans Day']

A few weeks later, Jocko wrote to express his and Malena's sadness regarding the passing of **Ed Garrison**. Jock and Ed didn't know each other as cadets – a Regimental thing – but, as Jock was returning from Vietnam (and enroute to Germany), successfully convinced Malena to marry him. He went to Panama (where Ed was stationed at the time) to marry Malena and, concurrently, had to see about filling up his of the aisle with people who could stand in for members of his family or others close to him since neither of his parent or his brother could make it. Only one of his siblings – his sister, Crystal – was able to attend and participate. The wedding was a momentous event for Jock, Malena and her family and Crystal – and a call to duty for Ed.



[Photo #8 – “Jocko’s and Malena’s wedding in Panama in 1969 with Ed Garrison and two brothers-in-law to add balance”]

Ambroses and Carsons Meet in Columbus

Tony Ambrose sent a photo of a display consisting of small flags, in honor of Veterans Day, that commemorate members of the Armed Forces on active duty lost to hostilities since 9/11. It was created by his National Sojourners (an organization of masonic veterans) chapter on the grounds of the Masonic Village where he and **Linda** now live. Tony's chapter does the same thing for Memorial Day at Fort Indiantown Gap. He sent another photo of a microreunion taken a couple of weeks earlier of **Craig & Susan Carson** with the Ambroses in Columbus, Ohio, which is roughly equidistant between their homes. Since the Carsons were unable to make this year's march back, Tony and Craig decided that they needed to get together. They had a couple of nice suppers together, as well as a wine tasting "picnic." While planning the meeting, they discovered that the National Veterans Memorial and Museum was a short walk from their hotel. Tony reported that the exhibits, building, and grounds were extremely well done, and worth a visit by anyone in (or passing through) that part of the country. A bonus to the gathering was that Tony managed to entice Susan into penning a contribution for BSOTW4, which is tentatively entitled "My Husband Is Just As Normal As The Rest Of His Classmates."



[Photo #9 – “Tony & Linda Ambrose with Craig & Susan Carson in Columbus”]

Classmates Gather to Witness Army Beat Airforce

Dale Hansen was the first offer a first-hand report of Army's nail-biter win over Air Force. Dale & **Joyce** met up with **Bill Brown**, and **Dave & Suzanne Martin** at the Army reception at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas on November 6th. They also saw **Joe Guignon** at the reception. **Phil Samuel** ensured his own seat as well as a ride to and from the game by securing tickets for himself as well as for **Ed & Shirley Nelson**. They acknowledged seeing other classmates at the game but Phil could only remember his old Beast roommate, **Ed Lorentzen**. **Ross Irvin** had to take a pass on going o the game in favor of staying home to look after his bride, **Margaret**.



[Photo #10 – “Joyce & Dale Hansen, Suzanne & Dave Martin and Bill Brown at the Army-Air Force Game”]

Much Later Breaking News

While rummaging through Internet sites for scraps of news, I came across some ancient tidbits posted by **Monte Anderson**. If I had been more diligent, they could have been shared years ago... Two Thanksgivings ago, **George & Andrea Shoener** traveled to Scranton, Pennsylvania to visit George’s family. Since they went that far, George and Andrea drove another two plus hours up to Elmira, New York to spend a day with Monte & **Katherine Anderson**. After lunch in a local restaurant, Monte enticed someone to take a picture of two ole company mates. The other photo was obviously taken much earlier and can be filed as an early mini-reunion – the closest I could come to Ranger School photos.



