

Greetings, Illustrious Class of 1973! As I write this, the nation is still in Covid-19 lockdown, but the natives are getting restless. It will be interesting to see where we are when we read this in June. The Class of 2020 graduated yesterday, 18 Apr 20, six weeks early. Graduation on the Terrazzo with 8' spacing between cadet chairs and no hugging and celebrating after the ceremony was surreal, to say the least. If you missed the graduation, it's available on YouTube.

Speaking of graduation, Dave and Sheryl **Ellis's** (CS-32) youngest son, Brad, graduated from the Academy Saturday. He played Rugby for our classmate Denny **Merideth**, CS-08, his freshman year, but the next three years were all Wings of Blue. Dave suggested that since there are now '73 grandkids attending USAFA and Sheryl had Brad when she was 43½, Brad might be one of the last '73 kids to go to the Zoo. I had to burst his bubble, though, by telling him we have classmates who married younger women and had children as recently as four or five years ago, so we could have '73 kids in the class of 2038! Brad's graduation announcement package is appended to the end of this column, if you'd like to see it.

If this coronavirus crisis has taught us anything, it's the importance of relationships. There are a number of classmates and wives who are battling cancer and other life-threatening diseases (besides Covid-19). If you or your wife are in that situation, please let at least your squadronmates know. I would also encourage you to let me know so I can pass the word to the class at large so we can send encouragement, and so those of us so inclined can pray for you. There's an old saying, "Joy shared is joy doubled; sorrow shared is sorrow halved." Let us help you bear your burdens.

In that vein:

Tom **Kennedy**, CS-31, sent an update on squadronmate Dan **Connelly**, who is battling cancer. If you'd like more info, please let me know and I'll put you in touch with Tom.

Donna Felton, Charlie **Felton's**, CS-10, wife of 40+ years passed away on 16 Feb 20 here in the Springs. Her funeral mass and interment will be at the Academy on 22 Jun 20.

I mentioned Dean **Haylett's**, CS-14, passing in my last column. His memorial has been moved from 1 May to 1300 11 Sep 202 at the USAFA Cemetery.

Bob **Fraser**, CS-29, retired at the end of February as the Technical Director of the Overhead Collection Management Center at the National Security Agency. "After receiving a DoD paycheck for 50 years, I decided it was time to call it quits. I had a memorable retirement ceremony, which allowed my family to get a glimpse into what I have been doing for the last 35 years in the Intelligence Community. My former boss, Kurt Gaudette ('91), officiated. I was pleased to have classmate Spencer Way attend – he is still toiling away for DIA on the Joint Staff. I never thought I would retire in the DC area, but since it is the center of mass of our five grandchildren, we are staying in Laurel MD." Bob says his wife Laurel has been his main squeeze since 1966! Congratulations on the longevity of your career and your marriage, Bob!



Valerie and Bob **Fraser** at his retirement ceremony from the National Security Agency

I had to laugh at Robert **Horton's** (CS-03) explanation of his email address, javaglide@...: "Love coffee (java) and wanted to go paragliding (glide), so I put them together. Still drinking coffee but never paraglide. I just retired and thought I might try it out this spring but.....between the virus complications and my wife saying I am an idiot at 69 (don't prematurely join the Gone But Not Forgotten), it's not looking good for my paragliding aspirations."



Ernie **Maravilla**, CS-11/15, sent an input from last fall he found in his Drafts (who *hasn't* done that). He and Frank **Sanchez**, CS-32, met up for the USAFA vs UNM football game in Albuquerque, NM on 23 Nov 19. It was a great game as the Falcons routed the Lobos!

Ernie **Maravilla** and Frank **Sanchez** at USAFA vs UNM football game Nov 2019

Spotted at the 2020 Wing Open Boxing tournament: Wing Open Champions AJ **Briding**, CS-19, and Johnny **Blecher**, CS-30. AJ: "Ed Weichers was the first USAFA boxing coach, and he was one of the co-founders of the National Collegiate Boxing Association (NCBA)...He and a few other coaches redesigned collegiate boxing rules to make it safer and more competitive, even for new boxers. Johnny **Blecher** was one of his assistant coaches during the first two years of the team. Then I took Johnny's place in '82, coaching through '84." USAFA won its first collegiate championship in 1980 with Johnny as the asst coach; they won again in '83 and '84 with AJ as asst coach. Air Force has won a total of 19 times. (Bob **Munson**, CS-34, reporting on scene.)



