

Illustrious Classmates,

If you are reading this and hearing about our 50th Reunion 28-30 Sep 23 for the first time, please contact me ASAP if you'd like to attend. Depending on when you receive this, it may be too late to get you into all activities, but we can try. We have had good response thus far (end of July), and expect to eclipse our record 45th reunion numbers. Reunion HQ is The Antlers Hotel downtown. We'll have receptions Thurs and Fri evenings, visit the cadet area Fri, and will stream the football game live to the Antlers for those who don't care to attend the game (6:00 PM kickoff vs. San Diego). A vast majority have opted for streaming so far. Each classmate attendee will receive a hard-bound copy of our class book, "*Becoming Leaders of Character: Conversations with the Class of 1973.*" Paperback versions are available at Amazon for any who would like to order extras. We're considering another hardbound printing. Let me know if you're interested. Thanks to Mike Mosier for his herculean effort in pulling the book together.

Our class participation in the ceremonies associated with the graduation of our 50-year Legacy Class (2023) went phenomenally. The commissioning ceremonies were held in the Cadet Area the day before graduation, rather than at midnight, as we did. We had classmates at the ceremonies for all 40 squadrons, handing each newly-minted 2Lt two things: his/her 2Lt bars engraved with 2023 on the back of one and 1973 on the other, and a hard-bound copy of "*Becoming Leaders of Character.*" Most classmates were given the opportunity to speak for a couple of minutes. I highlighted the close relationship between '73 and '23, and that they had honored us by including a "73" and an F-15 on their rings. I also encouraged them to have as close a relationship with their 50-year legacy class, the *next* Class of '73.(!!!) We had a good contingent of classmates at their graduation, and three of our general officers participated in "tapping ceremonies" honoring 2023's top performers in various categories. (The "tapping" apparently comes from the days when they used a hammer and small nails to attach each year's recipients' names to the plaques.) Norty **Schwartz**, Steve **Lorenz** and Mike **Edwards** represented us.



Norty Schwartz and a 2023 Cadet Wing Commander



Mike Edwards and the other 2023 Cadet Wing Commander

As president of the Falcon Foundation, Steve also presented the Top Scholar award, quite an ironic twist for a guy who describes himself as having been on the Dean's "Other List" most of his cadet career.



Steve Lorenz and the top 2023 scholar



CS-31 Grim Reapers update: Richard and Connie Hayes celebrated their 50th Anniversary with a trip to Norway;

Tom and Betty Kennedy spent a week at Emerald Isle beach in NC with daughter Michelle's family (granddaughter Samantha shown);



and Mitch Mitchell was recently in the Santa Barbara area enjoying time with friends.

Steve and Debbie **Waller** we are now in Cabot, AR, just up the road from Little Rock. Steve retired from LSU in 2021 as Assistant Vice President of Housing after a 23-year career in housing and residential life. They moved to Arkansas for four seasons, less heat and humidity, fewer hurricanes, and a state income tax structure with no taxes on Social Security and AF retirement.

Jack **Hudson** competed in the Cycling Time Trials at the National Senior Games in Pittsburgh this year. He was 15th of 32 in his age group for the 10K, after qualifying last year to ride in this year's nationals. He found a new hero to emulate in 17 years and beyond—a 90-year-old rider. In June, he participated for the 17th time in a week-long ride in Ohio with about 1000 riders. He also spent a week in Michigan with extended family in June, the 6th time they've done so! In his "spare" time, he continues volunteering at the AF Museum.

Jack leads a busy life, but never too busy for classmates. Brad **Young** and Stalker **Reed** were in town in May, so Jack squired them around the museum. That evening, Jack, his wife Marsha, and Stalker attended the museum's 100th anniversary dinner. Stalker also attended services for a former Museum Director, Col (Ret) Dick Uppstrom, a neighbor in a previous life. Jack has always maintained an open invitation for any classmate to drop by if in town. I can put you in touch.



The Colorado contingent of CS-16 Chickenhawks and celebrated Gene and Barbara **Ogilvie's** 25th Wedding Anniversary at the Colorado Mountain Brewery in Colorado Springs on 11 July.

Front: Denise (Buns) Richardson. Middle Row: Doug (Spider) **Richardson**, Gene **Ogilvie**, Barbara Ogilvie, Teresa Fazio. Back Row: Rich **Fazio**, Sally Mayberry, Tom **Mayberry**, Gregg **Reinecke**, Don **Sutula**.

Don **Ramm** continues flying privately and wonders why the rest of us don't. After all, we went to the *Air Force Academy*! He's building a hangar at his fly-in home in Payson, AZ. From his email:

10 years ago I was flying T-34s at March Aero Club for \$155/hr. Damn base commander closed the club in 2019 so I had to look elsewhere.

My ride today: 5 gallons per hour at \$3.95/gallon (mogas) so \$20/hour. It's an "LSA" [light sport aircraft] and I took the required 2-day (!) class so I do the inspections myself. Don't need a medical anymore so that saved \$150/year for the flight physical. Hangar...that's a little expensive. Probably about \$150,000 by the time it's done. But it's an "investment". 😊



My Thunderhoglet [Van's RV-12]:



My plan: Fly it until I'm 90. Steve **McCauley** (our classmate, he had one, sold it to buy a high wing) pointed out something to me just today: I probably won't be able to get into it in another

You go, Don! Fly some for the rest of us!