[Photo #11 – “Chief Monte Anderson and George Shoener circa Thanksgiving 2019”]



[Photo #12 – “Steve Caldwell, Monte Anderson, Steve Osborn, and Pete Sowa – we were soldiers once – and slim”]



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Happy New Year



[Photo # 1 – “Dwight Lee, in perfect “promotion picture” posture celebrates New Year’s Day on Pauley’s Island in 75° weather”]

Jack & Meg Miller “Formally” Celebrate Their 53rd

Jack Miller reported that he and Meg had intended to celebrate their 53rd Wedding Anniversary like most of the others – a quiet evening at dinner for two at their favorite restaurant. However, their 5-year old grandson caused them to do a drastic reconsideration. Last Fall, their daughter spotted an online deal she couldn’t refuse – a tuxedo for her son at a bargain price of \$24.95. Jack’s initial reaction was "what 5-year old needs a tuxedo?" As it turns out their grandson frequently watches old Fred Astaire movies with his older sister and really wanted to party like Fred. So, Jack & Meg planned a small formal party in which their youngest grandson would be “Fred” for a day. Jack admits that after almost two years of being sheltered and/or isolated, it felt good to get dressed up and socialize like days of yore. During conversation at the party, Jack says he found out that his daughter had already purchased another tuxedo for next year. Seems like a conspiracy of sorts.....



[Photo #2 – “Jack & Meg Miller surrounded by their family at their formal 53rd Wedding Anniversary Celebration”]

Jim & Rene Orahood Celebrate Their 52nd in a More Laid Back Way

Nestled on the Georgia coast, midway between Savannah, Georgia and Jacksonville, Florida, **Jim Orahood** dropped an email with some usable photos from St. Simon, Georgia to show a more relaxed way to celebrate a wedding anniversary. The kids and grandkids are grown and Jim & **Rene** get to enjoy each other. Jim also sent a photo of **Bill & Cindy McCauley** dealing with life in Key West. Sadly, the camera lens seems to have been coated with SPF 75 sun and focus block.



[Photo # 3 – “Jim & Rene Orahood trying to relax after 52 years of marital bliss”]



[Photo # 4 “Jim Orahood sowing off an anniversary present he bought himself”]

Liebs Provided 2021 Highlights in a Paragraph

Special thanks and shout-out to **Charlie & Janet Lieb** for making my job easier this time of year. While they sent along a big holiday letter with their card, they also provided a Cliff Notes version. They admit that this past year has been a trying time for everyone navigating through the pandemic. They feel grateful to be able to continue doing most of the things they enjoy: golf, pickle ball, riding horses, biking, attending Packer games, spending time with the grandkids in California and spending the winter months in Florida. A real highlight of the year for them was attending the opening home game of the Charleston Battery Soccer team (Charlie, Janet, and their kids are minority owners). The following week, they were thrilled to attend the

PGA Championship on Kiawah Island to watch their son-in-law, Brad Marek (tall guy wearing a big floppy hat), make his debut.



[Photo # 5 – “Charlie & Janet Lieb with their grand kids”]

Families Gather and Work Together

Elwood & Mary-Lou Cobey hosted their ever-growing clan at the family farm in Florida, **Jack & Bobbi Munson** opened their Cape Cod and Delaware homes and **Ralph & Sandy Tuccillo** clustered in Massachusetts and New Hampshire with families to take a break from lock-downs and refocus on the importance of these special groups. From the looks of the family photo album created in a word processing format, I could not access to share any of the photos, **Chick & Carole James** followed suit with many classmate families. While taking a break to read a book or putter, or play, they all gathered to share the load of cooking and washing so all are mutually comfortably drained and remembering how important it is to belong. It’s times like these – during holidays or events – to discover what grandchild is now taller than grandmother or mother. It’s great to say, “Look how you have grown” to the kids and grandkids – not so much the other way around...



