

# West Point

WINTER 2016

## In This Issue:

The Arts at West Point:  
“An Essential Part of an  
Officer’s Education”



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# West Point

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1 • WINTER 2016

The mission of *West Point* magazine is to tell the West Point story and strengthen the grip of the Long Gray Line.

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## ON THE COVER

Actor Kurt Rhoads from the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival performs *An Iliad* for cadets in the Cullum Hall ballroom at West Point. Photo: Jim Smith

## LETTERS

### Dear Fellow Graduates:

I first want to congratulate and thank the donors, volunteers, and WPAOG staff, indeed EVERYONE who helped make *For Us All: The Campaign for West Point* so incredibly successful. Over the past seven years, and for only the second time in our 146-year history, the Long Gray Line responded to the call to philanthropically support the Margin of Excellence needs at the Military Academy, as well as operational needs within WPAOG. Our goal was to raise \$350 million; thanks to the passion of all graduates and friends, we're proud to say that we had well over \$420 million received and pledged before the campaign ended this past December 31. The next issue of *West Point* magazine will have a full report on the campaign, but on behalf of everyone at West Point, first and foremost the Corps of Cadets, who will directly benefit, THANK YOU!

As we approached the end of the *For Us All* Campaign, the Board of Directors, Advisory Council, staff and I conducted a long-range assessment of our organization, looking ahead to the WPAOG sesquicentennial in 2019. We have published a strategic plan for these post-campaign years. Titled "Making Manifest and Powerful *The Grip of the Long Gray Line*," our plan has three strategic goals: 1) Maintain the momentum of support for USMA that was established during the campaign, 2) Enhance *The Grip of the Long Gray Line* by expanding services to graduates at all stages of their lives, and 3) Invest in WPAOG—the systems, infrastructure, staff, and volunteers to effectively operate in our hyper-connected world as we lead up to our organization's celebration in 2019 and beyond. A copy of this plan is available on our website, and we look forward to sharing it with you.

At the same time, the staff and I are proud to announce that the 2015 *Register of Graduates* is on sale now. Order your copy today! It's been five years since the last edition; and, after an overhaul of our database to incorporate security and other features, we've published the definitive historical record of the Long Gray Line's service to our nation. Inside the *Register* you'll find, listed by Cullum Number, more than 72,000 graduates of the U.S. Military Academy and their professional accomplishments as reported to us, past USMA and WPAOG leadership, scholarship recipients, and so much more. Contact the WPAOG Gift Shop or go to our website to order your copy.

Finally, I encourage all graduates to consider serving on one of our governing bodies: the WPAOG Board of Directors or the Advisory Council. "Giving back" to our alma mater is tremendously rewarding—just ask anyone who's recently served about his or her experience. Nominations are due by July every year for terms that begin the following January. More information can be found on our website or by calling my office.

I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming Founders Day celebrations, spring reunions, and at graduation for the Class of 2016!

West Point, for Thee!

Bob

Robert L. McClure '76  
Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)  
President & CEO, WPAOG







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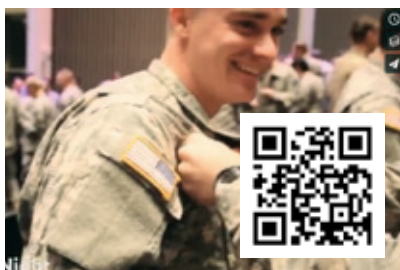
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Watch the Class of 2016 receive their U.S. Army Branch assignments!



Watch the recap of the 2015 Sylvanus Thayer Award presented to actor and humanitarian Gary Sinise.



Watch MAJ Christopher Dean '02 address the Corps of Cadets during the 2015 Nininger Award ceremony.

From Your West Point  
Association of Graduates

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## Our “Rockbound Highland Home” is alive with activity again as the Corps of Cadets has returned from the winter break to begin second semester.



We've had a fantastic first semester with a lot of great things taking place throughout West Point, and we're looking forward to an equally busy second semester.

Although initially founded as an engineering school, throughout the course of our history West Point has transformed its curriculum to include the study of the liberal arts. Today, West Point is recognized nationally, not only as a top engineering school, but also as a top liberal arts institution in its own right.

Studying the arts and humanities is an essential part of an officer's education. It is foundational to cultivating critical thinking abilities, and also allows us to develop cultural understandings. These are critical components in building relationships, which contributed to our effectiveness in Iraq and Afghanistan over these past 14 years.

In an interview with *Atlantic* magazine this past October, our Dean, Brigadier General Tim Trainor '83 said, "It's important to develop in young people the ability to think broadly, to operate in the context of other societies and become agile and adaptive thinkers. What you're trying to do is teach them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. They're having to deal with people from other cultures. They have to think very intuitively to solve problems on the ground."

With that in mind, we implemented a new curriculum this academic year. This new curriculum, the result of a three-year review process, is designed to better develop intellectually agile leaders through a broad core curriculum across disciplines, more in-depth academic majors, and increased enrichment experiences. Regardless of academic major, arts and humanities remain a key component of the core curriculum as we seek to develop graduates who can think creatively and critically and communicate effectively.

One initiative that has been successful in helping to broaden critical thinking and relationship building is the Vassar-West Point Initiative, an exchange program between USMA and Vassar College. Through this initiative, students spend time together on both campuses, attending classes and special events and, more importantly, interacting and learning from each other. These interactions have been valuable for cadets in becoming more dynamic thinkers and also in helping to bridge the divide between civilians and the military.

West Point is fortunate to have a variety of programs and organizations dedicated to the liberal arts and, in particular, the fine arts. Opportunities such as the Cadet Fine Arts Forum allow cadets to express, create, and showcase their artistic talents. Through a variety of clubs catering to specific interests such as film, creative writing, studio arts, and opera, cadets have the opportunity to cultivate their interests and nurture creativity and critical thinking through engagement with the arts and humanities. As one recent example, the

Film Forum hosted Ben Patton, grandson of General George S. Patton Jr. (1909) and son of Major General George S. Patton '46. Ben is the founder and executive director of *I Was There*, which organizes film workshops, helping veterans and military families cope with service-related stress through filmmaking. Ben discussed filmmaking and some of his organization's latest projects, which enable veterans to connect with one another, make sense of traumatic experiences, and substantially reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

Arts-related organizations like the West Point Band and the Glee Club are an important part of our strategic outreach, especially in enhancing our relationship with New York City, which is one of my strategic priorities. For example, both the Band and Glee Club recently performed at the 9/11 Memorial Concert at Trinity Church in Manhattan, as well as at various professional sporting events throughout New York City. The band was also recently selected to take part in the 2016 Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.

Many of these programs, facilities and initiatives only exist because of the tremendous support of our alumni. The *For Us All* Campaign has drawn to a close and, while we don't yet have a final official total, donations exceeded \$420 million, far surpassing our \$350 million goal.

Through your support, we've contributed to numerous arts-related programs and initiatives, including 10 fine arts clubs, the Visiting Shakespearean Actors Workshop, and the inaugural John Calabro Night of the Arts. We've also set in motion the development of a new Arts and Humanities Center overlooking Trophy Point. This center will serve as home for the Cadet Fine Arts Forum and eventually provide a space to support veteran artists, writers, or scholars "in residence" who will share their talents, knowledge, and experience with generations of cadets and West Point community members to come.

Additionally, your support has funded several strategic priorities, such as construction of the new lacrosse center, academic research centers such as the Center for the Study of Civil-Military Operations and the Cyber Research Center, the Modern War Institute, cadet activities, and semester abroad opportunities. In addition, we will soon begin work on a new and improved West Point Visitors Center. So, on behalf of the Corps of Cadets and the staff and faculty, thank you for your continued generous support.

As we get ready to celebrate our Academy's founding birthday, I look forward to celebrating this Founders Day with many of our graduates and the opportunity to update you all on everything that is going on at West Point.

As always, thank you for all you do in supporting the Corps of Cadets and West Point.

Go Army! Beat Navy!

Robert L. Caslen Jr. '75  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army  
59th Superintendent, U.S. Military Academy





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On a hot night last July, a performance of *An Iliad* took place at the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival on the grounds of Boscobel, a 19th-century mansion where the towers of West Point across the Hudson River served as a backdrop to the play.

*An Iliad* is based on the musings of actor Dennis O'Hare with co-creator Lisa Peterson. It's a strikingly contemporary conversation about the meaning behind Homer's epic poem on the Trojan War. The dialogue veers from ancient Greek to modern explanations of the action in accessible, everyday language.

As the sole actor in the first one-man show in the Festival's 29-year history, actor Kurt Rhoads took on the explosive role of a traveling performer for the regional audience, which included several cadets, instructors, and professors from the United States Military Academy Department of English and Philosophy. Professor of English Elizabeth Samet gave a preshow talk that contextualized not just the play, but also the relationship between theater and war in general. The evening was a precursor to a performance for more than 200 plebes at USMA in September.



Robert Walter Weir, *View of the Hudson River [from Trophy Point]*, 1864. Weir, a founding father of the Hudson River School, was USMA professor of drawing from 1834-76 and taught, among others, Ulysses S. Grant (1843), William T. Sherman (1840), and James McNeill Whistler (ex-1855).

But behind the well-established relationship between Hudson Valley Shakespeare and West Point lies a host of complex issues facing the nation regarding the role of liberal arts in higher education. Questions of value have clouded arguments for what were once considered accepted cornerstones of Western thought.

In the dialogue now taking place at universities across the United States, terms like “results,” “return on investment,” and “outcomes” seem to have replaced the traditional objectives of “cultured,” “well-rounded,” and “analytic.” Liberal arts professors are on the defensive, and university presidents are defending their jobs by touting strong science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programming over history, literature, and art. Graduate schools of arts and sciences are failing to draw the connection between two branches that were once closely wed to each other.

Colonel David A. Harper, Professor and Head of the Department of English and Philosophy at USMA, noted that the liberal arts are being challenged globally.

### THE CASE FOR THE ARTS AT WEST POINT AND THE NATION

“I’ve always thought that we have a lot to offer to that conversation because we see the arts as an important part of developing leaders,” said Harper. “It may be counterintuitive to outside observers who might consider the West Point education to require a more technical degree, but we have certainly seen that a grounding in the humanities and arts helps develop leadership traits in future officers.”

“If we here at West Point recognize the value of humanities, that should be a signal to the rest of higher education,” said Harper.

So who better to make the argument for liberal arts in higher education than USMA? The Academy has a rich history not only of arts education, but also of the arts working in tandem with an established reputation as the oldest and one of the best engineering schools in the nation.

Harper said that the Academy could serve as a model for the nation in the way that the school views the arts and humanities as complementary to the STEM disciplines. He added that the value of a tech/arts combination is increasingly accepted in Silicon Valley, but it’s old hat at West Point, where there is a long history of teaching artistic drawing alongside mechanical drawing.

### HISTORY OF ARTS AT WEST POINT

West Point Museum Curator Marlana Cook concurred with Harper, adding that no less than Robert Walter Weir, a father of the Hudson River School, was a professor of drawing (from 1834-76) to Generals Grant (1843) and Sherman (1840), to say nothing of painter James McNeill Whistler (ex-1855), he of “Whistler’s Mother” fame. Though they never met in any official capacity, future writer Edgar Allan Poe (ex-1834) also fell under the spell of Weir’s paintings.

In *West Point Library Bulletin* of 1972, Associate Librarian J. Thomas Russell asserts that Poe’s “Ulalume—A Ballad” refers to the master’s ability to capture the Hudson Valley fog in oil on canvas.

*“It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
In the misty mid region of Weir—  
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,  
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.”*

Weir’s romantic landscapes aside, West Point primarily taught drawing because of its importance to engineering for developing

**Right:** Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival actor Kurt Rhoads performs *An Iliad* for cadets at West Point’s Cullum Hall.





# *The Arts*

## AT WEST POINT: An Essential Part of an Officer's Education

By Tom Stoelker, guest writer



fortifications and drawing maps, as did most military academies established in the early 1800s.

Cadets were often charged with copying engravings or plaster casts. The exactness of the exercise didn't always translate into enduring aesthetic accomplishment. Cook remarked that museum visitors often marvel at Jefferson Davis' (1828) graphite drawing of Minerva, but while the drawing is a masterfully executed copy, the curator said it is not necessarily an artistic interpretation.

And while drawing class might have helped most students to think creatively, some of the more creative cadets were found lacking in other disciplines. Whistler was sent packing for failing chemistry and Edgar Allan Poe was court-martialed for "gross neglect of duty." The court-martial didn't deter Poe from asking then-Superintendent Colonel Sylvanus Thayer (1808) for a letter of introduction to the Marquis de Lafayette for Poe's planned, but unrealized, trip to Paris. The letter is in West Point's archives; a response from Thayer is not.



Jefferson Davis (1828) *Helmeted Bust of Minerva*, c. 1827. Davis' 'Head of Minerva' is a masterful copy, but focused on technical precision, not necessarily artistic interpretation.

Despite the occasional setback for some of West Point's more notable artists, most of the cadets benefited from their more artistically inclined classes, said Cook.

"West Point recognized that students needed artistic ability, and that they needed to think creatively and analytically," said Cook. "You weren't just drawing lines and taking measurements, but you were learning how to interpret a scene."

The same goes for reading and writing, said Harper. He said that the Department of English and Philosophy has an informal slogan: "Read your world; Write your world."

"If you can read your world then you can see beneath the surface," he said. "I

think that ties back to the *Iliad*, both the epic poem and the adaptation. If you're in a battle, how do you portray the truth? Often it's not about giving a literal account, but by tapping into an emotion through art."

### AN ILIAD AT WEST POINT

Two months after the Boscobel performance, the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival brought the production to the ornate ballroom at Cullum Hall for a group of plebes fresh from Beast Barracks.

"I like this idea that in the theater we can talk about the essence of war," said actor Kurt Rhoads. "If we don't talk about stuff it becomes illness. I thought a lot about PTSD when I was working on this role and doing a play about trauma and war was my way to express that."

Beneath the gaze of William T. Sherman (1840), who loved theater, and portraits of dozens of other Civil War generals, Rhoads once again brought his role of traveling storyteller to life and, as it was at the outdoor performance, the evening was a warm one. The windows of the McKim, Mead and White-designed hall were closed. At Boscobel, the audience dressed in shorts, whereas the cadets were dressed in their gray wool trousers. There was a certain empathy between the overheated actor playing a modern-day Homer in a trench coat and the cadets.

But the synergy didn't stop with the costume and uniforms; even the architecture contained parallels that enriched the text of the play. High atop the action, the frieze of the hall lists American battles, from Manila to Puerto Rico to Little Big Horn to Gettysburg.

"Before the performance started, we were just looking around the room and seeing all the different battles that we recognized and it was a very sobering feeling," said Cadet Adam Patula '19.

At what could arguably be referred to as a crescendo of the play, the actor recites the names of wars, dozens of them: from the Trojan



Abner Doubleday (1842) *Untitled (Topographical Study)*, c. 1841. West Point was first and foremost an engineering school. Cadets like Abner Doubleday were trained to be proficient in topographical studies.



Wars to the War of the Roses to the French and Indian War to the American Revolution to the Russian Revolution to World War II to Vietnam to Afghanistan to Ukraine. It takes several minutes to complete the litany. At the conclusion, the actor released a harrowing primal moan that ricocheted off the frieze and absorbed into the oil portraits of men who had seen similar bloody battles.

“You definitely have job security when you enter the military,” Cadet Andrew Zinner ’19 said of the list. “There’s always war.”

Classmate Gillian Garman-Davis ’19 took a more hopeful tone. “When he’s naming off the battles surrounded by all these portraits of men who have fought for our country it seems hopeless, but it’s not all for naught. We’re fighting for a reason.”

The students’ instructor, Captain Renee Farrar ’07, said the teaching moment was invaluable.

“If I could have everyone major in English, I would,” she said. “Literature has something to offer everyone. Studying it helps us understand our founding myths and creates empathy with people who differ from us in dramatic ways. You don’t want that sort of repetition of battles that we heard tonight.”