AJ **Briding**, CS-34, and Johnny **Blecher**, CS-30, reunited at the 2020 Wing

Al **Dunlap**, CS-08, sent a photo from a mini-reunion members of Evil Eight held in Scottsdale, AZ in early March. Al said they went there to enjoy the AZ spring weather, take in some MLB spring training games, enjoy each other's company, and of course celebrate life. Unfortunately, spring training baseball was cancelled the day they arrived, but as you can see from the picture, it did not stop them from successfully enjoying/accomplishing the rest.



Evil Eight mini-reunion in Scottsdale, AZ. Front Row (L to R): Ron **Moran**, Jim **Iagulli** and his wife Mary Jo, and Steve **Sexton**. Back Row: (L to R) Pam Moran, Ken **Womack** and his wife Alice, Allison Dunlap (daughter), Al **Dunlap**, Terry **Graybeal** and his wife Martha, Larry **Radov**, and Ann Carmichael (friend of Steve Sexton).

Stalker **Reed's** (CS-07) epic trip to sail with Bill Hanlon on the Seawanhaka out of the Seychelles was cancelled for obvious reasons. More on Captain Seawanhaka below. Stalker also reported that after 36 years with American Airlines, Alan **Kinback**, CS-07, is now an essential freight pilot flying solo in Beach 1900s at various locations throughout USA. Due to the virus, the problem now is getting to work from Palm Beach FL on the airlines, finding a shuttle or taxi, finding a hotel, and finding food. Other than that, Alan reports he loves the flying, most of time.

Dan **Pierre**, CS-39, sent in a newsy report: "Our preplanned vacations seem to regularly interfere with our priority '73 alumni events. Missed our 45th due to a Mediterranean Wine Cruise, and now this NCLS

2020. Just making up for my years of overloaded work schedules & road trips to Denise! Despite Green Bay not making it to the Super Bowl, I too was rooting for the Chiefs. I and four other 39ers participated in a continuous texting exchange with sparkling commentary throughout the game—both Mark **Romain** and Skip **Evans** are KC residents, and we were hoping for a Packer/Chiefs Super Bowl. Kelly **McCullar** commented that our personal communications over the 3-hour game was as exciting as the game itself. Al **Maurer** holds down our CS-39 representation quite respectably, but I do miss the personal interchange with our esteemed classmates and catching up on our collected experiences. My son, Doug, a '99 grad, says his class is not nearly as engaged as '73."

From Todd **LaVigne**, CS-04/03:

"My wife and I live outside Huntsville and I've been working for the US Army for some 19 years as a civilian handling Foreign Military Sales cases, currently for the UAE. She is retired from the USAF and the US Army as a civilian as well. Unfortunately, she has some other health issues (along with our **ADVANCED** age!) that makes it unsafe for us to do much activity that is out and about. So, we are sticking close to home pretty much. I saw the note from Nicole Cox about keeping contact with any cadets in the local area. I'd be glad to help with that as long as it's virtual, so let me know.



Diana and Todd **LaVigne** at RoemerFest Trier Oct 2008



The LaVignes' Piesport, Germany house and Land Rover

"Here are a couple of photos from our last assignment in Germany. We were both working at HQ EUCOM in Stuttgart but we liked the Mosel valley wine so much we made regular 5+hour drives up to the river to attend the wine fests [above] and ended up buying a house there [below]. That one was taken the day we closed on the house and I was bringing in our first bottle of Piesport German Sekt (champagne) to celebrate.

"Yes, [opcwarlord@xxxxx.xxx](mailto:opcwarlord@xxxxx.xxx) is my personal mail. That was my call sign during our deployment to Turkey following the 1st Gulf War when we were doing overflights in northern Iraq to protect the Kurds from

Saddam's leftover army. We took 11, F111Fs to Incirlik for 101 days (Sept 92 - Jan 93) and flew everyday but 4, I think. I was the Sqdn Maintenance Officer for the 524th FS and it was an altogether interesting experience."