[Photo # 6 – “The 2021 Cobey clan in Florida”]



[Photo # 7 – “All because of Mary-Lou and Elwood Cobey”]

Colorado Classmates Gather for Christmas Luncheon

Larry Stevenson sent photos (and corresponding names of classmates and brides) taken at the Colorado group’s annual Christmas luncheon held at the Bear Dance Golf Club in Denver, which opened up just to treat our gang to a great buffet. They all looked so good that they voted to share their fun and attachment with the class. At the time of the luncheon, they had not seen snow in over 200 days, so it was an easy drive for all. My Barbara noted that, since **Patti Halstead** was not in any of the pictures, she was the one wielding the camera. The Halstead holiday letter revealed that she had had knee replacement surgery and she was still recovering. Kari & Jim (Jr) Orahoad still live in Colorado Springs and they have looked after **Gary’s & Patti’s** wellbeing as they take care of “little jobs” to maintain the Halstead Manor. Gary enjoys ’68 Class luncheons, Tuesday Gentlemen’s Club and lots of golf. Army football games have brought a great camaraderie to the B-2 Bulldogs with Gary staying in cyber contact with **Steve Harper, Dave Ford, Ronnie Lane, Greg Camp, and Don Johnson** while watching from their respective homes and “pinging” away with texts laced with spirit. Gary & Patti traveled to Georgia to see their son, Scott, and stay with **Greg & Joanie Camp**. December brought Steve & **Sherry Harper** and further gatherings with Don & **Louann Johnson**.



[Photo # 8 – “Colorado Christmas Luncheon: Luann & Don Johnson (best sweater), Paulette & Dick Steiner, Marv & Ann Wooten, and Gary Halstead”]

Mike & Samar Fay did not attend the gathering as they live a little farther away from Denver than other classmates and they were busy preparing their spread for the ebbs and flows of winter. Mike was the Rector of The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Salida, Colorado where he spent the last couple of years celebrating services virtually and learning the hard way not to even try to lead his congregation in hymns on Zoom. The church did a celebration of Mike's ministry at the end of May and he retired shortly thereafter on June 1. Now, they tend the garden and live off of the land – lots of chard, tomatoes, squash. Samar put up 15 jars of salsa last year and they ate a lot of pesto, Caprisi salad and BLTs on homemade sourdough bread.

Colorado Classmates – Part II

After the Christmas luncheon, the Boulder area was hit with a devastating wildfire. While **Mike & Becky Fellows** kept us apprised of their situation via social media, I had not heard from **Greg Johnson** so I reached out only to find that he had far more going on than dodging wildfires. High winds took out power in his neighborhood; however, his daughter's community was in real fire jeopardy. While she was interviewed and quoted fairly extensively in *The NY Times*, her home survived. During our spotty conversations (commo was iffy), he informed me that he lost his beloved **Donna** in May to an autoimmune disease called Sjogren's Syndrome that she was stricken with in 2001. The disease remained at bay until 2019, when it rose up again. With Covid restrictions coming in the spring of 2020, it was not obvious to many that she had been further weakened. When she contracted a simple lung infection in May of 2021, it became too much for her weakened system, and she succumbed. During the Class Christmas luncheon, Greg met up with **GI Larry Stevenson** who lost his **Cheryl** a month before Greg lost Donna. As you can see, they sat together and supported each other through this first holiday season alone.



[Photo # 9 – “Chuck & Gayle Jones, Lynne & Robby Robinson, Becky & Mike Fellows, and Joe Henry



[Photo # 10 – “Cindy & Les Krohnfeldt, Greg Johnson Larry Stevenson, and Tom & Judy Martin

First Holiday With Family Yet Alone

John Cruden relates to **Larry's and Greg's Holiday standing. This was the first Christmas that John & Sharon** were not together since he was 17. Sharon's passing has bonded their family together – each individual looking after all the others. As a reminder, on Sunday, January 23, at 1 PM, the Cruden family will host a reception and then a dedication of a bench honoring Sharon and “All Army Wives” at the new Army Museum. All classmates are invited and can RSVP to John's and Sharon's daughter, Heather Campbell at heather99campbell@gmail.com.

Sharon Cruden Bench Dedication
1946 - 2021

In loving tribute to Sharon Holland Cruden, an exceptional wife, mother, grandmother, and friend – we celebrate a long and beautiful life filled with adventure, laughter, music, service, and much love. Born in Wyandotte, Michigan, Sharon was a child prodigy in music and was a gifted musician and artist throughout her life. She was the first member of her family to attend and graduate from college. After graduation she married her best friend and love of her life, John Cruden. She continued her passion for teaching and learning by earning advanced education degrees and went on to become one of the first Learning Disabilities Specialists. As a pioneer in the field of Special Education and Learning Disabilities, she became a well-known educator and taught at four different colleges. She helped develop the first program in the State of California for students with learning disabilities.



