MINUTES

WPPC – MD/DC/VA 4th Quarter Board Meeting

Carrol’s Creek Café, Annapolis, Maryland

October 28, 2017, 11:00 a.m.- 13:00

A quorum was present and President Melanie Gness commenced the meeting.

In Attendance:

President Melanie Gness

First Vice President: Don and Margaret Yamamoto

Second Vice President: Dave and Lil Reichanthal

Treasurer Kirk McLaren and Naya McLaren

Merchandise: Clara and Jerry Robertello

Afghans: Nona Faber and Jacqueline Grose

Joint Services Academy Ball: Maggie Drummond

Social Coordinator: Alison Arnold

President Gness asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the third quarter board meeting which was approved unanimously. Two more votes ensued. First, Angelique Wilkins was placed in nomination by the President. Second Vice President Dave Reichanthal placed the motion for vote with Kirk McLaren seconding the motion. The Board unanimously accepted the Angelique Wilkins as the next Secretary.

The second motion by the President was for the 2nd Vice President, Veronica L. Harsley-Dean. After discussion of the resume, the President put forth the motion to accept the candidate as the next second vice president. Maggie Drummond offered the motion, Kirk McLaren, Clara Robertello and Nona Faber seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to accept Veronica Harsley-Dean as the next second vice president.

President’s report:

The WPS/DC still owes the Club $500 for co-sponsoring the Meet and Greet. Howitzer year book listed all the 2017 Firsties but a number did not graduate and this took time to correct the list prior to publication. The club provides a Challenge coin procured from the New Jersey club at $12.50/coin and a letter from the club President, Melanie Gness. The President suggested that the Board consider other gifts to give to the graduating seniors. Other clubs provide mugs, watches, and other items.

The President noted that the “WP items for donation” including paintings, ceramic plates and other items, helps the Club’s support for Boulder Crest, the Club’s designated support for wounded warriors. All proceeds from sales of these items goes to Boulder Crest. In the future, more people will be necessary should donation items increase since it is an online FACEBOOK program requiring people to pack, and mail items to customers.

The club has 21 2017 challenge coins left over. It was decided to donate to the Grad group to pass to its members.

Afghans, 25 remain from the 2017 and these can go on the “WP items for donation” FACEBOOK page, but probably sending them to the Grad group is more efficient.

Leadership meeting at West Point (August 16-19) was not as valuable, and the President suggested that just one person go up to the meeting in August 2018. (note, in 2017, both the President and First Vice President attended)

President Gness has arranged for artist Mary Mullin to donate her paintings for the Club’s “WP Items for Donation” FACEBOOK for support to Boulder Crest.

The President worked with Kirk McLaren to update the accounting process which has met with approval from Ed Cragg, the bus coordinator and others.

First Vice President Report: None specific, but added that the Leadership conference raised the legal responsibility of all Parent Clubs to use the official Parent Club logo and to respect the use of the West Point logo, based on branding and legal issues. All items with the old unauthorized logos can be sold but all new club badges, shirts with logos, coins with logos, and new products designed or procured must now have the new Parent club logo. Deb Dalton and West Point will coordinate on logo restrictions, new club banners with the new logo, and approved vendors for producing Club products. Further, the Leadership Conference allowed us to network with other clubs, but clearly the Parent Clubs are viewed as another donation source. The AOG takes 12% off donations from the clubs to support AOG activities.

Finally, it was suggested and the Treasurer issue letters to members who incur costs for official business on behalf of the Club, such as attending the Leadership Conference, Ring Weekend as well as A and R Day programs, without reimbursement for their costs. These letters can be used for personal tax submission in accordance with the Club’s status as a 501 C 3 organization.

Second Vice President Report:

Dave reviewed the bylaws and noted necessary changes such as aligning the budget year (July to June) with the terms of office of the Board members (January to December). Further discussion will take place to finalize compliance with the Bylaws as well as update and implement Bylaw terms.

Dave noted the SEPA Army-Navy tailgate barbecue opportunity.

Treasurer’s Report:

Kirk explained the new accounting process which allows the treasurer to be a treasurer and not an accountant, while the online company will serve as an accountant which will offer consistency of services and procedures despite changes to the treasurer position. The Balance stands at $83,028.69, the Club is able to pay its bills. The Treasurer will file an IRS form by November 15 to maintain our 501 C 3 status. There is a problem of cyber theft and fraud as someone posed as President Gness to secure information. It was caught and prevented, but everyone must be cautious and vigilant.

