

Class of 1957 Class Notes 30 September 2014

I am going to start this column off with some Class business, go to current news, include some old news, and end with a review of Class losses in the last quarter. On a personal note, we have just entered the Jewish Year of 5775, an auspicious year that celebrates 57 forwards and backwards.

Class Business: The Class purchased a '57 flag to be displayed at WP. Here are the details from Paul Schwehm. "The Executive Board has purchased a Class flag, one for the primary purpose of use at West Point. It is displayed routinely in the alumni center, Herbert Hall, and can be used for funerals, reunions, and other Class West Point events. Be assured that it is not intended to replace our older version, which gets considerable use in the Washington area and is proudly carried at reunion alumni exercises. Part of the motivation for the acquisition is that the AOG now has a staff member who liaisons with the families for West Point funeral services. Her duties include arranging for a class flag to be transported to and displayed at the chapel or cemetery at their request." A picture of the flag in Herbert Hall follows.



Paul also provided some information about Class donations to WP gleaned from an AOG publication. "The AOG has published its report on giving for 2013, and our Class was very well represented. Forty-seven of us were cited for 2013 gifts. Since the report presents the giving in many ways, i.e., magnitude of the generosity, target of the gifts, consistency in giving over the years, etc., our 47 grads, ex-cadets and widows were cited about 80 times in the listings. Ten gifts were made "in honor of"

or “in memory of” our classmates. Our total contribution for the year was precisely \$206,437.15. Our lifetime giving figure is \$4,078,077.89, and our participation rate of 87.73% is the third highest of all classes from 1933. Well done, indeed. *For Us All: The Campaign for West Point* has accumulated more than \$345 million in cash and pledges toward its \$350 million goal and will continue through 2015. It is definitely not too late to contribute.”

Speaking of donations, our largest donation was made to build the Honor Plaza, and unfortunately time and the elements have caused some damage. The Class has established a small endowment to cover minor repairs, but recently we donated some additional funds from our gift fund for some more substantial repairs. Bill Ray negotiated with WP to get the repairs made and took some pictures of the final result on a recent visit to WP. The work included: Removal and resetting the dark paver; Resetting the granite under the plaque; Removal and replacement of the horizontal and vertical caulking on the West side of the Plaza; Removal and replacement of the failed joints on the West side of the Plaza; Entire site was power washed to clean and remove loose mortar from the walking surface and failed joints were replaced. I think it looks good, and here are some pictures Bill sent.



The Class was invited to nominate a Class Advisor to the WPAOG Advisory Council. For those unfamiliar with the Council, and that includes me, here’s the AOG description of its structure and functions. The WPAOG’s Advisory Council is comprised of 54 Advisors: 18 Advisors-at-Large, 18 Class Advisors, and 18 Society

Advisors. Each year, 6 Class Advisor seats are rotated for a 3-year term on the Advisory Council. Starting January 1, 2015 and continuing through December 31, 2017, your Class is asked to provide a representative to serve in this role. WPAOG's expectations of members of the Advisory Council are the following:

- Attend 2 Advisory Council meetings each year at West Point (usually in May and August).
- Represent your Class on issues that are being studied or discussed.
- Serve on WPAOG committees and task forces based on your expertise or demographic perspective.
- In cooperation with your Class officers, communicate with your classmates on matters of importance to the LGL and West Point. Be an advocate for WPAOG's programs and services.
- Support West Point and the Long Gray Line Fund through annual gifts.

Our nominee was Dave Schorr, and Paul Schwehm received agreement from Dave and the AOG. Paul wrote, "For the record, it is official. I've notified Dave, he affirmed his acceptance, and the AOG has been informed and has acknowledged same." Dave, in accepting the position, said: "Thank you. I am happy and proud to serve as our Class's AOG Advisor." Thank you, Dave, for your dedication to the Class.

Last, Paul is diligently working with the AOG on negotiating a contract with the Thayer Hotel for our 60th Reunion. It looks promising, but it will take a while.

Lou Circeo: "I thought that the class would be interested in learning that many of us are still actively making contributions to society.