She was also a lover of adventure and travel. She and her family lived in Germany for many years, where they traveled extensively throughout Europe. She went on many other adventures, including sailing on a ship in the Aegean Sea, snorkeling in the Galapagos, cross-country skiing throughout Europe, and kayaking in Alaska and Canada. In addition to teaching, she had a heart of service to others, serving as a hospital chaplain, founding a prayer shawl ministry, and creating beautiful quilts as gifts for others. In May, a ceremony of remembrance was held at the Aldersgate United Methodist Church. In August, a graveside service was held for her at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY. We miss her steadfast love, her comforting smile, her frequent conversations, and her dedication to her family. She is in our hearts now, and her memory burns brightly, guiding us still in our lives.

[Photo # 11 – Sharon

Cruden's Bench Dedication”]

Something to give Thanks For – Wounded Wives Club

Patti Halstead was not the only bride to undergo a knee replacement this last year. If COVID wasn't enough, **Ann Wright** had her international travel curtailed totally this year with total knee replacement surgery this summer. As part of her rehab, she and **Rick** traveled to Southern California to visit family and dodge the Texas heat. This may have been the first year that Rick traveled more than Ann since he is still working remotely for IDA and engineered two trips back to Alexandria, Virginia to meet his new boss and help with the move to IDA's new office building in Arlington – oh, yeah – and to see his two sons and their brides. **Nancy Hoblit's** rheumatoid arthritis is stable but remains a day-to-day challenge. Both Nancy and **Fred** have curtailed their golf and (as good COVID poster children) hunkered down in Nancy's summer home in Traverse City, Michigan. **Carol Shimp** also had leg issues only it was shooting pain brought about by bone spurs on her vertebrae that required back surgery. Her rehab included supporting **Bob** and helping **Kathy Shipley** cheer on **Dick Shipley** after his major surgery. COVID curtailed travel to Mendoza, so Bob & Carol participated in this year's blending via Zoom. To stay active in the wine business, they traveled to Paso Robles, California for the harvest and some “pop-up” pairing dinners. They also cheered on their son's and daughter-in-

law's move from El Paso to his new CEO position at Osceola Regional Medical Center in Orlando, Florida.

Something to Aspire to

As a major deviation to Sick Ranks, **Bob & Carol Shimp** paid a quick visit to Jacksonville, Florida this fall to check on Bob (96 and 94 year old) parents. Who else still has both parents? **Dutch Hostler's** mom is 98 and proud of her gentleman farmer son.



[Photo # 12 “Farmer Dutch’ Hostler on his way out to the North 40 at his spread on Oahu”]

Jim Jennings related to his F-2 Zoo company mates that, on December 9, his Mom, Irene Jennings, celebrated her 100th Birthday in Las Vegas. Jim & **Diana** were joined by their son, John Paul (who flew in from London), and daughter, Anna Marie (who flew in from New York), to celebrate with Irene in Las Vegas, Nevada. For her Birthday celebration, they had some great dinner(s), John Paul sang Pavarotti’s *Mamma* and she was able to participate in her favorite pastime – watching (and betting on) football – in the Sportsbook at Mandalay Bay. A veteran of four Army- Navy games in Philadelphia, she rooted hard for the Army team, but sadly Army lost, as did she – but she won over all and covered the spread. Members of the Zoo wrote back as they recalled the party that she threw at her home in Ohio after the Pitt game our Firstie year – she managed to get most everyone a date for the evening.



[Photo # 13 – “Anna Marie, Jim, Diana, and John Paul Jennings surround Jim’s 100 year-old Mom – Irene – during part of her birthday celebration in Las Vegas”]