

December 2010

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Class News: 1963

The Association of Graduates recently learned of the death of Maj (Ret) Jerry K. **Bowers**, Class of 1963. Jerry passed away October 3, 2010 as the result of a fall from Vail Pass in Colorado. Services were held on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October at the USAFA Cadet Protestant Chapel followed by a graveside service at the USAFA Cemetery and a reception at Doolittle Hall. A memorial fund is being set up and the information will be posted on the AOG website in the "Gone But Not Forgotten" notice for Jerry. Condolences may be sent to his family in care of his wife, Mrs. Leslie Bowers; 6226 Pike Cir.; Larkspur, CO 80118-9710

Typical of the mini-reunions there are many things going on at one time. This time was no different. When we arrived at the Tail Gate site the party was in full swing. A good sized crowd was in attendance and there was much food and drink to be had thanks to the local Colorado crowd organized by Bob and Charlie Ann **Hayes**. The yearly Tail Gate picture testifies to the large group of attendees and the great weather.



**FR** (LtoR): Gaston, Boeck, Merkle, Bender, Thomas, Olson Heide, Zoeller, McClellan, Butler, Hayes **BR** (LtoR): Matjasko, Hoffman, Schuchter, DeBerry, Steinbrink, Maywald, Bredvik, Diffendorfer, Lee, Denend, Borling, Verdier, Johnson, Reynolds, Ball, Winzell.

Not all reunion attendees are pictured but I was able to note some names of Classmates not in the photograph. They were: Dave **Boeck**, Ron **Fogleman**, John **Gavin**, John **Helinski**, Denny **King**, Jim **Lang**, Bob **Mazet**, Dave **Nuss**, and Phil **Tate** were also present but not pictured. If anyone was left out please accept my apologies. Many thanks to those who supplied copies of the group photo. The one here was provided by Gary **Bender**.

The football game was a rousing success as the Falcons defeated Navy for the first time in 7 years! I definitely sensed my Dad (USNA '40) turning over in his grave. A great game; from initial kickoff to the game's final seconds, the contest was close—as expected no one quit! An overtime contest was possible if Navy, on their final drive, could score a touchdown and convert a two point play. A Falcon interception ended the game and after exhaling we all headed for Arnold Hall feeling very relieved.

The festivities got underway about an hour after the game as everyone gathered at the A-Hall north mezzanine in front of the Class Cups case. This year we recognized our Classmates who passed away since the last Class gathering in October 2009: Joe **Johnson**, Roger **Sorensen**, Bill **Flanagan**, Ray "Buzz" **Patterson** and Jim **McDonald**. It was particularly nice to have Joe Johnson's widow, Carole, turn Joe's cup. Joe's son was also there with his mother.

We then did a practice dedication of Pat **Wynne's** ring. The Wynne family could be at our 50<sup>th</sup> when the Ring is formally dedicated. Denny **King** has worked hard on the cup display case. His latest effort was to design a presentation display for Pat's ring in the middle of the case as well as replace all the odd sized cups with new ones obtained by Lou **Matjasko**. Great work! The 500<sup>th</sup> cup (the JFK Cup) was also added to the case and will be dedicated at the 50<sup>th</sup>. The JFK cup is located in the final slot at the bottom right side of the case.



Pat's Ring in the Class Cup Case

The Class Gift Committee met at the Academy on Friday and stayed over for the Tail Gate, football game and the A-Hall events. We were all interested in learning more about the planning of our 50th Reunion Gift and we weren't disappointed. During dinner Committee members demonstrated a robust 'beta' version of the proposed USAFA CLASS HISTORIES website and kiosk presentations. It looked great! Denny's "counting coup" story just has to be heard. We don't have room in this column to tell the whole story but I expect you will be able to see more at the Class of 1963 Web Site soon.

Joining us for the Cup Turning Ceremony and dinner at A-Hall were members of Navy Class of 1963 football team. Organized by John **Gavin** a number of 1963 Air Force and Navy football team members met in the Springs this weekend for the game. I had a great time with John at Dave and Carol **Nuss'** home on Thursday evening. A lot of stories were exchanged especially about the Nuss' and John's travels to Africa earlier this year.

Also during the Navy football game weekend the USAFA Class of 1970, celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion, dedicated their gift to the Academy, the Southeast Asia Memorial Pavilion. The Pavilion is located near the AOG building, along the Heritage Trail, overlooking the Cadet Area and the Academy's golf links. Several of our Classmates participated in the ceremony. If you are a Facebook 'Friend' of Jimmie **Butler**, he posted a full report and photo album about the Pavilion on his Facebook page. A plaque for those eighteen members of the Class of 1963 who lost their lives in the SEA conflict is part of the Pavilion—see the Website version of this Class News. The Memorial Pavilion is a first class facility and the sculpture map of Southeast Asia is absolutely spectacular. Make it a mandatory stop on your next trip to Colorado Springs.

Our Classmate, Tony **Hoskins**, sent an update a few weeks ago. Tony is the Chief Pilot for Sierra Nevada Corporation in Sparks, NV. He has been flying the Polish M-28 including ferrying three of the airplanes from Poland to Denver ("low and slow - kind of fun") and will be flying several tests at Eglin. Tony also ran M-28 flight training classes for USAF pilots last year. "Even the O-5s look like kids now!" he says. In the photo below, Tony is obviously the old guy in the middle.



Tony: 4<sup>th</sup> from the left.

Turns out the Air Force Special Operation Command (AFSOC) purchased ten of these airplanes that look a little like the 1980s C-23 Sherpa or its predecessor the Shorts Sky Van. The M-28 started life as the Antonov 28 (AN-28).

Got a short update from Steve **Savonen** via Facebook. Reports he left orthopedic surgery, after 26 years, April 2008 and moved to Albuquerque. After driving 18 wheelers for a year he ended up driving school buses in Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. Unable to handle sitting around in retirement Steve says he is much more alive driving his bus at Mach 0.03 and pulling 1.5 g's on the corners (safely, of course).

That's it for this time. Hope everyone is doing well out there and taking care of themselves. Linda and I send our best wishes to all for a great holiday season and a bountiful New Year!