Last year the Russian Government invited me to become a member of their 25-member "International Award Committee" to select the winner(s) of the Global Energy Prize. (See below link). This is an annual award, akin to a Nobel Prize for Energy, with several honors and a monetary award of about \$1.25 Million. I get 2 VIP trips to Russia every year (in March to Moscow to select the winner(s); in May to St. Petersburg to participate in the award ceremonies [the President of Russia presents the awards] and to attend the receptions and celebrations honoring the winner(s). I have recently returned from my first award cycle, and must admit that our VIP treatment was wonderful."

Bill and Montse Webb visited WP on 12 September and attended the funeral for **Alex Vardamis**. He also toured the facilities and met with some of the cadets he helped get there. What follows are extracts from his report to K-1 on the funeral, and part of his description of the rest of the day. "Under bright sunlit skies we walked with Al's wife Fran and family to the interment site. ... We were accompanied by the AOG staff, and met at graveside by a uniformed military honor detail. In the distance was a rifle squad for the final salute. I was honored to be asked to bear the Class of '57 Colors at graveside. As the service progressed a breeze softly moved our flag. Eulogies were given by Al's son and daughter telling of their respect for a man of integrity and service. ... Al now Grips Hands from the Shadows, as will we all. From the cemetery we proceeded to the "Beat Navy House", across the road from the Catholic Chapel for a reception lunch. Montse and I chose to sit at the woodblock table in the kitchen and were joined by **Fran**, her son Dan and wife Elaine, plus grandson Joshua. We told stories of Al, as a Cadet, an Officer and in his retirement. It was good value and a celebration of a life well

lived. Company K-1 Classmate Al Vardamis, RIP...Well Done!



And here's how Bill and Montse spent the rest of the day. "We visited the AOG Gift Shop and in so doing viewed the Class memorial bricks now emplaced in the garden behind the building. Next was the West Point visitor's Center and gift shop. ... Aft of the Visitor's center is the West Point Museum. It is a huge value and fundamental to understanding the Academy and our military history. Then on we went back to the "Post" or is it "Campus", parking at the baseball field and first doing a recon of the West Point Club. (no change) Next we crossed the road to the "new" library. Walking the sidewalk we found no entrance. I stopped a cadet and asked how to enter the building. ... On entering Thayer road we were stopped by a Yearling on soft guard duty. Security was up and only those with Military IDs were admitted. We thanked him and moved to enter the Library, by the wrong door! Eventually we

found the 6th floor parapet vista facing the parade field, and Trophy Point ... All of our Cadets showed well, strong and committed. ... These are good men of whom we can be proud. They know they are entering our profession at a time our nation is at war. I see commitment in them which is part of our heritage. The LGL endures.”

Thanks, Bill.

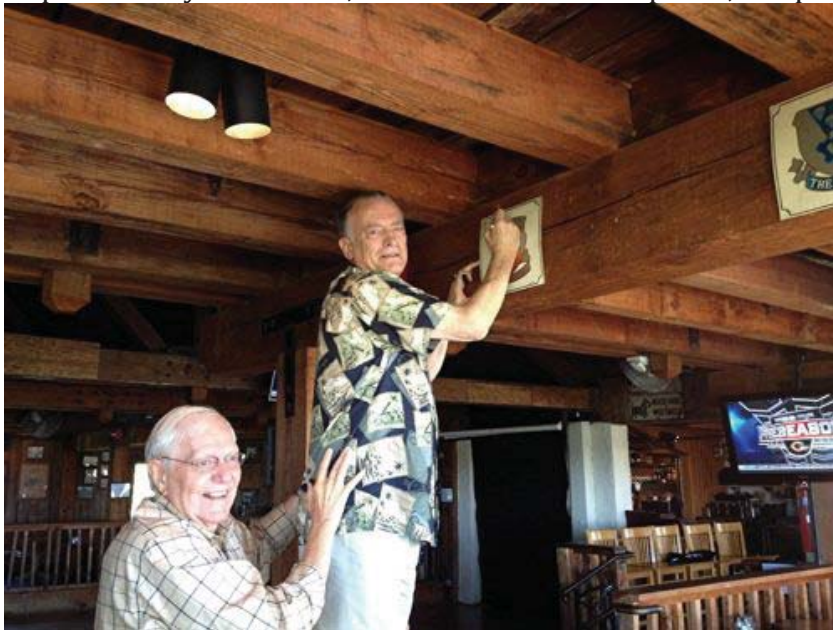
Kay Kehoe: A large number of Classmates turned out for **Tom’s** funeral and burial at Arlington National Cemetery, and then gathered at the Ft. Myer O’Club to celebrate Tom’s life. Nineteen members of the Washington DC, Alumni Glee Club, including three members of '57, sang "Mansions of the Lord" for the Processional, and the Alma Mater for the Recessional. It was a great send-off and I know Tom would have been pleased, as was our family. Unfortunately, the role of caretaker for such an extended period (about ten years) has taken its toll on Kay’s health. In a note to friends, she wrote: “I have been "out of commission" for a while and apologize for not answering my mail. Not long after Tom's funeral on August 6th, I began feeling not at all well. Thought I was just exhausted. Turns out that I finally went to the doctor last Wednesday, after sleeping round the clock since Saturday, and I could barely walk, see and was slurring my words. I was diagnosed almost immediately with diabetes and my level was over 600. Think you need to be around 70-100. Since then I have been having insulin shots daily. They began at 10 and I am up to 30 today and my level is down to the mid 200's. I am still sleeping a good part of the time and my vision is not good enough to read. ... Poor daughter Kathy has not been back to work to the funeral, except for a few days. She's been playing nursemaid to Tip and me, Suzy homemaker, shopper, etc. ... She is doing a great job as nurse, caregiver, etc. ... Please excuse mistakes!” Subsequently, Kay wrote that things have improved. Kay, we all wish you well and are keeping you in our prayers.

