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30th Annual Alumni Reunion (November 12, 2016)

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Texas Falls to West Virginia 24-20 / UT NROTC's 76th Anniversary!

70th Reunion class of 1946, **60th** Reunion class of 1956, **50th** Reunion class of 1966 and **40th** Reunion class of 1976 **30th** Reunion class of 1986, **20th** Reunion class of 1996, and **10th** Reunion class of 2006

Another super reunion weekend and, again, in conjunction with UT's celebration of Veteran's Day! The weather was perfect, lots of good interaction between alumni and future alumni, delicious barbeque, nearly \$76,000 dollars in scholarships and swords awarded, lots of "catching up" with friends and classmates, but (unfortunately) a close loss to West Virginia. The game was at 1100, which is not our most desirable time. It did afford those who did not attend the game, the chance to roam around the campus, visit the NROTC spaces and visit longer with classmates. There turned out to be plenty of football tickets and some went unused. Some of our alumni opted to enjoy the game in the comfort of the Alumni Center just across Waller Creek. Our midshipmen set up several classrooms in the Glickman Center with big screen viewing of the game as well. That location would host the BBQ later in the day. Only three classes ending with "6" were represented: 1966, 1976 and 1996. The Class of '70 had the most alumni in attendance, 7. The youngest class represented was 2005, with 1 alumnus.

The weekend started on Thursday evening, November 10th 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 Brian Teets, UT's Professor of Naval Science, and his XO, CDR Brian FitzPatrick were in attendance. The guest speaker was Dr. Hans Mark, Professor of Aerospace Engineering and Engineering Mechanics at The University of Texas. He spoke on "Admiral Rickover and the Navy's Nuclear Program," in which Dr. Mark had a small role to play as a young engineer.

Friday morning at 0800 the next event started out at Star Ranch Golf Course. This year we had only two foursomes. Because of that there was no rivalry match between Navy and the Marine Corps. We played "best ball" and just took full advantage of the beautiful weather to enjoy ourselves. Star Ranch started everyone off with a delicious hot breakfast in the clubhouse before teeing off. Then we hit all the range balls we cared to before starting play. We 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, 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 Crow's Nest scholarship will again be awarded thanks mainly to the generosity of Bob Brown '52. The group this year raised enough funds to endow another \$1,000 for the scholarship this year. 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. 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; however, UT is trying something new in the near future. They want to use University dormitories for grouping new students together for their first few years. This will probably be an opportunity for NROTC, or ROTC students in general, to room and board together and promote some camaraderie.

Friday night, as usual, was a divided evening for alumni. Some went to the NXNW Restaurant and Brewery, just a few blocks from the hotel, to celebrate with classmates over a few beers. Others went to the Awards Dinner at the Austin Country Club. At the dinner, two of our alumni were recognized as Distinguished Alumni (DA). They were J. Stephen Quinn '64, and James B. Sales '56. One of our alumni was recognized for Distinguished Service (DS). He was Frederick J. Moon '70. Each received a certificate from Max Miller, Chairman of the Midshipmans Foundation; a lapel pin from Rod Koenig, President of the Midshipmans Foundation and a framed photograph of the Battalion from CAPT Brian Teets, 28th Professor of Naval Science at UT. After each presentation the recipient had a few words to say in appreciation of this recognition. Fred Moon had been a past President of the Alumni Foundation. Our host, Rusty Allman, provided a superb dinner and fine facilities for this event. Part way through the planning process for this event, Rusty was hospitalized and is now recovering. Many thanks to Jim Bushee for pinch hitting for Rusty and ensuring the success of this event. And we all wish Rusty a speedy recovery. We ended the evening around 9:15 p.m. and a few die-hards went over to NXNW Restaurant and Brewery to finish their evening.

Saturday began very early for the Alumni Foundation board members since the football game was at 1100. They met in the McRaven classroom of the Mulva ROTC Center on the 5th deck of the CLA at 0700. Three directors' terms were due to expire and they agreed to stay for another three year term. They were Bob Brown '52, Chip Biesemeier '70 and Ed Mergele '75. Kevin Hugman '80 stays on as President. Dan Rueda '05 remained Vice President and Omar Rivera '04 Treasurer. Dick Wellborn is VP for Alumni Relations. David Wells '69 is Secretary. For backup there was also an Assistant Treasurer, George Blume '67, and Assistant Secretary, Fred Moon '70, elected. Since the football schedule for 2017 was not out yet, the board could not announce a date for next year's reunion.

At 0800 everyone gathered in the basement lecture hall in the CLA for the Main Event, the General Business meeting of the UT NROTC alumni and the awards ceremony of scholarships to the Midshipmen and officer candidates of the Battalion. A few hard copies of the book, *Texas Fight, The History of the Naval ROTC at the University of Texas at Austin*, by the author, Ed Mergele '75, were also being distributed, as were eBook versions of it on thumb drives, for a donation to the Alumni Foundation or Midshipmans Foundation. The *Texas Fight* book, this year, covered the second 20 years of the NROTC unit's history at UT, beginning in 1960. Future volumes are in the works for each succeeding 20-year interval. Kevin Hugman started this event with introductions of our VIPs (flag officers and Distinguished Alumni/Service members present) and a moment of silence for our fallen comrades since our last Reunion. After a short general business meeting it was time to award some scholarships. This fall we awarded nearly \$76,000 in scholarships and swords to deserving Midshipmen and officer candidates. See the scholarship awards page for details. We finished the gathering with announcements of our Alumni Foundation officers and three continuing directors. Football tickets were distributed to those who had not already obtained them and the crowd was dismissed to attend the game or some other activity until the BBQ later in the afternoon.

Kick off was at 1100. Those without tickets could view it in the air-conditioned comfort of the Alumni Center or in the Glickman Center of the CLA, where the BBQ would be held. The game was close and Texas had multiple opportunities which they didn't cash in on. Texas threw a "hail Mary" pass in the closing seconds, which fell incomplete. UT gave away a very nice collectible coin to all the veterans who attended the game. It was Veterans' Recognition Day and the pre-game ceremonies included a fly-over by the Air Force, organized by the Navy. After the game ended, alumni slowly filtered back to the CLA patio and adjoining Glickman Center for beer and BBQ.

At 1530 (3:30pm) all alumni, midshipman and friends congregated for our annual BBQ. The weather was gorgeous. 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. Bill McRaven '77, the UT System Chancellor, stopped by and visited with the Midshipman, congratulating them on their scholarships. Lots of photos were taken of the middies with their Admiral/Chancellor.

You can see who attended what events by clicking [here](#) or on "Who came" on the *History Matrix* page.

Sundav morning was a leisurely wake-up and breakfast in the hotel lobby. Friends swanned 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 Mergele '75