I also received a touching email from Thia Anderson, Erik's widow, that I'd like to share with you, along with his obituary, per her request. If you knew Erik, you can just see him in the Marines' Memorial Club.

Sitting here listening to Phantom of the Opera; I can hear Erik whistling along while he does dishes. He could have been a World Champion Whistler, earning \$200,000 annually, but his heart belonged to the Air Force.

When we were stationed at Vandenberg AFB, Lompoc, CA, we planned to have a Hawaiian Christmas at the military camp. Packed lots of bathing suits, shorts, tee shirts, sandals. Hopped in the car early and drove north to catch the MAC plane that would take us to paradise. One of Erik's favorite sayings here in East Tennessee Appalachia was, "It is another day in Paradise." Anyway, made it to Travis AFB and waited with all of the other happy expectant travelers. Oops, the MAC plane did not get outfitted with seats for travelers at the previous stop...dang!



(Definitely not what I said). What to do? The positive, charming and indomitable Erik considered options then secured two rooms in downtown San Francisco at the Marines' Memorial Club. Heigh Ho, Heigh Ho, It's off to San Francisco we go.

It was perfect for us. Early the next morning Erik walked two minutes to the Curran Theatre to wait in line to get some returned Phantom of the Opera tickets; he was the second person in line. Yippie, we are going to the Phantom matinee! Wearing all of the shorts and shirts that we could layer on ourselves, we headed to the Macys Christmas sales (the decorations were beautiful.) Success. Wearing our new warm outfits we found our theatre seats in the exact middle, row 7. And the 4 seats in front of ours were empty. What a great unexpected gift for us all--thank you, Erik. Erik's special gift was all of the history at the Marines' Memorial club; he spent several hours going upstairs and downstairs, walking the hallways, looking at photos, reading the stories. Our special gift to Erik was listening to him share his vast historical knowledge.

We walked, gave donations to street folks, ate authentic oriental food in tiny out-of-the-way restaurants, rode the cable car to Fisherman's Wharf where the World Famous Bushman, hidden behind branches jumped at us and shouted "ugga bugga!" We screamed, then laughed and laughed. Our excellent seafood restaurant was just right there so we got a 2nd floor window table and watched the Bushman in action. And apparently all of Santa's helpers had seen us in San Francisco instead of Hawaii, 'cause we had full Christmas socks in our rooms early Christmas morning.

We all agreed that this unexpected San Francisco Christmas was one of our favorite family memories.

It has been almost a year since Erik, class of 73, 19th Squadron died on August 4 during open heart surgery. I do not know if you all got his obit. So I am sending/perhaps resending it. Do with it what you will.

Thia, formerly CynThia, formerly Cindy
Best friend and lover of Erik

It's Another Day in Paradise:

Erik Charles Anderson, age 71, of Roan Mountain TN, passed from this life after surgery complications on August 4, 2022 at Johnson City Medical Center.

He was a native of Kingsport, TN where he played soccer and ran track. He attended high school at Suwanee Military Academy, graduating in 1969. From there he went to the Air Force Academy, graduating in 1973, which launched a distinguished and decorated military career in the United States Air Force, where he served in Space and Missile Operations until he retired at the rank of Colonel. After serving as a civilian with Booz Allen Hamilton for some years, Erik heard the call of the East Tennessee mountains and "retired" with his wife Cynthia to Roan Mountain. Erik's impact was felt throughout East Tennessee through his work with Magil Memorial Presbyterian Church, the ACS food pantry, Carter County Parks & Rec Board, and the Roan Mountain Community Park that was so impacted by his work that the community re-named the park in his honor.

Erik was loved by many in both family and community where he was respected for his logical and compassionate leadership, admired for his principled integrity, appreciated for his generous spirit, and remembered for his unflappable positive attitude and infectious enthusiasm.

His accomplishments were many: leading the successful launch of countless military satellites, tracking Santa Claus at NORAD on Christmas Eve, performing as a Master Whistler, decorated military service, clearing an entire dance floor at a formal event with a single fart, holding the USAF record for duration of a spoon hanging on his nose, an extreme golf handicap, hash house harrier, Air Force Academy dumpster sailing, playing an essential role in the development of the Roan Mountain community park, proud husband, father and grandfather, and if we told you any more about what he did... we'd have to kill you.

Erik is survived by his wife Cynthia Anderson of Roan Mountain, TN; daughter Erin Wallace and husband John of Annandale, VA; daughter Tiffany Sapp and husband Jayon of Gray, TN; grandchildren Lilah Sherrange, Daniel Sherrange, Leo Sapp and Antigone Wallace; and beloved Scottish Terriers Hamish and Freya. Other surviving family include sister Sandra Stiehl of Atlantic Beach, NC; brother Mark Anderson of Kingsport, TN; niece Samantha Byers of Concord, NC; and Scott Stiehl of Newport, NC.

Erik was preceded in death by his parents V.E. (Andy) Anderson and Eudora Anderson of Kingsport, TN, and sister Cinda Rae of Columbia, SC.

“Here’s a toast...to the host...of the men we boast”

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