Jack Solomon: Jack sent several inputs, and I’ll start with the report on the Atlanta 4 July celebration. “We just completed our 23rd Annual July 4th get together and it was great fun. This year we held our event at the 57th Fighter Group Restaurant located at Peachtree-DeKalb Airport in Atlanta. An appropriate name for the Class of ‘57. In attendance were **Marty & Val Carson, Mike & Judy Keating, Parks & Sue Houser, Jack & Pat Solomon, Bob & Luanne Faulkender, Lou Circeo, Bill Ray, Gordie Rogers, Fox McCarthy, Paul & Alice Schwehm** and **Fred Smith** and Kathy Tulley. We were privileged to have Paul there as he was able to give us an up to the minute review of what is happening with the class relative to the upcoming reunion and other activities relative to the Academy. I might point out that Paul and Alice have attended 20 of the 23 annual Atlanta July 4th events and for most of those years, Paul would run (and finish) the July 4th Annual Peachtree Road Race. Although age has diminished his physical abilities, it has not diminished his spirit and resolve, and this year he completed the 2014 Peachtree Road Race but this time as a walker. Not bad for an 80 year old. I’ve attached some photos.”



In a second note, titled "Small World," Jack wrote: "For the past year, under Bob Faulkender's leadership, the Atlanta group of 57'ers have met at the 57th Fighter Group Restaurant on the 2nd Wednesday of the month for lunch. Today was an interesting lunch. In attendance were Bob Faulkender, Fred Smith, **Tom McDonald**, Bill Ray, Marty Carson, Lou Circeo and Jack Solomon. We have also used this restaurant as a gathering place for dinner on the Friday evening preceding our annual July 4th get together. The restaurant is saturated with military "stuff" on the walls and on the grounds. Many military photos from the past and insignia, etc. adorn the walls. While talking to the group, Tom looked up at the ceiling beam directly above us and saw what appeared to be the Battalion crest for the 501st Signal Bn (Airborne). It was indeed the crest and it turns out that Tom was the Battalion Commander at one point in his career and so Tom was asked to autograph the crest which he did with Bob providing anti-vertigo support to Tom during the signing. The photo below shows the event."

Jack's last note was about a visit by **Sandy Moses**: "Sandy Moses, widow of my M-1 mate **Charlie Moses**, took a trip east from her home in Phoenix to visit family and friends in Alabama, Georgia and North Carolina. We were thrilled to have her spend 4 days with us. She even got to spend some time with Pat and I at the USO/Atlanta Airport facility." Attached, below the McDonald photo, is a photo from her visit.