Other Reports:

President Gness reviewed the Grad Luncheon headed by Alison Hereford and that the Riverside Café has been reserved again at West Point. This has proven to be an extremely popular and successful program.

R-Day was successful and Magda Schrage will continue next year as coordinator.

Hosting coordinator Priscilla Quackenbush housed 16 Cadets for the 10 miler.

Boodle Bash by Dana Brasile, the President again recommended that specific gifts to our Cadets from this Club be given a separate gift, such as Grant Hall gift cards. The Club has been commended and praised for sending boodles each year to all companies, regiments as well as teachers and West Point base military personnel and the Prep School.

Meet and Greet needs a new coordinator. The Good Shepard Church cans host the club again in 2018 but preparation must begin now. Also a new caterer will probably have to be found.

JSAB Report:

Maggie reported that advertising is still down and that only $1,700 of $5,000 goal in corporate sponsorship has been met. This helps pay for the meals of the participating Cadets and Midshipmen (up to 120). This year, the Navy and Coast Guard are the hosts but Navy has done no work and so West Point is left doing much of the coordination and advertising. Last year, 90% of the participants were from West Point. While no money is being sought, the Club has allotted $3,000 to help Maggie manage the Ball. Coast Guard Vice Admiral Sandra Stosz will be the guest speaker at the Ball. Next year, West Point will host and the Club will be asked to spend more money to make the Ball a huge success.

Afghans:

Nona noted that ring weekend was a major success, selling out Afghans brought to the event. With the rental of a container to serve as a warehouse, the Club may be able to sell Afghans for each of the four classes. Volunteers will be needed if the Club is to sell Afghans for all four classes. Currently, the Club only sells the Afghans for the graduating class forcing parents from other year groups to buy Afghans from other groups. The Club’s Afghans, the Club’s major money maker, are better quality and the proceeds go directly to West Point.

Club Merchandise:

Clara noted that that a line item on the budget is key for procurement of new items. $2,500 would meet needs. Expanding sales to include FACEBOOK sales will be labor intensive and more volunteers will be needed. More items will need to be looked at to diversify and expand inventories, but space, cost and time and the need for volunteers will be critical. (Note: West Point has its designated vendors and with the Logo restrictions, raises challenges if non West Point approved vendors can meet the strict logo use restrictions. This will be further discussed with West Point. End note)

Social Coordinator:

Alison noted that while charges have gone up, the venues – Carrols’ Creek in Annapolis and the Virginia Sports Club – have been highly supportive and overall costs remain reasonable and below costs relative to other venues examined.

Report not submitted by the First Vice President is included below:

Leadership Report Summary:

From: Yamamoto, Donald (CIV US NDU/NDU-P)

Sent: Monday, August 21, 2017 5:56 PM

To: 'Melanie Gness' <mggness@gmail.com>; 'david reichenthal' <reichenthal1@gmail.com>; 'Lillian. S. Reichenthal' <lillian.s.reichenthal@nasa.gov>; Margaret <crlshore@aol.com>; 'Kirk W. McLaren' <nayarit.j.mclaren@gmail.com>; 'james.williams.' <james.williams24@wayne.edu>; 'karimurray@me.com' <karimurray@me.com>; Cindy & Rocky Mengle <rcmengle@verizon.net>; Ty Phelps <wppc.members@hotmail.com>; Shawn Murray <shawn.murray@mcchrystalgroup.com>

Cc: 'Yamamoto, Donald Y' <YamamotoD@state.gov>; Yamamoto, Donald (CIV US NDU/NDU-P) <donald.y.yamamoto.civ@ndu.edu>

Subject: West Point AOG Leadership meeting Notes

Melanie, David, Lil, Ty and Kirk:,

Here are the abbreviated summary of activities at the West Point Leadership conference for use at the next board meeting and at our next Parent Club meeting at Carroll’s Creek Annapolis in October. We also must express our deepest gratitude to Rocky and Cindy for their efforts with the raffle, that definitely solidified our position as the largest Parent Club Donor in 2017.

Note, Melanie led our delegation to the conference. David and Lil, you will definitely thrive at this event next year and the following year.