### ART AND WAR

Professor Samet has written extensively about literature and war. In her lecture before the Boscobel performance, she weighed in on the loaded term “theater of war” and what that might mean. She noted that Louis XIV once staged a spectacular mock-battle involving 60,000 soldiers that was attended by the entire court of



**Above:** Henry Larcom Abbot (1854) *Untitled (Landscape)*, 1852. A graphite drawing by CDT, later BG, Henry Larcom Abbot. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1863. **Below:** Professor Elizabeth Samet (front, left), members of the USMA English and Philosophy department faculty, and cadets enjoyed a performance of *An Iliad* at the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival on the grounds of Boscobel Mansion in Garrison, NY. West Point is visible across the Hudson River in the background.





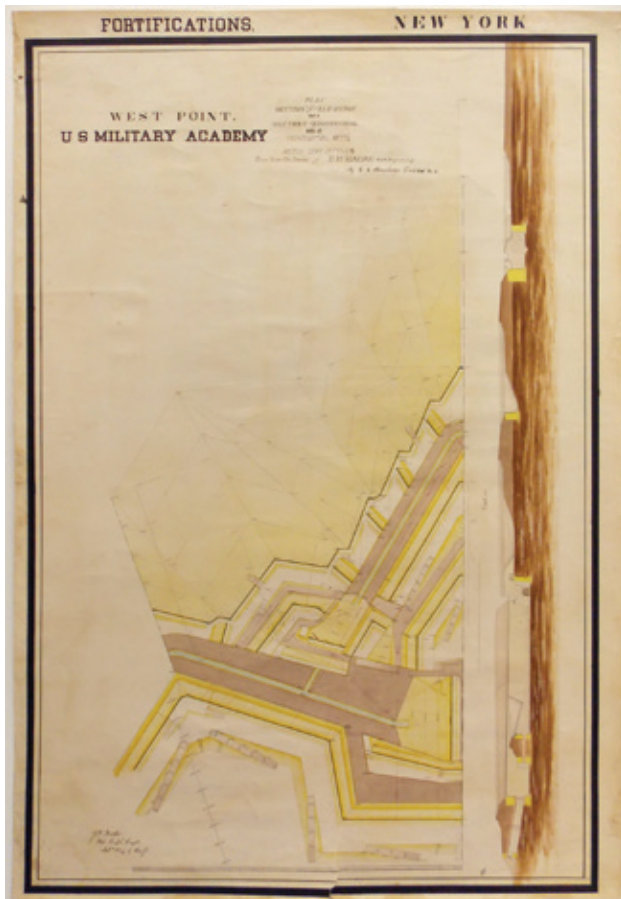
Versailles, which had decamped to a nearby hilltop. She said that before technological advances enlarged the battlefield, spectators could safely watch real battles from a distance. During the Napoleonic Wars, for example, the Duke of Wellington complained of an epidemic in war tourism. Today, she added, the proliferation of digital media has enabled war tourism on a giant scale.

“We are all spectators of war, watching it from afar, our drama curated by someone else’s video camera. The seeming reality of these images creates the illusion of proximity.”

She said that the question of authenticity always dogs the subject of war’s artistic representation.

“With few other subjects is there such an emphasis on the necessity of ‘being there’ in order to understand,” she said. “Yet there’s no absolute truth of war: each participant inevitably comes away with only a piece of some essential truth. Through empathy an artist may be able to combine a variety of perspectives into a rich and full picture.”

Just as writers and artists can tap into the pain and complexities of war through empathy, the study of the literature and art they produce can foster a deeper understanding of war and the military profession in the classroom, she said.



Edmund C. Bainbridge (1856) *Plan and Section of a Half Front of Fortifications on a Horizontal Site*, c. 1855. The USMA arts curriculum combined copying great works of art in the studio with *plein air* painting. The combination proved effective in training engineers to think analytically and to produce precise plans out in the field.



Ulysses S. Grant (1843) *Indians Bargaining*, c. 1842. Grant’s drawing of Native Americans engaged in trade is a copy of a lithograph by John Richard Coke Smyth.

## LOVE AND WAR

Samet was also quick to point out that West Point doesn’t teach war poetry exclusively. “English class is the place cadets can also read tales of love, home, and family,” she said.

*An Iliad* highlights aspects of love and family that aren’t necessarily as prominent in *The Iliad* as set down by Homer. Noting the strong culture of military families at West Point and in the Army at large, as well as the vital role of family readiness groups in wartime, Samet said that such scenes had special resonance for this audience.

There is a scene when Hector’s wife, Andromache, learns of her husband’s death and reacts with rage and yells at her dead spouse. “What good are you to your son now?” the storyteller paraphrases her as saying.

“In contrast to the stark violence that dominates the poem, this is an intimate domestic scene,” said Samet. “This private familial moment suspends the action of the poem and shows us the cost of war.”

At the end of the poem, and the performance, Hector’s father, Priam, begs the victorious Achilles for the return of his son’s body for proper burial. Achilles, who is “addicted to rage,” surrenders the body and lets go of his rage only after Priam mentions Achilles’ own father, Peleus.

“The play ends with a father who had lost his son,” said Davis McCallum, the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival’s artistic director. “Achilles sees in Priam his own father. A profound part of what theater can do is take disparate people and make us whole.”

For Cadet Patula the lesson was obvious: “It’s an eye-opening experience to hear how other people characterize war. This helps us to maintain the human aspect of ourselves whenever we enter that situation so we don’t lose ourselves in that rage as Achilles does.” ★

*Tom Stoelker writes about art, architecture, and academia. He lives in New York City.*





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A photograph of the USMA Band marching in formation on a paved path. The band members are wearing dark blue uniforms with white gloves and blue trousers with white stripes. They are carrying various instruments, including tubas and euphoniums. A large black and gold flag with the word 'ACADEMY' is being carried by a member in the front. The background shows a brick building and trees.

# The Never-Ending Beat for the Long Gray Line: USMA Band

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff

Walter Pater, a Victorian-era critic and essayist who was an early proponent of “art for art’s sake” and the Aesthetic Movement, once remarked, “All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music.” While seemingly complex and profound, this quote boils down to a simple idea: in the realm of art, music is king. Similarly, the United States Military Academy Band is at the top of the arts at West Point—just ask any one of the 50,000-plus concert-goers who has attended one of the Band’s performances at Trophy Point in the summer.

**Above:** LTC John Cross '93, 1st Regiment Commander, leads the procession of the USMA Band and the U.S. Corps of Cadets from the Cadet Chapel to the West Point Cemetery during the inurnment services for GEN (R) H. Norman Schwarzkopf '56 on February 28, 2013.



But the USMA Band, also known as the West Point Band, is not paramount at the Academy for purely aesthetic reasons. Instead, the Band is tops because of its connection to cadets. While some cadets partake in the arts at West Point through extracurricular clubs, and while some might study artistic works in one or two semesters of course work, every West Point cadet is intimately connected to the music of the Band. It seeps into the fiber of their being over the course of their four years at West Point, as it has for every member of the Long Gray Line since the Academy's founding 214 years ago. A Revolutionary War-era West Point order book addresses this phenomenon of the Band's effect: "Music regulates the Soldier's waking and sleeping, spurs him on in marching and fighting, and accompanies him on occasions of joy and sadness."

The first occasion of both joy and sadness for cadets at West Point is R-Day, and the West Point Band is there, although not exclusively in a musical capacity. Members of the Band manage the dozen or so stations in Thayer Hall through which cadets must pass during in-processing. While it might seem odd to have a bugler or drummer checking a new cadet's height and weight or issuing gear, the fact is that the members of the Band are Soldiers first, dedicated to completing any mission to which they are assigned. "We support the Academy in a variety of ways," says Lieutenant Colonel Andrew J. Esch, Commander of the USMA Band. "Our main mission is to serve as strategic communicators for the Superintendent as an asset he can employ to create relationships and raise goodwill regarding West Point and the community, but we complete more than 1,600 missions a year, some of which are outside our music specialty." For example, during summer training, senior non-commissioned officers with the Band support the land navigation portion of Cadet Basic Training.

But, returning to the order book quotation, it is music that accompanies Soldiers on occasions of joy and sadness, and the cadets' first break during the agony of Beast Barracks is the USMA Band's Concert Ensemble 4th of July concert. "It is designed to

give them a morale boost," says Esch. Listening to the classical and oftentimes patriotic music performed by the world-class musicians of the Concert Band is likely to boost anyone's spirits. With nearly 50 members, the Concert Band is the largest component of the overall USMA Band, and its stellar performances at West Point and beyond have earned it a reputation as one of the top symphonies in the nation. The USMA Band's concert musicians have performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and other major music venues along the East Coast. The Band has also given joint concerts with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, "maintaining a long-standing collaboration between the United States Army's oldest band and America's oldest orchestra," says Master Sergeant Sam Kaestner, Publicity Division Chief for the West Point Band. At West Point, the Concert Band is known for its Summer Concert

**"Our performances are not strictly focused on creating art; they are more about creating relationships," Esch says. "The Band helps people feel good about the Army and about West Point."**

—LTC Andrew J. Esch,  
Commander of the USMA Band

Series at Trophy Point, especially its "1812 Overture" or Labor Day Concert (complete with cannon volleys!), and its Winter Concert Series at Eisenhower Hall, which frequently features internationally famous guest artists. Yet, despite its emphasis on providing public concerts, the Concert Band also regularly supports cadet activities at the Academy. One popular initiative is "The Core of the Corps" exercise, during which the concert elements of the USMA Band

**Below, left:** The USMA Band participates in the Class of 2019 Acceptance Day parade. **Below, right:** The USMA Band performs its annual Labor Day concert at Trophy Point.





demonstrate how conducting and performing music serves as a metaphor to leader development. Concert Band members also collaborate with the various academic departments (e.g., English and Philosophy, Foreign Languages, and History) to complement classroom lessons, and members of the band help mentor cadet clubs, such as the Cadet Spirit Band, Jazz Forum, and USCC Pipes & Drums.

Although publicly renowned, the USMA Band only touches cadets occasionally in a concert capacity. The Hellcats, on the other hand, reach cadets nearly every day for four years of their lives at the Academy. The Hellcats, or the Field Music Detachment of the USMA Band, trace their lineage to a group of fifers and drummers who were attached to Minutemen companies stationed on Constitution Island during the Revolutionary War. When General George Washington established the garrison of West Point in 1778, this group moved across the Hudson River. The establishment of the United States Military Academy in 1802 only increased the need for music at West Point, and the fifers, drummers, and now buglers stationed there played calls to give orders to the cadets. Not much has changed in more than two centuries. Today, the Hellcats are responsible for sounding reveille each morning and retreat each evening, as well as providing the music to which the cadets march

into the Mess Hall on weekdays. While some cadets might resent the bugle-call alarm clock or percussive beat of the Hellcats, most graduates have fond admiration for the eternal rhythm of West Point that these musicians provide. “The Hellcats are part of the fabric of the cadets’ daily experience,” says USMA Band member Sergeant Major Christopher Jones. “Many old grads who return to West Point at reunions recall a love-hate relationship with the Hellcats.” And several of them are even laid to rest at the West Point Cemetery accompanied by a Hellcats bugler blowing “Taps.”

Another USMA Band ensemble that old grads might recall is the Jazz Knights, formed in the early 1970s but now known as the Benny Havens Band (BHB). While the Hellcats fulfill more of a formal military role in the USMA Band, BHB is more hip and casual. With talented vocalists (male lead vocalist Staff Sergeant Jeremy Gaynor was recently featured on NBC’s “The Voice”), dynamic guitar play, and a funky horn section, BHB is able to perform a wide-range of rock, pop, country, hip-hop, Motown, R&B, and disco hits, everything from “Don’t Stop Believing” (Journey) to “Uptown Funk” (Mark Ronson, featuring Bruno Mars). BHB performs at many cadet social functions throughout the year, such as Ring Hop, Plebe-Parent Weekend, the 100th Night Show, and Graduation Hop. A few years ago, at



Benny Havens Band members entertain football fans in Black Knight Alley before the Army West Point vs. Air Force game.





**Above left:** A bugler and drummer from the Hellcats perform “Taps” for a funeral at the West Point Cemetery. **Above right:** The USMA Band performs in Times Square on June 12, 2015 to celebrate the U.S. Army’s 240th Birthday. **Right:** A detachment from the Hellcats sounding “Reveille.” **Bottom right:** Benny Havens Band members host Country Music Night at Trophy Point Amphitheatre.



Homecoming 2010, some 36,000 fans attended a high-energy BHB concert dedicated to returning West Point graduates at Michie Stadium. Events such as these show why BHB is nicknamed “The Official Party Band of the United States Corps of Cadets.”

Whether one is discussing the musicians of the Concert Band, the Hellcats, BHB, or the Marching Band (which is a combination of elements from the other named bands that performs at parades and other official functions), they are all collectively part of the USMA Band and its mission, which is to support the U.S. Corps of Cadets. They are also all artists, having devoted years of their lives to the study of music. Nearly all of the members of the USMA Band have a college degree from a renowned music school, many with a graduate degree or higher, and each had to compete for and pass an audition before joining the Band. Finally, each rehearses many hours every week to reach the level of precision needed for performance. Yet while they are all artists, and art is inherent in what they do, Lieutenant Colonel Esch bucks Walter Pater’s theory by saying the music the USMA Band makes is not art for art’s sake. “Our performances are not strictly focused on creating art; they are more about creating relationships,” Esch says. “The Band helps people feel good about the Army and about West Point.” Sergeant Major Jones says he sees this during football reviews on gameday. “When the Band completes the Army Song and makes the final left turn in front of the reunion class, they give the biggest cheer to show the genuine positive feeling of appreciation for the Band.” At that moment, the graduates are likely recalling their connection to West Point, listening to the same songs they once marched to as cadets on the very same parade field. Such is another function of the USMA Band, it helps maintain West Point traditions. Consider the “West Point Graduation March,” which represents parts taken from seven songs, one of which (“Auld Lang Syne”) dates back to 1788. “So, looking at their dates, nearly every graduate from West Point since 1802 has heard songs from this march,” says Jones. Regulating waking and sleeping, accompanying occasions of joy and sadness, the USMA Band plays on. ★



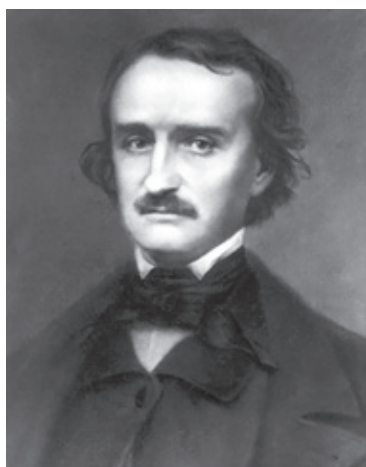


*S*argoyles, gothic stone buildings, and cold, dark spells known as “gloom period.” It sounds like the setting of an Edgar Allan Poe story, but it’s actually how one might describe a winter at West Point. Perhaps the literary legend was inspired by his surroundings during his time at the Academy, however short a time that may have been. Poe entered West Point in 1830 but was expelled just eight months after his arrival. A career in the military was not what Poe envisioned, and his dismissal from West Point was by design. Poe resented his caretaker, the wealthy tobacco merchant John Allan, for not paying his expenses while away at a previous university, and for not informing him of his remarriage. Poe promised to get himself expelled from the Academy, which he successfully did in March 1831.

For the next 20 years, Poe earned a measly wage writing poems and stories and editing journals, but he was frequently fired from editorial positions due to his drinking habits. Poe would go on to publish numerous poems, short stories and a novel until his

mysterious death in 1849 at the age of forty. Although he is widely recognized as the inventor of the modern detective story and the science fiction genre, Poe only received critical acclaim for his mythic masterpieces after his death, thanks in part to a libelous biography written by one of his literary adversaries, Rufus Griswold. Coincidentally, Griswold’s attempt to slander Poe only added to his mystical and macabre persona, which was growing among his fan base during the second half of the 19th century. Griswold’s misrepresentation of Poe led to soaring book sales and created the Poe legend that lives on today.