Ralph Luther: Location update. I'm now in NC quite near my youngest daughter.
Bob and Jeanne Comeau: “Max, in late May, I had the honor of administering the commissioning oath to my grandson, Nicholas Smith, when he graduated from McDaniel College in Westminster, MD, as a distinguished military graduate and the ROTC battalion commander. He is now a 2LT, Military Police Corps, attending the basic officer course at Ft Leonard Wood, MO. In November, he will report to Ft Bliss, TX, joining his wife, 1LT Devan Hamric, Signal Corps, whom I swore in two years ago when she graduated from McDaniel. Attached are a couple of photos from the event. Oh, and by the way, they're expecting in February--our fourth great-grandchild. Congratulations to all, especially on the great grandchildren.





Barry And Donna Fox: John Ramsden passed on the following message from the Foxes. "Barry and I enjoy knowing how all are doing. To bring you up on us in a paragraph or so. We moved back to our 200 yr old farm home in Brunswick, Maine. We had been in Williamsburg Va for yrs and loved it but loved the old place in Maine better. Have done lots of modifications to it and love its rich history. Area is full of great weather, town looks like a Rockwell painting, lovely main streets downtown, and a large park in the summer and a ice skating area in the hardy winter. It is an easy college town, Bowdoin College, We are close to the ocean and lots of rivers. Being on the coast the winters are not bad. Internal Maine is a different story, We are two hours north of Boston, 30 minutes to Portland. Donna takes care of Vietnam Vets in our extended old place. Has a staff of terrific help. Has license and room for one more should any in the class like to move to Maine. Togus, the Veteran Center here does a superior job as observed first hand. If any in the class find themselves in a situation of wanting to relocate, join us. wmsbgfox@aol.com I would be humbly honored to have a classmate with us.. Grip Hands and beat Navy!!!! "

Jack and Barbara Vickers: I distributed this to the Class, but am including it here for those who missed it. "A few of you made some nice comments to me after my last Narragansett Bay swim in 2011. Scheduling conflicts preventing my making the swim in 2012 and 2013; so I signed- up for this year's across-the-bay swim. General MacArthur said, "Old Soldiers never die; they just fade away." During June, I completed EIGHT practice swims of 1.75 to 2.0 miles. However, in contrast to my previous 5 across-the-bay swims, the weather on 19 July was not sunny and the air temperature was cool (the 70^o F water temperature was about the same as before). Always before, I swam from one side to the other without stopping. This time, when I reached the halfway point, I had to stop and rest on the kayak for a little while. I swam some more and took a longer rest. Soon I was mostly resting on the kayak until we started to approach the Jamestown shore. I then swam the last 2 tenths of a mile to the finish line; and was helped to shore. I was placed in a warming tent, and covered with aluminum-foil blankets and heaters until I stopped shivering (15

minutes or so). Barbara (my beautiful wife, the Nurse) said that when one experiences hypothermia, all of one's energy is diverted to trying to warm the body; so no energy is available for swimming. I was told I was the second oldest swimmer (I was also one of the slowest). This was my last swim across Narragansett Bay – obviously, this Old Soldier has begun to fade away!" Some classmates have expressed doubts that Jack will ever fade away.



Joe Beben: "This June I flew East and spent a week with **Mort Roth**. Mort is in an assisted living home in Stamford CT and doing fairly well. There was one huge accomplishment as a result to his move from VA: his meds were reevaluated and cut back so the hallucinations which plagued him earlier are gone. He's back to his old complaining self but don't we all wish we could dial back ten or twenty years. However, his Parkinson's is unrelenting, minor tremors with his legs are now evident. We drove up to beautiful Wolfeboro NH to visit with **John and Cindy Burt**. John has not been able to put to sea in his beloved sailboat on the Maine coast this year but he hopes to get there soon. John is the treasurer for the city of Wolfeboro, meaning he tracks every penny spent by the various departments, invests spare cash in short-term deposits and otherwise keeps the city finances on an even keel. We spent a lovely evening with steak dinner at their home. The Wolfeboro Inn is first rate, recommend it highly. It sits on Lake Winnepesaukee which is a treasure in itself. The inn has an old fashioned bar which Mort and I inhabited nightly if only because to sample the endless varieties of beer. If you down a hundred (only two at a visit are counted) you get your own pewter mug hung from the ceiling. There were over a thousand such suspended and I don't doubt some of our classmate's names are up there. Finally, no visit with Mort is complete unless you visit a casino and for this we drove to the gargantuan Foxwoods Resort near Mystic. With six casinos and 2,266 hotel rooms one can get lost. En-route we visited the Coast Guard Academy (their marching band was practicing) and the U.S. Submarine World War II Veteran's Memorial (East) at Groton. It was a good visit. You can reach Mort at © 703-282-1043. John is at 603-569-5583." Sounds like a great trip. Thanks, Joe.



