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27th Annual Alumni Reunion (November 2, 2013)

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Texas Starts Slow but Bests Kansas 35-13

60th Reunion class of 1953, 50th Reunion class of 1963 and 40th Reunion class of 1973

What a fantastic weekend. Dick Wellborn '70 said this on a recent LinkedIn comment: "Yes, it was a great reunion weekend! Awesome weather, great barbeque, a Longhorn win, and a fun time catching up with old friends!" The 'Horns had some difficulty finding first gear but managed to cruise to a 35-13 win in the second half. This was also our first opportunity to use all our new facilities on campus. Another first was the first annual Crow's Nest scholarship award. In 2013 nearly \$60,000 in scholarships were awarded to our deserving midshipmen and officer candidates.

The weekend started early this year on Thursday evening, October 31st, with the Navy League dinner at the Austin Women's Club (708 San Antonio St.). Many midshipmen and officer candidates from the Battalion were present as guests of the Navy League. CAPT John Eden, UT's current Professor of Naval Science, and two other past PNSs were in attendance. CAPT Gabe Salazar '79 and COL Steve Smith. The guest speaker was Dr. Hans Mark, Professor of Aerospace Engineering and Engineering Mechanics at The University of Texas. Since 1990, he has been associated with The University's Institute for Advanced Technology as a Senior Research Engineer. In that capacity he works on advanced weapons systems for the U.S. Army. Dr. Mark is a strong friend of the ROTC Programs on campus. He surprised many at the dinner by speaking on another subject which is near and dear to his heart, a manned mission to Mars. He has had close connections with those who have worked on the planning of such a mission and he had provided input to the process as well. It was inspirational to hear that such endeavors are still alive.

Friday morning we got the next event started out at Star Ranch Golf Course. This year we had four foursomes. Three were Navy and only one was Marine Corps but that didn't deter the playful rivalry between the two. We played "best ball" and started in a scramble. Navy prevailed but, like last year, it was close. Star Ranch starts everyone off with a delicious hot breakfast in the clubhouse before teeing off. Then you can hit all the range balls you care to before starting play. The hard rain from yesterday did play havoc with the bunkers. Many were partially washed out and some standing water was still present. That just meant we all got a free drop on any ball landing in a trap. The weather was marvelous and made the game delightful to play. We all started at 8 a.m. and around noon players finished and had a nice buffet lunch waiting for them at the clubhouse to end the event.

Later that afternoon at the Embassy Suites Hotel (our HQ), Crow's Nesters from all eras met for a summit at 3:00 p.m. to discuss how they might positively impact the room and board issue for midshipmen and officer candidates of the Battalion. This year the first Crow's Nest scholarship will be awarded thanks mainly to the generosity of Bob Brown '52. The group has amassed half the amount needed to endow a second \$1,000 scholarship. If you were a 'nester, or just want to help some of our Battalion members with room and board, think about contributing to their fund. CAPT Eden said it takes about \$8-10K to pay for room and board at UT each year. Even scholarship students have to bear this expense because UT cannot, as a State school, provide it.

Friday night, as usual, was a divided evening for alumni. Some went to Scholz's to celebrate with classmates over a few beers. Others went to the Awards Dinner at the Austin Country Club. At the dinner, four of our alumni were recognized as Distinguished Alumni (DA). They are RADM Henry C. "Cub" Amos, USN SC (Ret) '56, RADM Brady M. Cole, USN SC (Ret) '58, Rodney C. "Rod" Koenig '62 and Luis de la Garza '66. Each received a DA certificate from Bob Brown, Chairman of the Midshipmans Foundation; a DA lapel pin from Max Miller, President of the Midshipmans Foundation and a framed photograph of the Battalion from CAPT John Eden, 27th Professor of Naval Science at UT. After each presentation the recipient had a few words to say in appreciation of this recognition. As always, our host, Rusty Allman provided a superb dinner and fine facilities for this event. We ended the evening around 9:15 p.m. and a few die-hards went over to Scholz's to finish their evening.

Saturday began early for the Alumni Foundation board. They met at 0800 in the new ADM William H. "Bill" McRaven classroom on the 5th deck of the new Liberal Arts Building. Three directors' terms were due to expire and they agreed to stay for another three year term. They are W. Robert "Bob" Brown '52, James D. "Jim" Brotherton '68, and Edwin W. "Ed" Mergle '75. One longtime-serving director, R. Glenn Looney '61, will be rotating off the board. Well done, Glenn. Thanks for your years of service. Glenn will be replaced by our newest director on the board, Harold W. "Chip" Bieseimer '70. Welcome aboard Chip! No officer positions changed for the coming year. Since the football schedule for 2014 is not out yet, the board could not decide on a date for next year's reunion.

At 0930 we all gathered in the nice large auditorium next door in the Student Activity Center. Ray Adams started with introductions of our VIPs (Flag Officers and Distinguished Alumni present) and a moment of silence for our ten fallen comrades since our last Reunion. We then conducted a short general business meeting and then went ahead with the scholarship awards ceremony. This fall we awarded nearly \$49,000 in scholarships and swords to deserving midshipmen and officer candidates. With the \$11,000 in scholarships awarded last spring that brings the total this year to nearly \$60,000. See the scholarship awards page for details. After the scholarship award ceremony, specialty insignia were pinned on graduating seniors who will be our future aviators, submariners and surface warfare candidates. Staff representatives of those warfare communities did the honors. We finished the gathering with announcements of our new Alumni Foundation director and three continuing directors.

At 1130 all alumni and friends congregated on the new patio deck, outside the College of Liberal Arts Building on the Eastside overlooking Waller Creek and the Alumni Center, for our annual BBQ. The folks at Pok-E-Jo's did another fine job of serving up Texas barbecued brisket and sausage with all the trimmings. They served for an hour and a half. Then folks just got to relax, enjoy the beautiful weather and visit with each other until game time while trying to float two kegs. Between 1:30 p.m. and 2 people started drifting over to DKR-Memorial stadium for the game with Kansas. We had a block of 60 tickets this year and all were spoken for. With those and season ticket holders we had a large contingent attend the game. The weather was perfect for it and Texas did not disappoint.

Kick off was at 2:30 p.m. Those without tickets could view it in the air-conditioned comfort of the Alumni Center. That evening many alumni gathered together at the Flying Saucer out near the Intramural Fields for more camaraderie, good food and drink. I private room was reserved for the group to use but many made use of the whole facility. Over 30 alumni and family gathered to take advantage of more visiting time and to participate in the festive atmosphere that usually follows a Texas win.

You can see who attended what events by clicking [here](#) or clicking on "Who came" on the *History Matrix* page. The most people showing up for a 10x reunion year were three attendees from the Class of 2003! It's great to see our younger alumni participating.

Sunday morning was a leisurely wake-up and breakfast in the hotel lobby. Friends swapped business cards and last minute sea stories while they said their good-byes. The weekend was truly a delightful and memorable one. Please make plans to join us next year.

By Ed Mergle '75