Edgar Allan Poe, despite never graduating, is one of many who attended West Point and later pursued a creative career. From writers to filmmakers, to painters and photographers, the Academy has seen its share of post-Army artists. In the following profiles, meet three USMA graduates who have excelled in the creative arts while keeping the prevailing USMA tradition alive in their work. ★



## Edgar Allan Poe ex-1834

### Poet and Writer

By **Anthony DiNoto**, WPAOG staff







## THE COMMITMENT CONTINUES

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## Anheuser-Busch Salutes the 116th Army-Navy Game





## Randy Rogel '76

### Emmy Award-winning Song and Script Writer

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff

Like the Cosmo Brown character in "Singing in the Rain," a role he has played four times to critical acclaim in numerous productions of the play (winning an Ovation Award for his latest performance), Randy Rogel '76 loves to entertain people and "make 'em laugh."

**Above:** Emmy Hat Trick—After winning a Primetime Emmy in 1993 for his work on "Batman: The Animated Series," Randy Rogel '76 garnered more accolades for providing music, lyrics, and scripts for the Warner Bros. television show "Animaniacs," winning an Outstanding Achievement in Animation Emmy in 1996 and an Outstanding Children's Animated Program Emmy in 1997. Surrounding Rogel are characters from those shows, including Yakko, Wakko, and Dot and Pinky and the Brain.



Rogel developed this passion growing up in San Diego, California, and he quips that he came to West Point “so I could get some sleep” (a line from the Hundredth Night Show he wrote his firstie year). Rogel put his passion and theater background to use as an original member of the Cadet Acting Troupe (established by Gary Rodriguez '74), which found success on post with a production of “The Fantasticks” and won a “Best Production” Award for “The Devil’s Disciple” at a regional competition off post. “The level of talent we had in the Corps was amazing,” he says.

After graduation, Rogel served as a Field Artillery platoon leader in Italy. He then left the Army in 1982 to pursue a career in sales. He started acting again in his spare time and soon realized that he wanted to work in Hollywood. For nearly a year, Rogel sent spec scripts to agencies hoping for a break. None came. “If West Point gives you anything, it gives you self-discipline,” he says. “This discipline allowed me to keep going through all the rejection.” Finally, Rogel changed his tactics and started submitting scripts directly to studio executives. He left the one that got him hired as a writer on “Batman: The Animated Series” (1992-95) right on producer Barbara Simon Dierk’s desk while the office staff was at lunch. In 1993, Rogel won the Outstanding Animated Program Primetime Emmy for co-writing the episode “Robin’s Reckoning: Part I” for the “Batman” series; he was also nominated for a Daytime Emmy in 1994 (Outstanding Writing in an Animated Series) for his work on “Batman.”

Soon after, Rogel became interested in writing for “Animaniacs,” another Warner Bros. Television show, this one produced by Steven Spielberg’s Amblin Entertainment. He encountered some resistance from studio executives about moving from the dark, dramatic world of “Batman” to the zany, comedy world of the “Animaniacs,” but Rogel again used his West Point-inspired perseverance and wrote a song for the show titled “Yakko’s World,” which names the

countries of the world to the tune of the “Mexican Hat Dance,” to prove he could make the transition. Soon, Rogel was providing music, lyrics, and scripts for “Animaniacs,” winning an Outstanding Achievement in Animation Emmy in 1996 and an Outstanding Children’s Animated Program Emmy in 1997 for the show. Rogel also won a Peabody Award for his work on “Animaniacs.” He has gone on to write award-winning stories and lyrics for more than a dozen animated works, including “Histeria!” (1998-99), “House of Mouse” (2001-02), and the feature film *Rio 2* (2014). He is currently touring with “Animaniacs Live!” for which he plays piano and sings songs from the show with other cast members in front of a live audience, and running two animated shows that air on various Disney channels, “1001 Nights” (2010-present) and “The 7D” (2014-Present).

With all his success in different creative areas and at a variety of studios, Rogel is well known and carries a lot of credibility in Hollywood. When his colleagues find out that he also has a West Point background, they are doubly impressed. Rogel credits this background with giving him numerous experiences that have formed the basis of his writing. “A lot of animated shows have writers with hard-sciences background,” Rogel says. “So, not only has West Point prepared me pretty well for life, it also prepared me for my profession because I have a lot of material to draw on.” He also thinks those entering the Army officer profession can benefit from exposure to the arts. “This goes right to the heart of West Point’s mission of developing a well-rounded officer,” he says. “Art is one of the essential building blocks of civilization that asks the thematic questions of humanity needed to make us smarter, and it helps us develop a sense of humor, which is essential to a stable society.” Speaking of humor, Rogel says that he would love to write a song about West Point. He says, “West Point has plenty to poke fun at, but in a really lovely way.” Imagine just how funny the lyrics for a tune titled “The Corps Has...,” as written by Rogel, could be! ★



Randy Rogel '76 (left) played the lead role in “As You Were,” the 100th Night Show for the Class of 1976, which he also wrote and directed. He is shown here with classmates Joe Hardesty '76 (center) and Dan Nolan '76 (right). Rogel was an original member of the Cadet Acting Troupe during his days at USMA.





## Sean Mullin '97

### Filmmaker

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff

Orson Welles, the filmmaker behind *Citizen Kane* (1941), widely regarded as one of the greatest films of all time, once said: "A writer needs a pen, an artist needs a brush, but a filmmaker needs an army." Since officers lead the U.S. Army, and West Point trains these Army officers, does this make West Point a *de facto* film school?

**Above:** Sean Mullin '97 (left and inset) directed the 2014 award-winning "comedic love story" *Amira & Sam*.



Sean Mullin '97, the director of the award-winning film *Amira & Sam* (2014), has joked in interviews while promoting his film that West Point provides fertile training ground for film directors. He says that West Point helped him as a film director in three ways: 1) making tough decisions under pressure, 2) adapting to unfavorable circumstances, and 3) inspiring a team to do its best work. "In many ways, I don't think there's a better film school in America than West Point," Mullin says, although he admits that he was unaware of any arts programs while he was a cadet. In fact, the extent of his film experience at West Point was buying a video camera and, as he puts it, recording his cadet buddies "doing stupid stuff on the weekends and telling funny stories." But this was the mid-1990s, the apex of the independent film movement, when young filmmakers such as Quentin Tarantino, Kevin Smith, and Richard Linklater seemed to be inspiring all college kids with cameras. "I was very inspired," recalls Mullin, who also says the loose, natural, character-driven style of Linklater's "Before" trilogy had the most profound influence on *Amira & Sam*.

Before making *Amira & Sam*, Mullin served as a Field Artillery fire support officer in Germany and then as the Officer in Charge for a New York Army National Guard unit stationed at Ground Zero after the September 11th attack. Referring to the latter assignment, Mullin says, "It was a crazy time in my life because I'd spend 12 hours at Ground Zero during the day, then I'd do stand-up at comedy clubs or improv at the then newly formed Upright Citizens Brigade Theater." Crazy, but formative. This time exposed Mullin to the world of Wall Street, which factors into the plot of his film. And Sam, the main character, is a great mix of military vet and aspiring comic. "Although I would never call the film autobiographical, it definitely pulls a lot from my background and there's no way anyone else could have made this film," Mullin says. In 2002, Mullin entered Columbia University's Graduate Film Program, earning an MFA in Film Directing.

*Amira & Sam*, Mullin's first feature film, tells the story of Sam Seneca, a former Green Beret sergeant on terminal leave who is making the transition to civilian life after serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Amira Jafari, the niece of Sam's former translator who is cited for selling pirated DVDs and faces deportation. Explicitly, the film is a romantic comedy (or, what Mullin calls, "a comedic love story"), but implicitly, it examines the complex issues of immigration and veteran assimilation. "One of the goals I set out to accomplish with *Amira & Sam* was to challenge misconceptions about returning veterans," Mullin says. "I wanted to flip the tired veteran-grappling-with-PTSD premise on its head and ask: what happens if the soldier comes home from war unharmed, but it's his country that's lost its mind?" The film, which has won nearly a dozen awards at film festivals across the country and is now available streaming on Amazon Prime, has been praised for its impressive editing (or lack thereof in one essential long-take scene), stellar performances, and humor.

During his promotional tour of *Amira & Sam*, Mullin had the opportunity to return to West Point and screen the film for cadets and faculty. "Everyone genuinely seemed to enjoy it, and we had a great Q&A afterwards," he says. Mullin has more West Point connections planned in the future. He is currently working on a project titled *15 Brothers*, which is set within the world of Army West Point rugby, and he envisions completing a "Duty, Honor, Country" trilogy. "*Amira & Sam* is about 'Country,'" Mullin says, "and my currently untitled Ground Zero/stand-up comedy feature will be about 'Duty,' while I have another idea for a military-themed film about 'Honor.'" If that makes it sound as if Mullin is busy, he certainly is. "It's yet another similarity between the film business and the military," he says, "There's no rest for the weary." ★

Amira (Dina Shihabi) and Sam (Martin Starr) run through the subway in Drafthouse Films' *Amira & Sam*.







## Q&A with Chris Pestel '03 Photojournalist

By Anthony DiNoto, WPAOG staff







### What inspired you to attend West Point?

I was recruited to play football in the fall of '98. I wanted to play at the D-I level, and I was aware of West Point's status as an excellent academic and leadership institution. Being from the Midwest, I was also told we would play Notre Dame. Which we eventually did, but four years after I graduated.

### What kept your inspiration alive during your cadet years?

I tried to intertwine media into the papers I wrote. My first English paper plebe year was on "The Simpsons," and my senior thesis analyzed John Milton's *Paradise Lost* from the perspective of the original "Star Wars" trilogy. The media room in the old library was my sanctuary—I often went there to watch Ken Burns documentaries, listen to music, and do yoga before football practice.

### What arts-related activities did you do as a cadet?

Juggling football practice with academics while having creative ambitions was always a struggle. On nights before game day, I would draw caricatures of the players and coaches. One artistic project I did as a cadet was during a trip to Lake Havasu, AZ. I took a Polaroid camera and each day I would take 50-60 pictures. I posted—literally—the photos to the wall and windows of our rented houseboat. It was sort of a living comic book of instant nostalgia, and I thought I was on to something big. But someone else went ahead and did that: it's called Facebook. Too bad.

### What project has been most meaningful for you and why?

Two projects stand out. In September 2015 the West Point boxing team came to Chicago to work with city kids. I tagged along and created a photo essay of the trip titled "To Beat the Devil." Ironically, the day after I published the essay, *The New York Times* published an article criticizing mandatory boxing at the U.S. service academies. I was concerned that people would think my story was connected to the article, but I soon learned that West Point cadets were using my photo essay as a 'counter-punch' to the criticisms. So I am proud to say that the Corps of Cadets, and especially the Army Boxing Team, used it as an unofficial response to rally behind. To know that my words and images were used to help profess the depths of their passion was one the most rewarding experiences of my career.

The other project was a photo essay I did on my fallen classmate, Laura Walker '03, who died in Afghanistan in 2005—the first female West Point graduate killed in action. There is an annual handball tournament honoring Laura, and I wanted to show what Major Renee Ramsey '03 (Women's Handball head coach and USMA Professor) was doing to keep the memory of our classmate alive, and the impact it had on cadets. The result was "See It

Through: An Inside Look at the 1LT Laura Walker Memorial Tournament and How Legacies of the Fallen are Kept Alive through Cadet Development." I think that story helped our class make its mark on the West Point legacy and the Long Gray Line.

### You've made many trips back to West Point since graduation. What draws you back?

The mythology, the repetition—it's very appealing. The creative community within the Long Gray Line is sparse. And rarer are those retelling the West Point story through imagery. Creative perspectives are important, as they often uncover something unconventional or uncommon. Who better to tell a visual story of our Rockbound Highland Home than a grad?

### How did West Point prepare you for life as an artist?

Adaptability, functioning under pressure, and building the confidence and courage to take the path less traveled. It also supplied an endless canvas to paint on. The West Point community is relatively small, but its impact is huge. There are so many accounts of success to learn from. But there are also so many accounts of temporary failure and setbacks. So many stories, so little time.

### Your photos seem to tell a story. Do you shoot with a theme in mind?

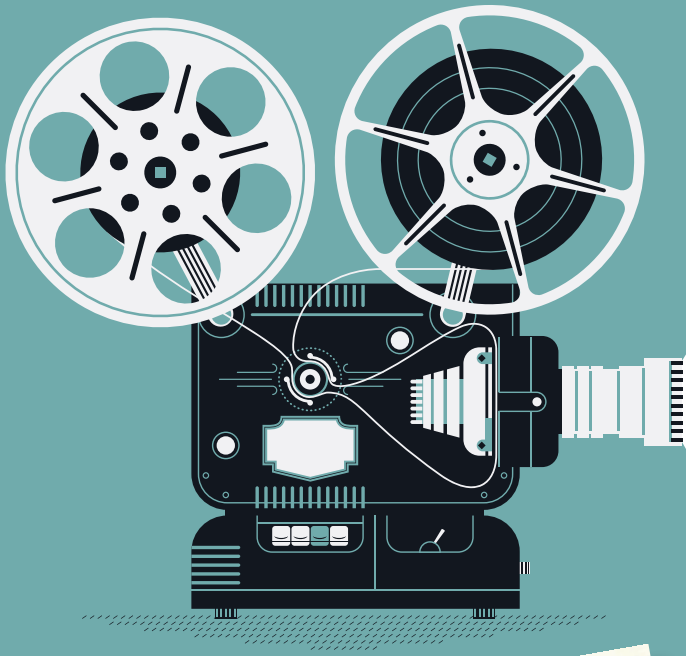
I take a Zen approach and believe photography captures what awareness observes. If you prepare properly and observe carefully, you spot patterns and interesting angles. I strive to step beyond the world of action photos and move closer to the essence of a subject. Playing football for Army granted me access to a brotherhood unlike any other. I like to show how those bonds formed at West Point make the institution special. Capturing the essence of the scholar-athlete-warrior is what spurred other West Point-related photo essays.

### What are some of your artistic goals?

I'm at an interesting crossroads of photojournalism and art. I want my work to evoke emotion from the truth but ultimately ask more questions than give answers. I like to think of myself as creating tiny historical fictions. Photography is a wonderful craft to practice, but the great paradox is that if you are careful, it teaches you to see the world without a camera. ★







# Lights, Camera, Action for Duty, Honor, Country

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff





Think about some of the elements that make for a good movie or TV show. What comes to mind? A compelling drama? Colorful characters? A unique and detailed setting? A sense of timelessness among all the elements in combination? Given these elements and more, it's no wonder that West Point has been the setting and subject of more than 100 filmed projects, everything from silent documentaries and Hollywood feature films to TV miniseries and newsreels, with most celebrating the Academy and a few critiquing it.

The earliest West Point films were “actuality” films, or films that use footage from real events but do not structure the film to make a point, as a documentary would. The titles of these films essentially described the content seen on screen, for example “West Point Cadet Drill, No. 1” and “West Point Cadet Cavalry Charge,” both produced by the American Mutoscope Company in 1896. Often in this era, film companies came to West Point to capture the historical figures who visited the Academy. In March 1902, both Edison Studios and the American Mutoscope & Biograph Company filmed Prince Henry of Prussia reviewing the Corps of Cadets. A few months later, Edison Studios was back at West Point to film President Theodore Roosevelt presenting Calvin Titus (the first Soldier to scale the wall in Peking, China), Class of 1905, with the Medal of Honor in “Graduating Day at West Point Military Academy.” Actualities primarily of West Point parades and football games continued until 1924, when Inspiration Pictures produced *Classmates*, the first commercial film featuring scenes at West Point and characters based on cadets.

Adapted from a 1907 play written by William C. de Mille (film director Cecil B.'s older brother), which was originally filmed in 1914 in Jacksonville, Florida with legendary director D.W. Griffith as its production supervisor, the 1924-version of *Classmates* is loosely based on two West Point events: the 1900 death of Oscar L. Booz, an ex-cadet from the Class of 1902, who allegedly died from injuries he received as a result of hazing, and the 1901 dismissal of five cadets who led a demonstration protesting hazing restrictions. Most of the film is set along the Amazon River in South America, but the film culminates in a wedding scene at the Cadet Chapel with real cadets serving as extras. The next two feature films, *Dress Parade* (1927) and *West Point* (1927), shared similar plots, and both featured more scenes of West Point than *Classmates*. *Dress Parade* was directed by Donald Crisp (who returned to West Point 28 years later to play “old” Marty Maher in John Ford's film *The Long Gray Line* [1955]), and, as one reviewer commented, “takes full advantage of the location scenes at West Point.”