Joe Shimek: This was written by a A-2 '58 file and forwarded to me by **Stan Cass**.
"Fellow A-2 Files - I am forwarding to you a card sent to Stan Bacon by **Aleda Shimek**, Joe Shimek's wife. It appears that he is not doing too well, and is now

under hospice care in Kerrville, TX. I went to see him last spring, along with Stan Bacon and Sam Meyers, and although he was happy to see us, it was clear that he was failing mentally due to Alzhiemers (sp?) disease. Aleda and Joe had a very nice place in the country West of Kerrville, in Ingram or Hunt, TX (don't know where one starts and the other ends). Joe called it Fort Kolache. Joe took me out to his "shop" which is a big barn, where he converted one end to his shop to make toy soldiers. He was still doing that last year, but no longer. Aleda is looking for a buyer for his toy soldier collection and manufacturing equipment. Two years ago, the Gonzo Compadres went to Ingram, TX and performed at a party of his friends in a Mexican Restaurant. We did not get thrown out, in fact, they asked us to come back last spring (March), but sadly, Joe was already in the assisted living place, and was unable to attend, so we went to the place where he was, and sang for him and a bunch of residents in the dining room. As we were walking down the hall from Joe's room to the dining room, Joe turned to me and said, "after all of the places we have been, and all of the things we have done, this is what it comes down to." I sadly remember those words from him! **Wes Kidd**, wrote "Who can forget Joe at the head of our Plebe hike column, leading us with his bagpipes."

Gerry and Diane Galloway: The Galloways and Tom and Betty Adcock broke bread with a USNA 57 grad, Cam and Betty Fraser, and sent a photo to prove it can be very congenial.



Bill Golden: Bill sent a suggestion that I'd like to forward to the Class for action, if you agree. Bob Tener was thru here in Carmel Valley on Sat enroute to our small gathering of '57 tailgaters for the Army - Stanford debacle. He took pictures of our '57-related auto license plates to forward to you which he may have done by now. While visiting Ted Voorhees some months ago, and seeing his VA license plate US57MA, I thought it to be an interesting idea to elicit plate pictures from classmates across the country, to be included to your class column. I recall seeing one at a reunion which I think said K2 57. There must be a load of variations on and combinations of USMA, West Point and '57 out in the hinterland. Perhaps on the class net you would solicit such photos of plates and owners.

Nick Monaco: Nick published a comprehensive newsletter about events here in the DC area and it is on the Class web site. Thanks Nick.

Warne Mead: Received a note last May from Hank Larsen, '59 Scribe, with a human interest article from the Fayetteville Observer about Warne. I didn't know he was one of triplets. According to Anne, Warne was an unexpected number three. On 25 May, Warne and brothers Wayne and Wally - all in good health - celebrated their 80th birthdays together. Warne credited their older sister, Miriam (now 85 and living in Berkeley CA) with being the 1st Sgt of the family and helping their mother bring up the boys. It was supposed to be surprise party, but as Warne said, "It's kind of like the Titanic. It started out as a small iceberg." In the end there were 56 guests, with brother Wayne coming from Marco Island, FL and Wally coming from Normal, IL. Congratulations (belatedly), Warne, to the three of you.

I had intended to go back to the end of 2013, but ran out of steam. Sorry about that.

Class losses since 1 July 2014

Alex A Vardamis passed away on 9 July 2014. Obit at <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/burlingtonfreepress/obituary.aspx?pid=171767608>

Donald Ray Schafer passed away on 23 July 2014. Obit at <http://obits.dignitymemorial.com/dignity-memorial/obituary.aspx?n=Donald-Schafer&lc=7237&pid=171857979&mid=6060621>

Alice J. Kidd (wife of **Wes**) passed away on 26 July 2014. Obit in Chicago Tribune, July 28, 2014

Thomas Edmond Dayton passed away on 6 August 2014. Obit at http://herald-zeitung.com/obituaries/article_9cce1b20-25d5-11e4-a822-0019bb2963f4.html