Class President Ron **Scott**, CS-34, sent an update to the Class Book Project. If you're not aware of it, we are putting together a book that describes our experiences before, at and after our time at the Academy. The plan is to have the book ready for our 50<sup>th</sup> reunion and our Legacy Class of 2023's graduation a few months before our reunion in Nov 2023. Ron's update:

Part I is two-thirds complete; chapters pending are from Lorenz (has submitted material but needs to be integrated), Klotz, Merideth, Taravella, Muse, and Munson.

Mike Mosier has the lead on drafting an introduction and possibly a separate chapter for Part I on careerism (and possibly the difference between ambition and being ambitious).

Felicia Recker (AOG Graduate Programs) assured me today that they have a wonderful database that she will pulse to support our requirements (e.g., all who entered, did not graduate, graduated, but not commissioned, etc. for one of our appendices; and other details that can be useful for our class profile).

The current book organizational structure is not in concrete. For example, depending upon how much material we have for Part II, we might blend that into the introduction.

Once we have received all the Part I chapters, we'll request that the writing team review and offer recommended track edits for grammar and any recommendations to improve content and flow. For a document control process, I recommend a single document move sequentially from reviewer to reviewer and accumulate track edits and margin comments progressively. Once we have completed that review, we will send each chapter back to the author to consider our recommendations and then to return their modified chapter to us. We'll update the manuscript accordingly and then return Part I of the manuscript to the authors so that they can then again review their chapter within the context of other chapters provided. This might generate additional considerations to improve their respective chapter. We'll then update Part I and park it while we work on Parts II and III.

Meanwhile, we will continue conducting interviews to generate material for Parts II and III. This will take some time because it involves scheduling, conducting the interview, tweaking the transcript for review/modification by the interviewee, and then clipping a portion of the recorded interview for web posting (and a file to be used at our 50th reunion). Ideally, we'll get through the interview phase by the end of summer. We'll then be in a position to evaluate the quality of the stories and whether we have a sufficient number for each of the virtues. We can then focus on any gaps.

For those who have been following Bill Hanlon, CS-07 DNG, and his travels in his sailboat Seawanhaka (right, in drydock), Stalker Reed, CS-07, sent in an update from Bill.

“Just a pretty typical haul out every year or two. I did most of the work myself, 85% +/- . After the first week the shipyard closed down to new boats coming in and outside workers/contractors, so it was safe isolated place to be. I stayed onboard. Good provisioning shops, paint, hardware 5-minute pedal away. Shipyard charges were pretty normal, about like marina; manageable as I was living onboard.



“They knew how to design and build boats in those days (1925). Long and lean, like we like our women and Kentucky thoroughbreds, ey guys? She is pretty quick sailor, good in light air, but with the 8-ton keel 3 meters down, very stable. A term they used to use "sea kindly." New boats are mostly plastic slapping through the waves. There is a prop well for the shaft and propeller, no bow/stern thruster, a real sailboat.

“Very nice to be back on the water. Smooth anchorage, good snorkeling and boat projects. Only a handful of cruising boats in the entire country. Airport is still closed down, but I did see a C130 Herc fly in and out yesterday. Maybe med supplies or health workers. I am back at Ste Anne Marine Park anchorage, free. Good morning snorkel. Big rain yesterday to wash yard dirt off, perfect timing. Half dozen cruising yachts, USA, Austria, French, Brit, Reunion, Australia. All good, for a lockdown, a few drinking buddies.

“I'll be here for at least several months. There are no other countries close by, and my understanding is they are all closed down to foreign yacht entries. Seychelles has some present restrictions on yacht movements, but that will open up when things are sorted out and will be great cruising. Great place to be "stuck" and watch USA happenings from afar...

“Cheers, guys. Capt Seawanhaka”



Bill's New Neighbor

73!

Mike Arnett

Class Scribe

“Here’s a toast...to the host...of the men we boast...the U.S. Air Force!” but in God we Trust.