The film opens with a full-dress parade, during which a visiting amateur boxer spies the Commandant's daughter and decides to become a cadet in order to vie for her affection, a plot which exploits the potential conflicts between regimented upperclassmen and a cocky, over-confident plebe. *West Point*, starring William Haines and a young Joan Crawford, is another arrogant-plebe-angers-the-Corps-but-makes-good-in-the-end story and has, as the *New York*

*Times* noted, “some impressive scenes of the United States Military Academy.” The film was shot on location and gives viewers a historical look at the Academy in the 1920s—the shot of the Academy from the Hudson River as the new cadets arrive via the Day Line steamer is particularly spectacular, and the film shows the old West Point Hotel that once stood near Trophy Point. *West Point* was also co-produced by The War Department with Academy officials serving as advisors, which some say pushed the film into propaganda territory with its strong *esprit de corps* message.



Warner Bros. took out a full page ad in the 1935 *Howitzer* to thank West Point for its cooperation during the filming of *Flirtation Walk*.



West Point's heyday in film began in 1934 with the Oscar-nominated (Best Picture) film *Flirtation Walk*. Not only is it named after West Point's scenic foot trail for cadets and their dates, but *Flirtation Walk* incorporates West Point's annual 100th Night Show as a plot element. Another film that incorporates a number of West Point traditions into its plot is *The Duke of West Point* (1938). The film shows a subdued version of R-Day and barracks life, makes drama out of West Point's Honor Code and the now defunct "silence" practice, and climaxes in the annual hockey game against Canada's Royal Military College. However, despite all its attention to West Point traditions, *The Duke of West Point* was shot entirely in Hollywood, giving it a somewhat artificial feel to those who know the Academy. The feature films about West Point in this era generally fell into three, oftentimes overlapping, genres, most with a romance subplot: comedies, musicals, and sports films.

Some of these films were well-received, such as *The West Point Story* (1950), which has James Cagney as a Broadway director-turned-cadet staging the 100th Night Show. Some were "bad" but likable, such as *Francis Goes to West Point* (1952), the third film in the "Francis the Talking Mule" series, which was filmed on location with minimal (and begrudging) cooperation from the Academy. Lastly, some were critically panned, such as *The Spirit of West Point* (1947), which has Felix 'Doc' Blanchard '47, Glenn Davis '47, and Army head football coach Earl 'Red' Blaik '20 playing themselves and features plenty of newsreel coverage of their gridiron highlights, but reportedly has been called, "The Plan 9 of sports movies" (referring to *Plan 9 from Outer Space* [1959], which is consistently voted the worst movie of all time). West Point's run of feature films culminated in 1955 with *The Long Gray Line*, which Michael G. Arden, the USMA Library's Audiovisual Librarian, calls "the West Point movie to take with you to a desert island."

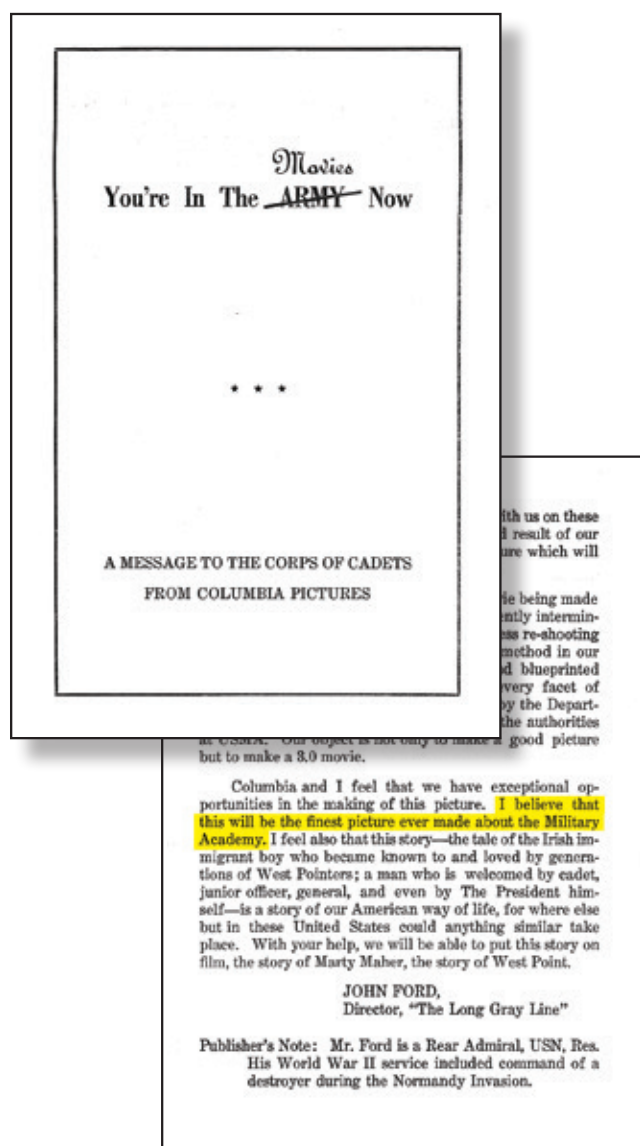
Based on Sergeant Marty Maher's biography *Bringing Up the Brass*, *The Long Gray Line* stars Tyrone Power and Maureen O'Hara, and features several prominent figures in West Point history, such as "Master of the Sword" Herman J. Kohler, "Cadet" Dwight Eisenhower (1915), "Captain" John Pershing (1886), and "Cadet" Omar Bradley (1915). The film also features a number of familiar West Point scenes, such as the Cadet Chapel, Quarters 146 ("the Gingerbread House"), and the Plain. Regarding the latter, when shooting wrapped, the Academy had to replant the grass of the Plain to make it ready for the parade season that followed. According to the brochure "You're in the Movies Now: A Message to the Corps of Cadets from Columbia Pictures," director John Ford planned on making every effort to have *The Long Gray Line* be as accurate as possible to authentic life at West Point. Jay Olejniczak '61 reports that Ford's dedication to authenticity required that the parading cadets in the film use an older form of drill based upon three platoons of three 8-man squads rather than the more common company or battalion mass. Yet, despite its devotion to staying faithful to West Point characters, locations, and activities, *The Long Gray Line* did take liberties with history for the sake of drama. For example, the Mahers of the film are depicted as losing a son in childbirth, but they had no children in real life. Furthermore, the real Marty and Mary Maher lived in NCO quarters, not the quaint home near the Plain known as the "Gingerbread House." Still, many agree with Ford's assessment to the cadets in the aforementioned brochure when he said, "I believe that this will be the finest picture ever made about the Military Academy." In fact, in its December 31, 1954 review, *Variety* called the film "a standout drama on West Point." As a testimony to the successful collaboration between the filmmakers, the Academy,

and the Corps of Cadets, Arden notes that all 1,900 cadets were bused to New York City by Columbia Pictures, marched from Central Park West to the Capitol Theater on Broadway, where the film was being premiered with the real Marty Maher in attendance, and passed in review to honor him.

With the success of *The Long Gray Line* and with one of its graduates occupying the White House, West Point was an American pop culture staple during the 1950s. Hoping to capitalize on this status, Ziv Productions looked to bring the Academy to TV's burgeoning audience with its television series "The West Point Story," which ran Fridays at 8 pm on CBS starting in October 1956. According to Arden, Ziv spared no effort in presenting West Point and its cadets with almost complete veracity. "Before production started, TV editors in 15 cities around the nation interviewed cadets by telephone," Arden says, "and Ziv and the Academy officials worked together to create scripts based on actual events that transpired at West Point." In fact, the Academy established an eight-member "Television Board" to approve story







Film director John Ford penned a message to the Corps of Cadets before shooting *The Long Gray Line* at West Point.

outlines, First Lieutenant Stanley V. Wielga Jr. '53 served as the show's technical advisor, and underclassmen were assigned to minor on-screen roles in the TV series. To add to its authenticity, all of the show's exterior shots were filmed at West Point, and its producers routinely consulted the cadet "Blue Book" for room arrangement charts, the schedule of calls, and other regulatory documents pertaining to cadets. The show was so realistic that, according to Arden, some of its actors in costume were mistaken for real cadets by Academy officers and corrected for uniform or rule infractions. According to Captain Walter Frankland Jr. '46, USMA's Assistant Public Information Officer at the time, "The 'West Point Story' television series enabled millions to gain a better understanding of the purposes, character, and accomplishments of the U.S. Military Academy."

By all accounts, the show was a success for West Point. Ratings indicated that 25-30 million viewers tuned in each week to watch, and the number of annual visitors to West Point nearly doubled after the show's first season. Many visitors would stop cadets for pictures or autographs, according to Colonel E.W. Richardson '37, the Academy's Public Information Officer at the time. "Thanks to the show," he said in a letter to Mr. John Sinn, President of Ziv, "the

cadet at West Point is now considered somewhat of a celebrity." The show helped to recruit cadets as well. Plebes from the Class of 1961 were given a questionnaire that asked about the show's influence on their decision to apply to West Point: 1,728 out of 2,085 (approximately 83 percent) said that "The West Point Story" motivated them to apply. Unfortunately, the show lost its sponsor, General Foods, after one season and was dropped by CBS. ABC picked it up for a second season but moved the show to a Tuesday 10pm slot, where it lost a good part of its audience. Despite the efforts of Major General Garrison Davidson '27, Superintendent, who wrote to CBS when the show was cancelled to offer the Academy's assistance in getting the show back on the air, "The West Point Story" ended after 40 episodes. Academy documents show that President Eisenhower was "miffed" that his favorite TV show was no longer on the air.

As the patriotism of the 1950s gave way to the social upheaval of the 1960s and beyond, the number of notable film projects about West Point plummeted and the prestigious feature film was replaced by the mediocre made-for-TV special. Most of these projects had sensationalistic aspects: "Women at West Point" (1979, CBS) was publicized as "the battle of the sexes" and criticized for being unrealistic and inaccurate; "Dress Gray" (1986, NBC), which was based on Lucian Truscott IV's '69 book of the same name, involves the fictitious murder of a homosexual cadet and subsequent cover-up by the administration of a West Point-like institution that was also suffering from a cheating scandal and rampant drug use; and "Assault at West Point" (1994, ABC) dramatizes the court-martial of Johnson C. Whittaker, an ex-1880 African American cadet who was attacked by three of his classmates, but who was accused and later found guilty of staging the attack himself to get out of a philosophy exam.

While the plots of the above projects did not favor the Academy, other film projects looked to the Academy's locations to put them in a favorable light. For example, the wedding scene in *Hello, Dolly!* (1969) was shot at Trophy Point, where Arden notes a chapel façade was constructed and then razed after filming; *MacArthur* (1977) shows cadets in the Mess Hall during the title character's famous "Duty, Honor, Country" speech; and Bob Hope staged his 78th "All-Star Comedy Birthday Party" special for NBC (1970) at West Point. Hollywood also continued to turn to West Point for legendary characters to populate its biographical war movies: George C. Scott won a "Best Actor" Oscar playing George S. Patton, Class of 1909, in the 1970 film *Patton*; Paul Newman played Leslie R. Groves '18NOV in *Fat Man & Little Boy* (1989); and Mel Gibson played Harold G. 'Hal' Moore '45 in *We Were Soldiers* (2002). Finally, thanks to programs like "60 Minutes" and "CBS Sunday Morning" and to networks such as the History Channel and National Geographic TV, West Point has been given the opportunity of late to show the American audience how it is preparing the next generation of leaders for the nation; however, there always seems to be a "Code Breakers" (2005, ESPN) or "America's Book of Secrets" (2012, H2) type of show looking to exploit West Point's time-honored traditions for the sake of ratings.

Through the years, since the advent of film in the late 1800s, West Point and its graduates have continued to fascinate both filmmakers and generations of viewers. ★







## 2015 Thayer Award Presented to Gary Sinise

For his dedication to our nation's active duty military personnel and returning veterans, the West Point Association of Graduates presented the 58th Sylvanus Thayer Award to actor and humanitarian Gary Sinise on October 22, 2015. WPAOG gives the Thayer Award annually to a U.S. citizen whose outstanding character, accomplishments, and stature in the civilian community draw wholesome comparison to the qualities in the West Point motto: *Duty, Honor, Country*. The text of Sinise's address to the Corps, along with video and photos of the ceremony may be found on the WPAOG website.

After a ceremony including a full dress parade and speaking to the Corps of Cadets at dinner in the Mess Hall, Sinise submitted a heartfelt personal note to COL (R) Robert McClure '76, President and CEO of the West Point Association of Graduates, asking him to pass along his gratitude to the Long Gray Line for honoring him with the Thayer Award. ★

### A Personal Note of Thanks to West Point Graduates

*'Thank you' does not seem an adequate acknowledgment for your recognizing me with the Sylvanus Thayer award at West Point. After the day's events, while extremely tired from the long day of activities, I was still wide awake as the special day continued to replay itself in my mind over and over again.*

*For me, the privilege and reward is in knowing that, as a civilian citizen, there is something I can do to support the men and women who defend our country. Yet, I appreciate so very much the acknowledgment that you have bestowed on me, and will cherish the memory of receiving it always. The Thayer award will be proudly displayed at my office in Los Angeles in a place of honor. Please know how deeply grateful my family and I are for all you have done in service to our country, and for honoring me with this special tribute.*

*Warmest regards to you all.*

*Sincerely,  
Gary Sinise*



“Then what are we fighting for?”

—attributed to Winston Churchill,  
*when asked to cut arts funding in favor of the war effort*

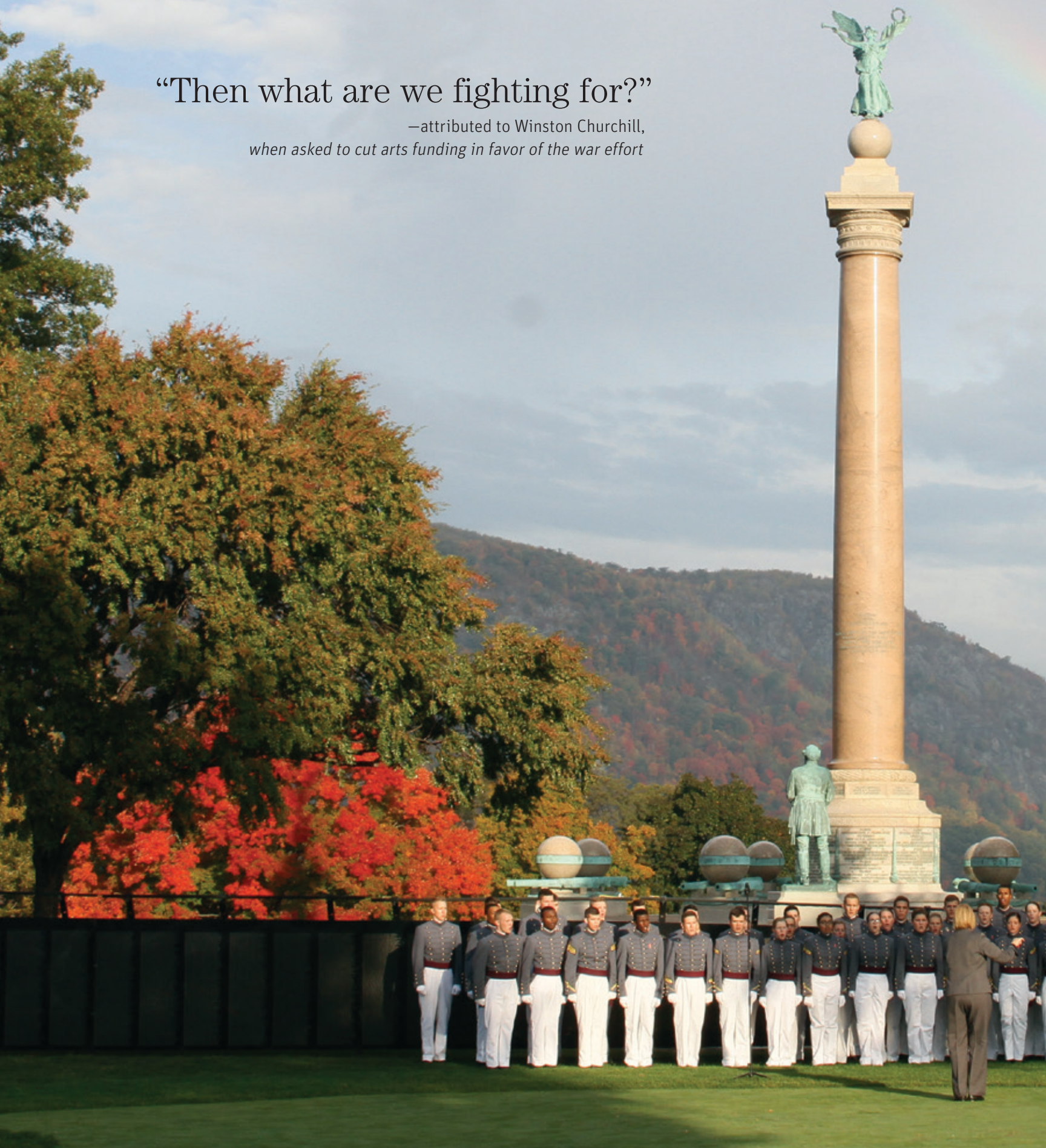






Photo: Anthony DiNoto/WPAOG



# Ambassadors in Song: The Cadet Glee Club

By Anthony DiNoto, WPAOG staff



It wouldn't be an issue about the Arts at West Point without mentioning the United States Military Academy's Glee Club. The storied ensemble of celebrated singers has symbolized West Point melodically for over 100 years. The Glee Club represents both USMA and the U.S. Army at official events, while enhancing life at West Point through its traditional and ceremonial duties. But for Glee Club Director Constance Chase, it is the recent resurgence of the Glee Club which excites her. "Ever since I came to West Point I've seen a return of the Glee Club to the national stage," says Chase. With performances at Super Bowl XXIV, in Carnegie Hall and during the final credits of the hit film *We Were Soldiers* (2002), she couldn't be more sincere. The crooning crew travels the world far and wide to perform their classic a cappella songs, touching audiences of all kinds on stages of all sizes.