Separately, I will connect Melanie and David/Lil with the main contacts at the other parent clubs wishing to expand ties with our club don

West Point Association of Graduates

Leadership Conference, August 16-19, 2017

Executive Summary:

Part I: AOG:

AOG paid for issuance of a Parents Handbook to each family of a Cadet, and pays West Point Magazine for each family until graduation of their Cadet

AOG supports West Point Societies to contact and support graduates, assist widows, assist grads seeking to visit West Point, support graduates facing end of life issues, and Rockbound Highland project for grads.

AOG expanding support for Parents Clubs for fund raising and to assist Clubs address needs of families of current Cadets

The US Government pays for basic training of Cadets while AOG, as a 501C 3 organization, helps pay for internships, travel and semester abroad, Ring weekend and special Cadet events, extra-curricular activities, funds Cadet Club teams and activities, scholarships for graduate studies for graduating Cadets, supports endowments and funds specialized academic and research programs at West Point, and above all funds many construction projects at the Academy. AOG has funded 30 construction projects from buildings and sports facilities.

52,441 living graduates from 81 classes, 74,350 have graduated from West Point since 1802. AOG established the Rockbound Highland Home project to support graduates. 76% of all donations received come from the Alumnae with Parents making up 10% of donations, remainder from friends and other groups. 26% of all West Point Graduates donate, goal is to reach 33%. Last Year AOG highlighted $2.4 million in multi-year donations from just parents of Cadets. The goal for this year is for Parents and Clubs to donate $800,000. So far AOG has collected $421,000.

Part II: West Point:

West Point expanding its academic reputation nationwide. Though it dropped from first to second among top nationally ranked public colleges according to Forbes (Annapolis was first), West Point ranked top on academics, learning programs, classroom experience, mentoring but was rated lower on “social climate” (social parties/events). Superintendent LTG Caslen articulated the West Point Vision and stressed the three core values of the Academy: Developing Leaders of Character; Foster Relevance and Preeminence; Cadet Creed.

Takeaway Ideas:

Parents Clubs need to interconnect, coordinate and support each other. Example, many clubs are newly formed or very small, and several have reached out to our MDDCVA club to seek advice and support, esp clubs from North Florida, Long Island, Buffalo, Illinois.

MDDCVA supports other clubs through purchases of bags from the Georgia Club and Coins from the New Jersey Club. These and other clubs have limited items for sale and expressed interest in items we sell.

Michigan has one of the best web masters and offered to help our club. Sharing experience and best practices, parent clubs can better coordinate and improve club activities.

Trademark Restriction: West Point and AOG made clear that beginning immediately, all Parent Clubs must obtain approval from West Point to use West Point logo and branding. There is now an approved West Point Parent Club logo that must be used on all name cards, name plates, badges, clothing items, local produced products displaying West Point or the West Point logo. West Point and AOG advises all Parent Clubs to use only approved vendors. Clubs must get prior approval from West Point to use local vendors not on the approval list. Clubs should also seek West Point advice/approval on use of all West Point logos, brands and Crest. This is a legal issue to protect the West Point brand, logo, name. (Further information will be distributed)

Information of Note:

MDDCVA ranked first place in donations to West Point among all Parent clubs for 2016 and so far in 2017. AOG and other clubs point to MDDCVA as a model for parent club operations and activities:

2016:

First, MDDCVA: $39,600

Second: New Jersey: $33,285

Third: North Texas: $7,200

Followed by Houston, Orange County and Michigan

2017: through August 15,2017:

First, MDDCVA: $40,480

Second, New Jersey: $30,108

Third: Long Island: $2,650

Followed by Central Ohio

The New General Benjamin O. Davis Dorm was officially opened Friday, August 18. General Davis was “silenced and isolated” during his four years at West Point, though he was allowed to tutor deficient Cadets. His father became the first Black to attain the rank of General in 1940. General Ben Davis commanded the newly formed all-black Tuskegee aviation squadron. Though he retired as a Lieutenant General, President Clinton recalled him to duty for one day to promote him to his fourth star in 1998.

Final Note: AOG organized a packed program of activities, meetings, dinner and luncheon speeches to promote networking and inspire support for West Point. It was very clear how critical AOG’s role to supporting the West Point Cadets and Graduates.