The first formal Glee Club performance occurred in 1903, and the group has since become one of the U.S. Military Academy's

most recognized cadet organizations. In the 1950s, the Glee Club appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* multiple times, wowing national audiences in the emerging doo-wop era. During the next two decades, the harmonious voices from West Point resonated with both military and civilian audiences during times of both war and peace. Now, the group maintains a national presence through live performances and professional audio recordings. Just recently, the Glee Club recorded an album at Skywalker Ranch—the renowned sound design, mixing and audio post-production facility for Lucasfilm. From that session, two Glee Club projects were born: a 15-minute CD representing their work, and a documentary of that very recording session, which according to Chase, is "film festival-worthy." Chase, who has been directing the Glee Club since 1999, believes the Skywalker Ranch recordings are a shining moment for the club which will once again propel the group into the national spotlight.

**Previous page:** The West Point Glee Club performs at Trophy Point during the display of *The Wall That Heals*, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Replica & Mobile Education Center. **Above:** On September 11, 2015 the West Point Band and the West Point Cadet Glee Club gave a performance at Trinity Church on Wall Street in New York City. The program honored first responders and featured members of the ensemble as soloists.



While the recordings at the home of George Lucas' musical sanctuary seem to be the pinnacle of success for the Glee Club, Chase has a few other memories that serve as high points for the group. One such favorite was a New York City performance honoring retired General H. Norman Schwarzkopf '56. "All of a sudden, he started singing along with us. It was a surreal experience having that steely gaze of his fixed on me," Chase remembers. Another memorable performance was when both the West Point Glee Club and the Notre Dame Marching Band came together, forming a 300-piece band, to perform "Battle Hymn of the Republic" when Army West Point played the Fighting Irish at Yankee Stadium in 2010. Or the more recent performance in Ft. Lauderdale this past Veterans Day weekend, when the Glee Club flew to Florida, performed for school children during the day, to a sold-out audience at night with the local orchestra, then flew back to New York, were bused to Connecticut's Mohegan Sun Casino and performed with Trace Adkins for an encore performance of "Til the Last Shot's Fired" as part of the 2015 "Vets Rock" concert series.

All admirable acts, however, it's an annual performance back at West Point that is perhaps the most significant for Chase. Each year, the West Point Association of Graduates presents the Thayer Award to a citizen of the United States, other than a West Point graduate, whose outstanding character, accomplishments, and stature in the civilian community are comparable to the qualities of the West Point motto: "Duty, Honor, Country." At the end of the ceremony, The Glee Club performs West Point's "Alma Mater" from the balcony in the Mess Hall, and the feeling in the room captures the essence of the Glee Club. "The Thayer Award

performance is incredible, and affirms the notion that their music goes beyond walls of West Point and inspires the art of song," says Chase. That inspiration seems to be quite powerful, as every year Chase gets more and more singing applicants. Membership into the Glee Club is by audition, and cadets who meet rigorous musical standards are admitted after a performance interview with the Glee Club leadership team. The team also provides an assessment of the best and brightest singers to represent West Point at public events. Members come from all musical and academic backgrounds, and create a diverse and unique sound which has become well known to many.

As for favorite songs, "Mansions of the Lord" seems to be the clear winner. The Glee Club is asked to perform that song at nearly every live show, and it is the track heard in the aforementioned *We Were Soldiers* film. It seems the West Point Glee Club was the only choice for the end credits of a movie about Lieutenant General Hal Moore '45 (Retired). In November 1965, then-Lieutenant Colonel Moore and 450 men of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry were dropped by helicopter into a small clearing in the Ia Drang Valley, South Vietnam and engaged in the Battle of Ia Drang, the



Glee Club Director Constance Chase conducts cadets at a performance at Trinity Church on Wall Street in New York City.

The Cadet Glee Club performs with the USMA Band and Trace Adkins at Eisenhower Hall.







The Glee Club performs the national anthem with USNA midshipmen at the 2015 Army-Navy game.

first battle of the Vietnam War. (For more information on films about West Point and its Graduates, see page 24).

For more than 100 years, the West Point Glee Club has touched audiences around the world with a model depiction of the Corps of Cadets through live performance in the nation's finest concert halls, national TV network and feature film appearances, and CD and DVD recordings. The camaraderie enjoyed by members in their pursuit of performance excellence is best summed up in the club's time-honored motto: "No fun without music, no music without fun!" In 2007, the first Glee Club alumni reunion took place, and now occurs every four years. Currently, the cadet Glee Club's funding comes solely from gifts from individuals as well as groups such as the Alumni Glee Club. Chase is happy to see returning grads celebrate their bond with each other and West Point through song. Those connections, the memorable performances and the touching notes she often receives about former members who led music memorial services in Iraq and Afghanistan are what makes it all worthwhile for the Glee Club director. "Music plays such an important ceremonial role because it captures emotions when words seem to fail. Singing is a lifelong activity and a way to forever connect with one another," she says. ★



The Glee Club sings the "Alma Mater" at the Cadet Mess during the 2015 Thayer Award Ceremony.



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# Celebrating Cadet Creativity and Honoring John Calabro '68

By **Christine Shields**, WPAOG staff

Last spring, an audience of nearly 200 cadets, faculty, staff, and friends of West Point gathered in the Jefferson Hall Library's Haig Room for the first-ever "John Calabro Night of the Arts."

Coordinated through the Department of English & Philosophy (DEP) and the Cadet Fine Arts Forum, the John Calabro Night of the Arts celebrated the creativity of more than 50 cadets in the categories of poetry, prose, studio art, photography, film, and music. While an event highlighting the artistic talent of cadets has existed at West Point for 15 years, this was the first year it was named in honor of the West Point Association of Graduates' former Chief Operating Officer and DEP Professor Emeritus, the late Colonel John A. Calabro '68 (Retired). In his opening comments for the event, Colonel Scott Krawczyk '85, then DEP Head, said, "Because Colonel Calabro was simultaneously an exemplary Army officer and skilled artist, musician, and writer, he represented the ideal Renaissance person that West Point seeks to cultivate through its academic, military, physical, and extra-curricular programs."

The event also marked the debut of the John A. Calabro Music and Arts Program, endowed with a gift from Calabro's lifelong

friend, Mr. Fred W. Gretsch and his wife Dinah. Gretsch is the president of The Gretsch Company, maker of guitars and drums that are highly prized by music professionals. "The John A. Calabro Music and Arts Program is a way to pay tribute to a dear friend of mine," said Gretsch. "Not only was John a fine English instructor, but he was deeply committed to the arts himself, and I hope he would be proud to know that his memory will continue to inspire cadets' artistic talents and pursuits in perpetuity."

"Music and art transcend age, ethnicity, culture, and background," said Krawczyk. "The intent of this program is to leverage this power to bridge the civil-military divide, broaden the perspectives of those on either side, and support the great creative and artistic talent of our cadets." The Jazz Ensemble performance heard at the event was an example of this. Eight cadets performed with musicians from local middle and high schools as well as with West Point's own Hellcats.

The Jazz Ensemble included cadet musicians and local high school students.







BG Timothy Trainor '83, Dean of the Academic Board, and COL (R) Robert McClure '76, President & CEO of WPAOG, thank Mr. Fred Gretsche and his wife Dinah for their support in establishing the John A. Calabro Music and Arts Program.

Other cadets who showcased their artistic talents throughout the evening include Sally Sittnick '15 and Madison Maguire '18, who sang from the musical "Jekyll and Hyde;" Scott Filbert '15, who debuted his short film "Detective Rex;" Logan Comer '18, who read an excerpt from his story "Gallery 771;" and Daniel Trainor '15 and Sam Prichard '15, who performed the duet "Lily's Eyes."

In addition to the performances, the John A. Calabro Music and Arts Program posthumously presented the first-ever John Calabro Award for Excellence in Leadership and the Arts to First Lieutenant Christopher Shultz Goeke '08. Going forward, this award will be given annually to a cadet or graduate dedicated to a lifetime of leadership who demonstrates exceptional talent in and passion for the arts. An English major and jazz aficionado, Goeke was killed in action on July 13, 2010 in Afghanistan while serving with the 82nd Airborne Division. "Chris was a young man of impeccable character, boundless

**"Music and art transcend age, ethnicity, culture, and background. The intent of this program is to leverage this power to bridge the civil-military divide, broaden the perspectives of those on either side, and support the great creative and artistic talent of our cadets."**

—COL Scott Krawczyk '85, former DEP Head

**Colonel John A. Calabro Jr. '68** (Retired) was the very definition of a polymath: so much so, that he could tell you without opening a dictionary that a "polymath" is synonymous with a "Renaissance man," or a person who knows a lot about a lot. Part scholar, part soldier, part athlete, part artist, and part musician, Calabro accomplished "a lot" during his lifetime.

As a cadet, he drew cartoons for *The Pointer*, West Point's one-time literary magazine (a few of which reportedly put him in hot water with Academy administration!). After graduating from the Academy in 1968, he served as a Field Artillery officer in Vietnam, where he was awarded two Bronze Star Medals for valor. Returning stateside, he earned a master's degree from Columbia University in 1974, taking courses in advanced German, philosophy, history, and American and British literature. He then served as an instructor in the Department of English at West Point until 1977. That year, he won the New York State English Council's College Teacher of the Year Award. After an assignment with the 2/42nd Field Artillery in Germany, Calabro earned a doctorate in English at the University of Virginia and returned to West Point, eventually becoming a full professor in the Department of English in 1992.

In between publishing numerous articles, conference papers, and a book on American artist and USMA Professor of Drawing Robert Weir (1803-89), he served as the coach for the Women's Crew Team and the Officer in Charge for the cadet publication *The Circle in the Spiral*. He retired from the Army in 1998, but maintained his connection to West Point, first as the Director of Organizational Support, then as Vice President of Alumni Support, and finally as Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the West Point Association of Graduates.

During his retirement, Calabro continued to write poetry, painted water colors, cooked gourmet meals, and played several musical instruments. He also played racquet sports and golf, and helped establish the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor, NY. All the while, Calabro continued to teach English composition and literature lessons as a pro bono, adjunct member of the Department of English at West Point.

John Calabro passed away on July 9, 2013, having fostered the communication and critical thinking skills of more than 14,000 cadets, mentoring dozens of faculty members, and influencing numerous people in the Hudson Valley. Embodying the ideal blend of "Athens and Sparta," a phrase that has become



shorthand for West Point as it pursues its twin aims of educating and training future Army officers, he was posthumously appointed the first Professor Emeritus of English in the Department's history. Like all true Renaissance individuals, his influence continues today, especially in the event that bears his name: "The John Calabro Night of the Arts."

*West Point's Renaissance Man*



good humor, and superior leadership ability,” remarked Krawczyk, “and he possessed exceptional creative talent, vision, and intellectual curiosity, the same wonderful virtues we came to know and admire in Colonel Calabro.” Gretsche said, “I am honored to support an award that recognizes individuals like Lieutenant Goeke, and I know that John would be very proud to be associated with such phenomenal artists and leaders.”

Dean Feinman '16, who won an award at the event for his poetry, summed up the value of the John Calabro Night of the Arts to cadets. He said, “More than just an awards ceremony, the event gave us the chance to interact with several interesting people and explore how creative expression and the arts at West Point contribute to a more holistic concept of service and citizenship.”

The John Calabro Night of the Arts and the John A. Calabro Music and Arts Program are unique programs at West Point that will foster and celebrate cadets' artistic talents for years to come and use music and the arts as vehicles to forge new connections with those outside of Thayer Gate. Moreover, they honor the creative pursuits of those who have passed but whose art continues to inspire. On naming the event and program after his father, Jac Calabro said, “I am sure that my father would be thrilled to know that one of his legacies at West Point is the association of his name with the cultivation and appreciation of the arts.” ★

**Below, left:** COL Scott Krawczyk '85, former Department of English & Philosophy Head, recognizes, from left, Cadets Scott Filbert '15, Tony Holland '15, and Spencer Collazos '15 for their work on the first place film “Detective Rex.”  
**Below, right:** SFC Mark Tonelli of the USMA Band worked with members of the Jazz Forum.



**Left:** CDT Sally Stick '15 sings “In His Eyes” from the musical “Jekyll & Hyde.”  
**Right:** CDT Mackenzie Riford '16 receives the 3rd place poetry award from COL Scott Krawczyk '85.



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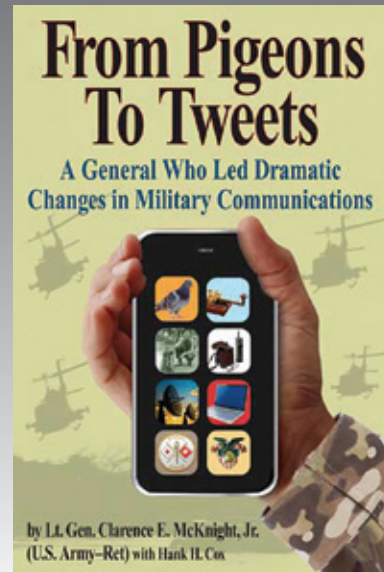


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Jazz, opera, creative writing, painting, sculpture, French dining and art appreciation are not activities one would typically associate with the United States Military Academy at West Point. Yet, thanks to the efforts of hundreds of cadets and the Department of English and Philosophy's Cadet Fine Arts Forum (CFAF), the arts are alive and well at West Point.

The CFAF is, in fact, comprised of nine cadet clubs, all of which are privately funded through endowments or annual gifts: the African American Arts Forum, the Creative Writing Forum, the Elsie Sannes-Pinnell Art Appreciation Forum, the Film Forum, the Hudson Valley Culture Forum, the Jazz Forum, the Opera Forum, the Philosophy Forum, and the Studio Arts Forum. According to CFAF's overall mission statement, these clubs provide cadets the opportunity to pursue cultural interests as well as a venue for their members to express, create, and showcase their artistic talents. Once such venue is CFAF's "John Calabro Night of the Arts," an annual award ceremony that celebrates cadet creativity (see page 36).

How does showcasing one's artistic talents or appreciating such talent in others enhance the 47-month West Point experience and make one a better Army officer? "Conversations around West Point tend to revolve around concrete ethical principles and quantifiable success, but leadership in the Army is inherently a human endeavor," says Major Adam Karr '05, Officer in Charge (OIC) of the Creative Writing Forum. Lieutenant Colonel Laura Bozeman, OIC of the Hudson Valley Cultural Forum agrees, stating that artistic talents and cultural awareness are skills Army officers need in today's complex global operational environments. "Cadets who understand the importance of artistic or cultural sites become officers who are more willing to seek out opportunities to learn and grow wherever they are stationed," she says. Perhaps Dr. Brianne Bilsky, OIC of the Studio Arts Forum says it best: "Extended exposure to the arts fosters in cadets an agile imagination, a resilient mind, and a willingness to confront new ideas with resourcefulness and invention, all of which are important skills for future Army officers to develop."

**Below:** Members of the Opera Forum attend a performance at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City.

# Cadet Fine Arts Forum

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff





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Members of the Elsie Sannes-Pinnell Art Appreciation Forum view a painting by Jackson Pollock at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

Here is a brief summary of each club in the CFAF:

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARTS FORUM

**Mission:** “To raise awareness of African-American contributions to the arts, to critically engage with the African-American intellectual tradition, and to articulate the role of the African-American culture within the broader intellectual communities of West Point, the greater New York area, and the U. S. Army.”

**Membership:** Approximately 30 cadets

**Meetings:** Monthly

**Regular Activities:** Acknowledging, appreciating, and critically engaging the contributions of African Americans (in art, music, fiction and non-fiction writing, poetry, drama, and oral rhetoric), while considering how the experiences and expressions of these artists and writers continue to influence, and are relevant to, contemporary society



**Left:** Cadet Katherine Bullard '15, CIC of the African-American Arts Forum, presents a bouquet to guest lecturer Toni Morrison, the first African-American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Morrison visited West Point for the 36th Sol Feinstone Lecture in 2013, and joined Bullard and other club members for lunch at the Cadet Mess. **Right:** Cadets from the Creative Writing Forum met with Susan Spieth '85 (left), author of the award-winning *Gray Girl* and *Area Bird*, thrillers set at West Point. Spieth discussed her experience as a female cadet in the first years of integration and how her experiences inspired the fictional Cadet Jan Wishart, the protagonist in her novels.

**Trip:** In the past, cadets have attended events at the historic Apollo Theater and met with prominent African-American figures in public life such as Jesse Jackson

**Why Cadets Join:** To study, appreciate, and promote the role of African-American culture and the arts

**Note from OIC:** “The African-American Arts Forum emphasizes the integral role of African-American writers, artists, and thinkers in American public discourse.” –Dr. Matt Salyer

### CREATIVE WRITING FORUM

**Mission:** “To explore the art of writing poetry and fiction with the aim of creating publishable work.”

**Membership:** 10-15 regular members

**Meetings:** Weekly

**Regular Activities:** Some meetings are devoted to creative writing exercises, while others are devoted to sharing and discussing works in progress

**Why Cadets Join:** They love to write!

**Note from CIC:** “We are a very diverse club with members who pursue all veins of creativity: script writers, spoken word poets, novelists, comic artists, and dialogue speakers.” –Cadet Dean Feinman '16

### ELSIE SANNES-PINNELL ART APPRECIATION FORUM (colloquially called “The Art Club” by its members)

**Mission:** “Dedicated to enhancing cadets’ exposure to, education in, and appreciation for fine art, sculpture, and architecture.”

**Membership:** 70 members enrolled; around 40 attend regular meetings

**Meetings:** Weekly

**Regular Activities:** Listen to a guest lecturer for 10-15 minutes, then discuss theme of the week.







Cadets from the Jazz Forum receive a personal tour of the birthplace of Jazz legend Professor Longhair from the artist's daughter during a Club trip to New Orleans to attend the annual Jazz and Heritage Festival.

**Trip:** Future trip planned to the Jay Walker Library of Human Imagination in Stamford, Connecticut, where cadets will be able to see and interact with “an original 1957 Russian Sputnik,” “one of two known Anastatic Facsimiles of the original 1776 Declaration of Independence,” and a “1699 atlas containing the first maps to show the sun, not the earth, as the center of the universe”

**Why Cadets Join:** “The Art Club uniquely educates and gives cadets crucial experience in the arts and humanities.” –Cadet Peter Honig '19

**Note from OIC:** “Far-reaching faculty and cadet interest has made the Art Club one of the fastest-growing organizations on campus.” –Captain Renee Farrar '07

### THE FILM FORUM

**Mission:** “To provide cadets an opportunity to view, critique, and discuss films from diverse genres in order to gain a better appreciation and understanding of the artistic nature of film and filmmaking.”

**Membership:** 150 cadets on the distribution list; 15-20 attend weekly meetings

**Meetings:** weekly

**Regular Activities:** Watch a film then discuss cinematic choices within the film, the director's vision, etc.

**Trips:** Tribeca Film Festival in New York City and G.I. Film Festival in the Washington, DC area

**Why Cadets Join:** It is a low-impact event (often serving pizza!)

**Note from OIC:** “The club also hosts various directors (most recently Ben Patton, grandson of General George S. Patton Jr., Class of 1909) who speak about the film medium and filmmaking.” –Major Andrew Marsh

### HUDSON VALLEY CULTURE FORUM

**Mission:** “To develop a greater appreciation for the rich cultural offerings and sights of the Hudson River Valley.”

**Membership:** Nearly 200 on the distribution list; 30 regular members

**Meetings:** 2-3 excursions per semester

**Regular Activities:** Trip sections to landmarks, festivals, museums, and other sites of interest within a 40-mile radius of West Point

**Trip:** Last year, cadets attended a performance of Shakespeare's “Macbeth” performed by actors from the London Stage at Vassar College's Martel Theater

**Why Cadets Join:** “To explore their own backyard”—(the Forum's recruiting slogan)

**Note from CIC:** “I think it is important to keep one's mind open to the parts of life that do not necessarily prove one's productivity with an immediate tangible result.” –Cadet Seamus Matlack '18



## THE JAZZ FORUM

**Mission:** “To spread and expand cultural open-mindedness throughout the Corps by exposing cadets to the aesthetic world of jazz; a world that has profoundly affected and influenced America, both socially and culturally since the beginning of the 20th Century.”

**Membership:** 153 cadets enrolled; about 15 active members

**Meetings:** 2-3 per month

**Regular Activities:** Range from jazz record listening nights to jamming with members of the West Point Band

**Trip:** One each semester to the Village Vanguard jazz club in New York City

**Why Cadets Join:** Jazz, jazz, and jazz

**Note from OIC:** “Currently, the NCOIC of the Jazz Forum is Staff Sergeant Geoffrey Vidal, a saxophonist extraordinaire, whose experience as a professional jazz musician working the jazz clubs of New York City is an invaluable resource to our cadets.”  
—Captain Scott Parsons

## THE OPERA FORUM

**Mission:** “To foster an appreciation of opera [and] to engage students in thinking about the different forms of communication that define opera (song, speech, music, etc.) and how these different methods of expression can be combined to tell (and retell) classic stories in bold new ways.”

**Membership:** Nearly 150 members, 20 of whom participate in trip sections

**Meetings:** Every two weeks, lasting about 75 minutes

**Regular Activities:** Screen recordings of performances surrounding a particular semester’s theme and then discussing them

**Trip:** The club has typically visited the Metropolitan Opera once a year

**Why Cadets Join:** Most sign up out of curiosity

**Note from OIC:** “Last year, alumna Lorna Case ’99 delivered a live opera concert.” —Major Mike Kieser

## THE PHILOSOPHY FORUM

**Mission:** “To create a space for cadets to broaden their horizons by engaging in philosophical reflection on a variety of topics and to foster deep and critical thinking among the Corps.”

**Membership:** Approximately 200 cadets

**Meetings:** 4-5 times per semester (depending on the availability of speakers)

**Regular Activities:** The format of the club is unique in that it brings renowned scholars to West Point to speak about topics of philosophical interest to cadets and allows them and faculty to respond (recent speakers/topics include Carol Gilligan on “Resisting ‘Masculinity’ and ‘Femininity,’” Virginia Held on “Care Ethics: Anything New?” and Stephanie Pell on “Spying in Bulk: Secrecy in the NSA’s Metadata Collection Program”)

**Why Cadets Join:** “I got involved in the Philosophy Forum because I believe critical thinking is essential to being a good officer and a good person.” —Cadet Samuel Kolling ’16

**Note from OIC:** “Phil Forum events are free spaces where people come together in the mutual appreciation of open inquiry, which has proven to be something cadets appreciate.”  
—Dr. Graham Parsons

## STUDIO ARTS FORUM

**Mission:** “Dedicated to hands-on experience in the plastic arts, especially drawing, painting, and sculpture.”

**Membership:** Approximately a dozen cadets regularly participate

**Meetings:** Once a week

**Regular Activities:** Very open in terms of agenda; mostly, cadets use the time to produce art in a studio space

**Trip:** Last fall, cadets attended the Arts Gowanus Open Studios in Brooklyn, New York, which was an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with dozens of local artists

**Why Cadets Join:** To harness their creative energies and express their ideas through a variety of media

**Note from OIC:** “The level of the cadets’ experience range from informal sketching to previously working as an illustrator for the Army.” —Dr. Brianne Bilsky ★



**Left:** Painting entitled “Kaiso” by CDT Uzoma Ezeonyeka ’18. **Right:** Charcoal drawing entitled “Gas! Gas!” by CDT Taylor Sharpsten ’18. The works finished 1st and 2nd in last year’s Studio Arts category.



# ARMY-NAVY LACROSSE

AT MICHIE STADIUM | WEST POINT, NY

ARMY  
42

## Women's Lacrosse

Saturday, April 2

DOUBLEHEADER STARTING AT 12 PM

## Men's Lacrosse

Saturday, April 16

DOUBLEHEADER STARTING AT 12 PM

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### GET YOUR TICKETS:

[GoArmyWestPoint.com](http://GoArmyWestPoint.com)

1-877-TIX-ARMY

# ARMY **A** CLUB

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## Help Support More Than 1,000 Cadet-Athletes

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Benefits Include: Complimentary Parking for Single Game and Season Ticket Members,  
Opportunity to Purchase, Army-Navy Football Tickets, and more!

---

### For more information:

845-938-2322 | [ArmyAClub.com](http://ArmyAClub.com) | [ArmyAClub@usma.edu](mailto:ArmyAClub@usma.edu)



# POP OFF!



Since 1974, The Eisenhower Hall Theatre has brought timeless plays, famous musicians, top comedy acts and other world-class performances to West Point, including Luciano Pavarotti, Johnny Cash, Bob Hope, Toby Keith, Jerry Seinfeld, the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and the Radio City Rockettes. Spanning both genres and generations, our Facebook followers' most memorable performances at Ike Hall are quite diverse.



## Amanda May Cousoule

Billy Joel. He came and did "An Evening of Questions and Answers with Billy Joel" and I got to go up on the stage and play the piano with him. We did "Heart and Soul" together. One of my favorite stories to share. :)



## Brad Hoelscher

Dave Matthews, 2007. He came on stage in FD.



## Dan Driscoll

Bruce Springsteen in '76; B.B. King as a warm-up act for the Marshall Tucker Band in '77.



## Don Cisco

My very first real concert. Steve Winwood in fall of '85. The Kinks and "Cats" in '87.



## Fredrick D. Miller

Beach Boys for Graduation concert ('85), J. Geils, Marshall Tucker with Red Rider.



## Gregg Schamburg

Harry Chapin - He would perform, then sit with Cadets until Taps telling stories. I miss him!



## Harris Brumer

Bob Dylan... Our Commandant at the time, BG Freddy McFarren, was none too pleased with the selection.



## Jamey Royse

Neil Young and Crazy Horse in Feb '91. They dragged out a giant mic with a yellow ribbon tied to it before their set.



## Jim Petro

Worked the crew setting up an ice rink on the stage for a show with Scott Hamilton, Tai Babilonia and Dorthy Hamill. Great show and a chance to talk with all of them during rehearsal.



## John Mullens

Les Miserables and Fleetwood Mac.



## Jon Walter

Elton John with percussionist Ray Cooper, fall of 1979.



## Keith Sims

Bob Hope...Mamie Eisenhower was there.



## Mark Johnson

Jimmy Buffett was April 2, 1983. I have an autographed Dialectic Society poster from the show framed at home. A plebe in my company had access and I got him a nice pie from Tony's in exchange for him getting it signed for me.



## Matthew Robinson

Dave Matthews and Tim Reynolds as a cadet!



## Mike Mendoza

Red Skelton. He autographed my math syllabus.



## Patty Cullen Pfanzer

New Riders of the Purple Sage in '78



## Rosemary Yanson

Elton John !!!!



## Sharon Westergreen

Jimmy Buffett! I want to say 1983 or fall 1984.



Join the conversation on WPAOG's Facebook page!





**“I love this job, I really do,” says West Point’s Cultural Arts Director Gary Keegan.**

Keegan is preparing to retire from his job at the Eisenhower (Ike) Hall Theatre after 38 years, the last eight in his current position. The only thing he wishes was different? That more cadets would take advantage of the theatre shows. “It is so rewarding when a cadet says ‘That was a great show!’” So he works hard to bring the “best of the best” to West Point for them.

Some would think that every artist would be happy to come to West Point, especially to perform for the cadets. Booking shows for the regular season is not so easy, though. The hardest part is finding the right dates and prices for an act to be here. Part of the timing includes the routing of a show, which Keegan describes as key. He says he always needs to consider, “Will the act be in, or traveling through, the area? Do we have the appropriate space? Is the price right?” He also has to work around a very full schedule of events at West Point. Cadets’ free time is very limited, and he has to consider other events occurring at West Point. So Keegan will often try to schedule shows around reunions, major cadet events (such as Ring Weekend or 500th Night), and other times when there will be visitors on post.

So how does Keegan find all these great productions that appear year after year? “I love going to Vegas,” he says (48 visits so far). “While there I can scope out shows.” There is a Theatre Committee, chartered to provide input for shows that the cadets desire. Of course, the season subscribers contribute their input as well. He is quick to admit he can’t please everyone. His mission is to come up with a slate of shows each year that will appeal to wide range of ages and interests. He works hard to ensure that patrons



**Top:** West Point Cultural Arts Director, Gary Keegan. **Bottom:** Country artist Hunter Hayes takes a “selfie” with a cadet’s phone.

# “There’s a lot to like at Ike!”

## Eisenhower Hall Exposes Cadets to an Array of Performing Arts

By **Kim McDermott '87**, WPAOG staff



will have access to a variety of comedy, magic, Broadway, music and dance.

It will always be a judgment call about whether a show will be successful. Does he aim for the enjoyment of the patrons who do attend, or does he aim for a sell-out? Keegan says there is no question—he will always err on the side of enjoyment. “Every year I have to ask myself, ‘Did I do that right?’” His best answers are in anecdotal form, when people tell him how much they’ve enjoyed a show. He appreciates the people (especially cadets) who make a point of telling him that they’ve enjoyed a show. He loves talking to graduates, who often recount stories of the most memorable performances they

subscription includes one free entrance to Mamie’s Buffet, a “sumptuous” buffet located in the Grand Ballroom for two hours prior to every show. Wait staff are available to take drink orders and there is live music. It’s a popular way to relax before the show, and reservations are increasingly difficult to get.

To bring in cadets, it helps that the cost of tickets is reasonable. They can see season performances at no cost. When there are add-on shows, there is a minimal cost. Sometimes they can charge the seats to their cadet account; it just depends on how much advance notice there is to sell tickets. Cadets are aware of the performances—they all get a season program at the beginning of the academic year and they will get at least one email reminder about each show. In addition, cadets have first priority to purchase tickets for the add-on shows.

At West Point, cadets are not just patrons of the theatre. They also serve as ushers for all of the shows. It used to be on a volunteer basis, but the slots are now filled using a duty roster. This provides for accountability and ensures that the theatre is not short-staffed. A club colloquially known as TAG (see below) provides a forum for cadets to be involved with most of the productions in other ways. Guild members will work with security, spotlights, and arranging sets (backstage work).

Keegan adds, “If we can touch a few people’s lives in each show, that’s a good thing.” Often this happens after the curtain comes down. A great example is the ‘Meet and Greet’ after the Celtic Woman show last spring. (The Meet and Greet is an opportunity provided to patrons—usually season subscribers and/or cadets—to meet a performer after the show.) After waiting in line, Cadet Danielle Diulus ’17 asked Máiréad Nesbitt if she would play a song with her. Nesbitt graciously agreed, and it was one of those moments you just couldn’t plan for—and one Diulus will never forget.

And it’s not always the guests who have the memorable moments. Many artists will accommodate a tour stop at West Point, simply because it is West Point. It pleases them that the cadets have the “best seats in the house” (right up front). Many headliners will grab cadet phones and take “selfies,” as country singer Hunter Hayes did during his October 24 performance.

While Eisenhower Hall shows are not about revenue, all profit supports the Cadet Activities Fund. Apart from the cadets, there are 750-800 annual subscribers to the different show packages. These subscriber tickets are available to the general public and are only for regular season performances. Add-on shows cost extra. ★



Violinist Máiréad Nesbitt and CDT Danielle Diulus '17.

attended. Mark Wolf '86 recalls, “I remember watching a number of excellent shows. I really enjoyed ‘Barnum’ and ‘Amadeus,’ but as I worked with the Fine Arts Forum, I saw almost every play. I also watched ‘38 Special’ and ‘Til Tuesday,’ which were brought in by the Dialectic Society. We always had an excellent variety of shows and they were some of the top shows at the time.”

Once shows are booked, it’s time to fill seats. Keegan admits that—like any other public event on a military installation—it has been slightly more difficult to get people in the gates since September 11, 2001. Security restrictions and the time it takes to get on post are issues, as is parking. One recent incentive is that every season

**The Cadet Theatre Arts Guild & Dialectic Society**, or “TAG” to the cadets, traces its roots back to the Dialectic Society established in 1824. Keeping alive a tradition nearly as old as the Academy itself, TAG promotes and produces cadet participation in the performing arts. TAG fosters cadet development by providing an immersive real-world “learning laboratory” centered on a shared passion for all things theatrical. Cadets perform onstage and work behind the scenes for TAG productions, work backstage on technical crews in support of professional shows at Eisenhower Hall Theatre, and participate in theater festivals and trips to cultural arts attractions throughout the region. Alumni are likely most familiar with TAG’s work every year on the 100th Night Show, where TAG cadets build sets, design lighting and sound for the show, manage props and costumes, and sometimes even act in the show. Since 1975, when Ike Hall Theatre hosted Bob Hope as its opening show, TAG cadets have directly contributed to the performance and execution of over 400 ticketed shows!



# START<sup>the</sup>DAYS!

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
5-7 Yearling Winter Weekend	3 Corps Founders Day Dinner	4-7 NCEA <i>National Conference on Ethics in America</i>
12-14 100th Night	11-13 Plebe Parent Weekend	8-9 Sandhurst Competition
18 Henry O. Flipper (Class of 1877) Dinner		28 Projects Day
 26 Brigade Boxing Open	12-20 Spring Break	28-30 "Athena's Arena" Conference <i>40 Years of Women at West Point</i>
		30 Retiree Appreciation Day

Upcoming events suggested by West Point staff & faculty.

Events for May—July 2016 should be sent to [editor@wpaog.org](mailto:editor@wpaog.org) by Feb 15, 2016.

For the entire calendar, go to

[WestPointAOG.org/calendar](http://WestPointAOG.org/calendar)

## West Point's Eisenhower Hall Theatre



**Sunday,  
February 28<sup>th</sup>  
5 p.m.**

**Saturday,  
March 5<sup>th</sup>  
8 p.m.**

**Saturday,  
April 2<sup>nd</sup>  
8 p.m.**

**Sunday,  
April 17<sup>th</sup>  
3 p.m.**



**For Tickets and Information Visit [IKEHALL.COM](http://IKEHALL.COM)**

Eisenhower Hall Theatre, 655 Pitcher Road, West Point, NY 10996

Box Office 845-938-4159



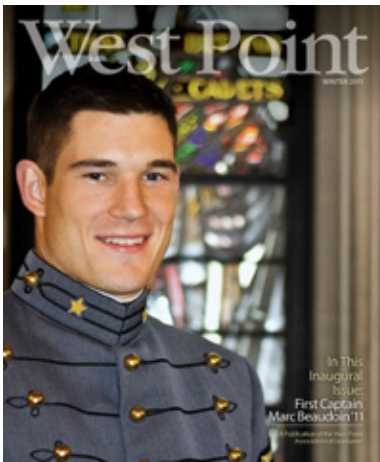


# WPAOG PUBLICATIONS

## *By the Numbers*



# West Point



issues of *West Point* magazine since 2011  
**twenty one**

**55,000**  
copies per issue

**2011**  
launch of *West Point* magazine

**\$0**  
COST TO  
GRADS  
WIDOWS  
CADET  
PARENTS



*Four*

issues per  
year: winter,  
spring,  
summer, fall

**\$35 cost** for annual subscription  
**\$99 cost** for a 3-year subscription

*more than*  
**500** international  
WP magazine  
recipients in 97  
countries

**3,796**



copies of Fall 2015 issue sent to  
USMA Class of 2016-2019  
parents, courtesy of WPAOG



# THE REGISTER OF GRADUATES

West Point  
Graduates  
included in  
2015 *Register  
of Graduates*

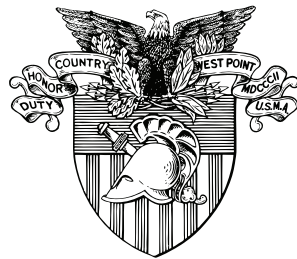
72,413

8,835

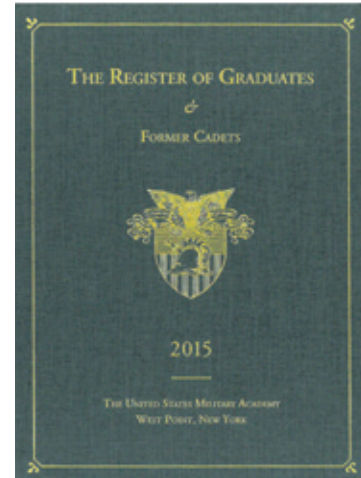
West Point  
ancestor/descendant  
genealogical  
relationships listed in  
*Register of Graduates*

1802-2015:  
218 Graduating Classes  
included in 2015  
*Register of Graduates*

Seventy-five



editions of  
*Register of  
Graduates*  
published  
since 1868



1915

Centennial Class  
celebrated in 2015  
*Register of Graduates*

# TAPS

Official Memorial Magazine of USMA Graduates

number of *TAPS*  
issues per year

1



195

Individual  
Graduate  
Memorial  
Articles in the  
2015 edition  
of *TAPS*



FOUR  
annual issues  
of *TAPS*  
(2012  
to 2015)

EARLIEST  
CLASS YEAR  
OF A MEMORIAL  
ARTICLE IN THE  
2015 EDITION  
OF *TAPS*

1913

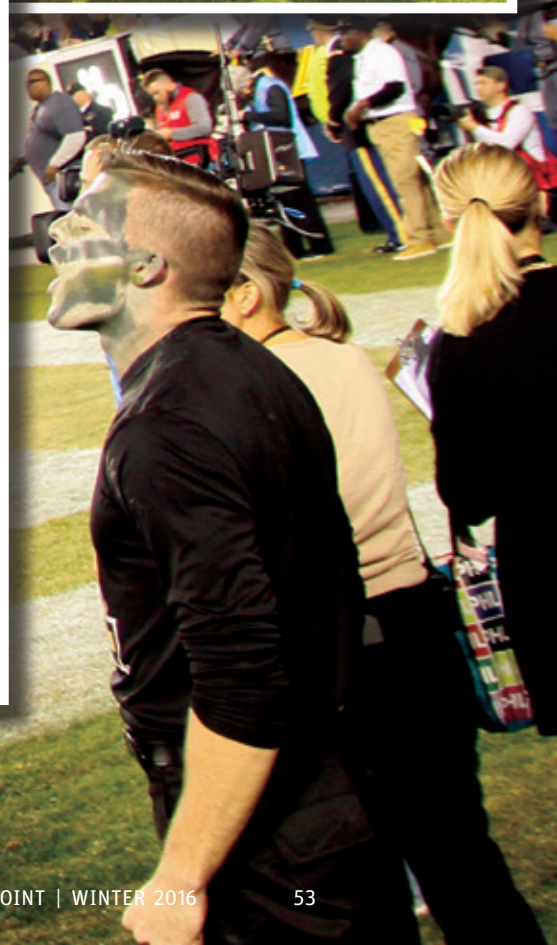


# Army vs. Navy 2015

The pageantry of the annual Army-Navy game is unmatched by any other sporting event in the country. The storied rivalry marks the end of the college football season, where Americans unite to see the two of the finest Service Academies go head-to-head for the most coveted bragging rights in all of sports. 'America's Game' wasn't any different this year as cadets, parents, fans and U.S. Army leadership showed their West Point spirit for the 116th time. Army displayed gridiron grit against a Navy team that was highly favored going into the December 12 game in Philadelphia, and kept fans on the edge of their seats until the final seconds. A fight to the very end, Army gave one of the best performances in over a decade, showcasing the team as a clear contender against Navy going forward. Leaving the stadium, Army fan banter consisted of just four profound words: "Next year is ours."









# WPAOG News



## Cadet Class Officers Learn about Lifelong Roles in the Long Gray Line

As all Old Grads know, *The Grip* of the Long Gray Line begins to form well before graduation and continues to deepen over time. Each year, the West Point Association of Graduates (WPAOG) reaches out to cadet class officers to help them prepare for their future leadership roles in keeping classmate bonds alive and relevant over time. On December 3, officers from the Classes of

2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 visited Herbert Alumni Center to learn more about their responsibilities as class officers and the partner resources offered by WPAOG to assist them.

The four class Presidents, Vice Presidents, Treasurers, Secretaries, Historians, Information Systems Officers, and Ring and Crest Chairs enjoyed lunch and received a

briefing from WPAOG CEO and President Colonel Robert L. McClure '76 (Retired) on the current state of the Long Gray Line and the ways in which WPAOG serves graduates and the Academy. Afterward, WPAOG staff members Rich Huh '94, Cathy Kilner '90, Lexie Davis '04, Kim McDermott '87, Elena Ivanova '99, and Lisa Benitez '88 led breakout sessions tailored for each class, detailing a range of WPAOG cadet services such as the 50-Year Affiliation Program, the Ring Memorial Program, Parent and Class social events at WPAOG, and tips on class governance. The WPAOG staff grads also gave cadets an overview of post-graduation Alumni Support services offered by WPAOG, such as Class Reunions, Communications, *West Point* magazine, the *First Call* e-newsletter, and Class Giving. WPAOG Advisory Council member Captain Brandon Archuleta '06, President of his Class, also imparted some lessons learned to the First Class officers.

It was a packed 90-minute introduction to their future as USMA graduates, but filled with useful information and connections to help them best fulfill their roles as class officers. ★



Rich Huh '94, VP for Alumni Support, and Cathy Kilner '90, Associate Director of Class Services, introduced cadet class officers to WPAOG's support services.

## WPAOG Receives National Recognition for Fundraising Excellence

For the third year in a row, the West Point Association of Graduates (WPAOG) was selected for the Overall Performance Award in Educational Fundraising by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), higher education's leading resource for knowledge, standards, and advocacy in alumni relations, communications, fundraising, and marketing activities. Of 571 institutions evaluated, WPAOG was one of only 15 to receive additional top-tier recognition for Sustained Excellence in Educational Fundraising.

Additionally, the 2016 edition of *U.S. News & World Report* (*USNews*) college rankings

listed West Point's alumni giving participation rate ahead of all other U.S. Service Academies. The *USNews* rankings methodology averages participation rates over multiple years. Among U.S. Service Academies, West Point ranked first in alumni giving participation at 29.3 percent, followed by the U.S. Coast Guard Academy with a rate of 28.6 percent, the U.S. Naval Academy at 18.8 percent, and the U.S. Air Force Academy at 12.7 percent. Information on the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy alumni giving rate is not available.

These national achievements are not surprising given that, over the last

three years, WPAOG has successively broken records for cash and pledge donation receipts.

"The *USNews* listing reflects how dedicated our graduates are to their alma mater," said Kristin Sorenson, Vice President of Development for WPAOG. "The report indicates that our constituents truly understand that their participation is essential to the core mission of the Academy, and we couldn't be more grateful for their support."

The CASE and *USNews* achievements came as WPAOG's *For Us All: The Campaign for West Point* seven-year

*continued on p.55*



# WPAOG News, *continued*

## Fundraising Excellence, *continued from p.54*

fundraising initiative was nearing its conclusion. This unprecedented campaign was undertaken to enhance the Academy's Margin of Excellence programs for cadets and to sustain the activities and traditions that serve the Long Gray Line. The campaign raised more than \$420 million, far surpassing its initial goal of \$350 million.

"Our graduates' participation is so important for West Point. Their gifts supplement appropriated funding and strengthen the Margin of Excellence," Sorensen said, referring to the additional programs, facilities and opportunities the West Point Superintendent has determined are most important for recruiting and preparing ethical and agile leaders of character. These activities complement the Academy's core curriculum and training.

"We want to encourage all graduates to give back to West Point at whatever level they can and in support of programs and activities that are meaningful to them," Sorenson explained. ★

## More Honors for WPAOG Fundraising

WPAOG has earned the highest ratings from both **Charity Navigator** and **Guidestar**, the two largest worldwide independent evaluators of charities and nonprofit institutions. WPAOG has a Charity Navigator **4 Star/Exceptional** rating, indicating that it "Exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its cause." WPAOG is also rated a Guidestar **Gold Participant**, providing detailed

financial information and the highest levels of transparency to supplement information that is publicly available from the IRS.

In addition, WPAOG was among 17 organizations recognized by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, NYC Chapter on National Philanthropy Day. The staff was honored as "2015 Organizational Heroes" for their work on *For Us All: The Campaign for West Point*. ★



WPAOG staff at National Philanthropy Day awards at the Plaza.



## Branch Night: Class of 2016 receives 'First Brass' from Class of 1966



Class of 1966 and 2016 officers at Branch Night at Ike Hall.

After four years of learning about the 17 branches of the U.S. Army through the Branch Education and Mentorship Program (Branch Week, military instruction courses, summer training, etc.), members of the Class of 2016 packed the orchestra level of Eisenhower Hall by company on November 19 to learn their future officer identity in the Army. To mark this important occasion, the 50-Year Affiliation Class of 1966 provided the sealed envelopes revealing branch assignments and the "First Brass" branch insignia which the firsties proudly wear on their cadet uniforms. Full details, video, and branch allocations may be found on the WPAOG website. ★

## Announcement of WPAOG Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of Regular Members of the West Point Association of Graduates shall take place on Tuesday, November 22, 2016 at 5:00pm Eastern Time at the Herbert Alumni Center, West Point, New York. At the Annual Meeting, the 2016 election of Directors and Advisors at Large shall take place. Information on the nomination process for the Director and Advisors at Large positions is published at [WestPointAOG.org/nominationpolicy](http://WestPointAOG.org/nominationpolicy). ★



# Gripping Hands

*“Grip hands—though it be from the shadows—while we swear as you did of yore, or living or dying, to honor the Corps, and the Corps, and the Corps.”* —Bishop Shipman 1902

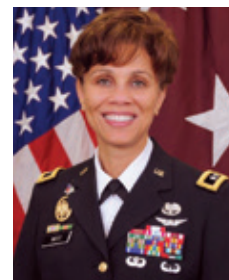
## 1953 Dean Honored by Oklahoma Military Academy

Robert L. Dean Jr. received a 2015 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Oklahoma Military Academy, which he attended before West Point. Dean is a world-renowned sculptor, playwright, and musician most noted for his statues of distinguished military heroes. His statues of General Dwight D. Eisenhower (1915) on the Plain at West Point and in the American Embassy in London are two of his more famous works. His most recent work, a bust of General H. Norman Schwarzkopf '56, is in the West Point Library, along with statuettes of Generals Eisenhower, MacArthur (1903), Bradley (1915) and Patton (1909).



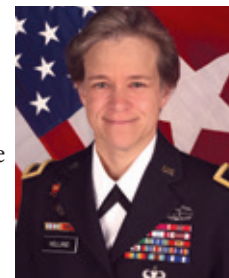
## 1982 West to Serve as Army Surgeon General

Major General Nadja Y. West has been selected for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general and assignment as the Commanding General, United States Army Medical Command/The Surgeon General, United States Army. This appointment will make her the Army's first Black Surgeon General as well as the Army's first Black female three-star general. The promotion will also make her the highest ranking female of any race to graduate from West Point.



## 1990 Holland to Serve as Commandant of Cadets

Brigadier General Diana M. Holland has been selected to serve as the 76th Commandant of Cadets, the first female to hold the post. She assumed command of the United States Corps of Cadets on January 5, 2016.



## 2000 Jaster Becomes Third Female Ranger Graduate

On October 16, 2015, Major Lisa Jaster became the third female graduate of the U.S. Army Ranger School. She joins fellow USMA graduates Captain Kristen Griest '11 and First Lieutenant Shaye Haver '12 as the only three women to successfully complete Ranger School out of the 19 who started in the first gender-integrated assessment which began in April 2015.



### General Officer Promotions

The U.S. Senate has confirmed the following General Officer nominations:

To the rank of Lieutenant General:

Major General Kenneth R. Dahl '82  
Major General Thomas S. Vandal '82  
Major General Nadja Y. West '82

To the rank of Major General:

Brigadier General Arlen R. Royalty '83  
Brigadier General John C. Thomson III '86

To the rank of Brigadier General:

Colonel Jennifer G. Buckner '90



# MAILBOX



Submit comments or questions to [Editor@wpaog.org](mailto:Editor@wpaog.org), or chat with us on one of our WPAOG social media channels!

**FROM:** Warren Alverson '54, Bob Hattler '58, Jerry Pogorzelski '63, Rick Rhoades '68, Karl Ivey '69, Steven Hart '88, Christian Garner '07, et al

The caption for the photo on p. 23 (for the "Modern War Institute: Creating New Global Knowledge in the Military Domain" article) in the 2015 fall issue is wrong: It does not show cadets surveying European battlefields from the "Great War," but rather cadets pulling targets on a rifle range (it is also from 1903, not "June 1919").

## RESPONSE:

Well, we certainly have some eagle-eye expert marksmen in our audience! Must be all the time spent at that range, right? Yes, the photo in question should have been captioned: "Cadets on 'target detail' at the rifle range in 1903." The Modern War Institute provided a number of photos for that article as well as a separate sheet of captions. During layout the wrong caption was paired with the photo, but it should have been caught during the magazine's editorial review. The editorial team is off to the range to train its

eyes so that this doesn't happen again! By the way, here is the June 1919 photo that shows cadets departing for a two month-long survey of Great War European battlefields.



## NO EXCUSE SIR OR MA'AM:

The 2015 fall issue's "Be Thou at Peace" feature should have stated, "Mr. John B. Wing, 1968."

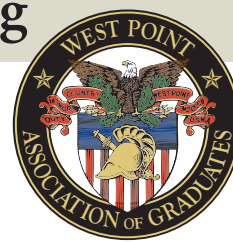


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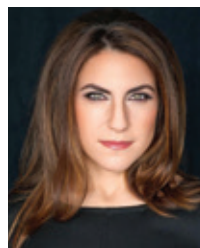
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# Be Thou at Peace

Deaths reported from October 1–December 31, 2015.

COL Edgar J. Ingmire, USA, Retired	1937	COL Edward P. Stefanik, USA, Retired	1950	COL William S. Chandler, USA, Retired	1961
LTC Milton A. Laitman, USA, Retired	1939	LTC Thomas P. Strider, USA, Retired	1950	Mr. Robert M. Gants	1961
COL Howard D. Elliott, USA, Retired	1943JAN	MG Will Hill Tankersley, AUS, Retired	1950	COL Philip J. Galanti Jr., AUS, Retired	1962
Maj Robert G. Kurtz, USAF, Retired	1943JAN	Mr. John F. Brown	1951	CPT Christopher H. Keuker, USA, Retired	1962
BG John W. Collins III, USA, Retired	1943JUN	COL Chandler Goodnow, USA, Retired	1951	LTC Charles W. Stewart III, USA, Retired	1963
Mr. Hanford N. Lockwood III	1943JUN	Mr. Adam A. Gorski Jr.	1951	COL Robert H. Wood, USA, Retired	1963
BG Wallace C. Magathan Jr., USA, Retired	1943JUN	LTC Lynn M. McCrum, USA, Retired	1951	Mr. Harold H. Klingler Jr.	1965
Mr. James B. Giles Jr.	1944	MG Richard M. Wells, USA, Retired	1951	LTC David B. Vann, USA, Retired	1965
MAJ William B. White IV, USA, Retired	1944	Lt Col William P. Bingham, USAF, Retired	1952	Mr. Robert P. Hagen Jr.	1967
LTC Charles S. Adler, USA, Retired	1945	LTC Leonard H. Fuller Jr.	1954	LTC James F. Anderson, USA, Retired	1968
Mr. Chester V. Braun	1945	COL Raymond E. Gunderson, USA, Retired	1955	Maj Jimmie S. Avery, USAFR, Retired	1970
COL Melvin E. Gustafson, USA, Retired	1945	COL Leo A. Hergenroeder, USA, Retired	1955	Mr. John C. Brenner Jr.	1970
BG James A. Herbert, USA, Retired	1945	Dr. James B. Johnson	1955	Dr. Michael A. Kulungowski	1970
Brig Gen Robert R. Lochry, USAF, Retired	1945	Mr. James F. Murphy III	1955	LTC Edward W. Pogue, USA, Retired	1971
COL Everett E. Love, USA, Retired	1945	Mr. Earl V. Singer Jr.	1955	Mr. Thomas H. Spears	1972
Mr. John J. McDonald	1945	COL James I. Town, USA, Retired	1955	Mr. David R. Marler	1973
CPT William V. D. Millman, USA, Retired	1945	Col John A. Hampton, USAF, Retired	1956	Dr. Charles T. Letcher	1974
LTC Benjamin C. Brown, USA, Retired	1946	LTC Kenneth J. Knowles, USA, Retired	1956	MAJ Luigi R. Magnanti, USA, Retired	1975
LTC Carshall C. Carlisle Jr., USA, Retired	1946	LTC Charles R. Russell, USA, Retired	1956	Mr. Clifford E. Nakayama	1975
Mr. Daniel J. Finnegan	1946	MG Mark J. Sisinyak, USA, Retired	1956	LTC Timothy K. Reddy, USA, Retired	1976
Lt Col Philip B. Hopkins Jr., USAF, Retired	1946	LTC E. J. Shimek II, USA, Retired	1957	Mr. Alan B. Becker	1977
LTC Thomas J. Stapleton, USA, Retired	1946	Dr. James C. Castle	1958	LTC Keith R. Donnelly, USA, Retired	1978
Mr. Joseph J. Williams	1947	LTC Glenn A. Lane, USA, Retired	1958	Mr. Michael W. Kiser	1978
Mr. David S. Mallett	1948	Maj Richard H. McManigell, USAF, Retired	1958	Mr. Gregory D. Holtkamp	1982
COL Garland R. McSpadden, USA, Retired	1948	COL Joseph A. Phillips, USA, Retired	1959	LTC David E. Bassett, USA	1985
COL Jesmond D. Balmer Jr., USA, Retired	1949	MG Edward M. Crowley, AUS, Retired	1960	LTC Cliff A. Daus, USA, Retired	1987
Col William H. Lake, USAF, Retired	1949	COL Robert S. Fairweather Jr., USA, Retired	1960	Mr. James J. Anderson	1998
Mr. William F. Trieschmann Jr.	1949	Mr. Adolph Sutton Jr.	1960	MAJ Timothy D. Faulhaber, USAR	2002
COL John L. Begley, USA, Retired	1950	Mr. Gerald F. Winters	1960		





# Past in Review



**Above:** Cast of the 1935 100th Night Show from the *Howitzer*, which enthused: "What a wow! Gorgeous girls, crooners, quartets... laughter and success." **Right:** A program from the 1906 100th Night Show.



## Laugh, Cadet, Laugh: The 100th Night Show

By Keith J. Hamel, WPAOG staff

The 100th Night Show, which marks and celebrates the number of days the First Class has remaining before graduation, has been a staple at West Point for well over 100 years. It evolved from the work of the Dialectic Society, which was established by orders from Sylvanus Thayer (1808) in 1824, making it the Academy's oldest extracurricular activity for cadets. From its beginning, the Dialectic Society was looking for ways to entertain its audience at West Point. At first, it offered debates and recitations, but in 1846, the Dialectic Society brought a one-act play to West Point. The performance was positively received, and the Dialectic Society continued to put on dramatic acts. Then, in December 1860, sensing tension between northern and southern cadets concerning Abraham Lincoln's victory in the recent presidential election, the Dialectic Society presented a burlesque-type play titled "The Toodles." Longer than the previous one-act performances, this two-hour comedy consisted of farces, dances, poetry, and 'histrionic readings.' In a letter to his mother, yearling Thomas Roland, ex-1863, wrote that the play was "admirably performed and

elicited enthusiastic applause from the audience," and that Eugene B. Beaumont, Class of 1861 May, who played old Toodles, "possesses a wonderful talent for comedy." With its emphasis on light-hearted comedy and not the serious drama or heavy-handed issues of prior Dialectic Society performances, "The Toodles" set the stage for what would eventually become the 100th Night Show.

Over time, the Dialectic Society's annual show was timed to coincide with an emerging post-Civil War tradition during which, according to former West Point historian George S. Pappas '44, "First Classmen gathered for a special meal and libations to observe the date of '100 days until graduation.'" The day for this milestone, sometime near the end of February, held special meaning for cadets beyond marking the date for graduation. Legend holds that the day also corresponded to the time when the sun, so missed during West Point's long and gloomy winter, finally returned to greet cadets just as they marched back from breakfast. With their spirits supposedly rejuvenated by the anticipation of spring, as well as by their now-in-sight graduation, upperclassmen

agreed to exchange roles and table duties with plebes in the mess hall on this special night and then put on skits and other entertainment to amuse those they had basically tormented since R-Day. Although not officially called the 100th Night Show, the first such event occurred in 1871 with a production called "The Nineteenth Century Brevities." The *Howitzer* for the Class of 1887 states that "in less than six weeks after the January 1884 examinations, we were attending the first 'Hundredth Night Entertainment' ever held at West Point." The 1887 *Howitzer* also details the meaning of the "One Hundred Days Till June!" hail for each class: freedom for firsties, hops and First Class Camp for cows ("...pretty girls and admiring relatives and other visitors who would come to see him at his best"), furlough for yearlings, and "equality" for plebes. By 1886, the 100th Night Show had become so popular that Mark Twain, who was living in Hartford, Connecticut at the time, reportedly came to see the show. Its popularity is likely the reason for the show's change of venue. By the late 1880s, the 100th Night Show was moved to Grant Hall, and by the time of the Centennial 1902 show it was



# Past in Review

brought to the stage of Cullum Hall. The show was also staged in the East Gym (now Hayes Gym) and in South Auditorium (now Robinson Auditorium) before settling at its current home, Eisenhower Hall, in the late 1970s.

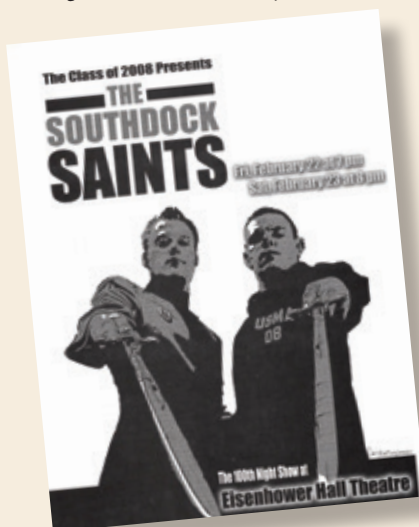
In 1903, the First Class cadets presented “The Caprices of Cupid,” and the 100th Night Show has been a musical comedy ever since. When sound arrived in Hollywood and musicals became popular in 1930s, the studios looked to West Point’s 100th Night Show as a plot device. The 1934 film *Flirtation Walk*, starring Dick Powell and Ruby Keeler, has a

cadet write a part in his class’s 100th Night Show for the Commandant’s daughter, who shunned him earlier. Then, in *The West Point Story* (1950), James Cagney stars as an unemployed Broadway director who agrees to help cadets put on the 100th Night Show. Bringing in a professional for the show is not as far-fetched as it seems. Reportedly, Sammy Cahn, the Broadway lyricist and songwriter for many of Frank Sinatra’s songs, repeatedly helped cadets on 100th Night Shows during the 1940s and 1950s. Contemporary 100th Night Shows have returned the effort by including numerous references to popular motion pictures, current TV shows, and other notable entertainment vehicles. For example, the 2008 show, titled “The Southdock Saints,” was a parody of the 1999 cult classic film *The Boondock Saints* and also featured skits resembling the NBC television show “American Gladiator.” Reports of the 2004 100th Night Show, titled “Or Disciplinary Action Will Follow,” note that it used songs from musicals as diverse as “Rent,” “Cabaret” (changed to The Firstie Club), “Chicago,” “The Lion King,” and “Godspell.”

The 100th Night Show gives firsties a chance to reflect on their time at the Academy. As a recent 100th Night Show program stated,

**Left:** The program from “The Southdock Saints” presented by the Class of 2008.

“The intent of the show and the cadets involved is to lightheartedly poke fun at West Point, its cultural idiosyncrasies, and the various events, circumstances, and even people that have shaped the [First] Class.” The most memorable ones do this with a mix of excellent music, amusing plot, and scathing dialogue, most of it aimed at Academy and Corps leadership (regimental tactical officers are especially lampooned as a combination of the Keystone Kops and the Three Stooges). To quote the program again, “Most of it is based in truth, some exaggerated, and all of it offered in the name of humor and entertainment... the beauty of this show is that it serves as a reminder of the importance of laughter in order that [West Point] not take [itself] too seriously.” ★



**Above and left:** The Class of 2013 presented “Ted: A Class and Its Dream” for their 100th Night Show.

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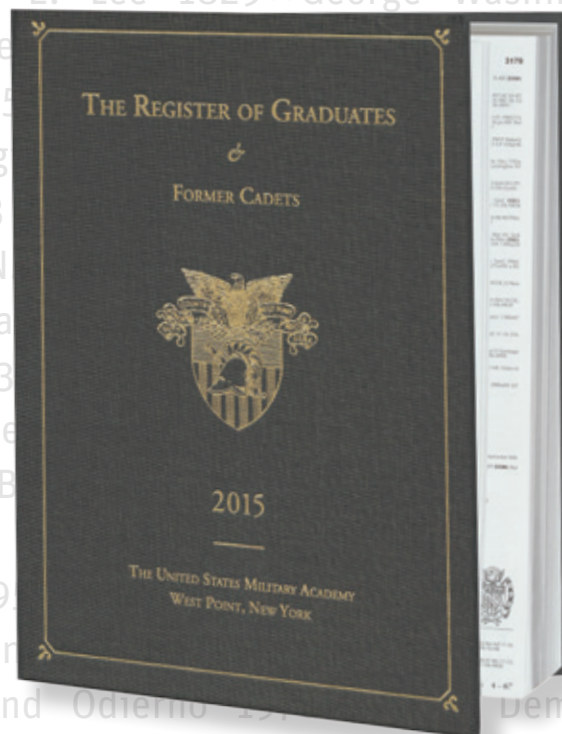
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