Class of 1996 Annual Meeting, held on 21 Oct 2017 at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium - - notes taken by Cara Albright

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
   * Voting members:
     + Class Project/Fundraising (Brian Reardon) **Present**
     + Company Reps (Shane McDonald) **Not present**
     + Treasurer (Nikki Battaglia) **Present**
     + Secretary (Cara Albright) **Present**
     + Vice President (Bill Pennington) **Present**
     + President (Nagel Sullivan) **Present**
3. Minutes from previous meeting
   * Last meeting was conducted at the 20-year reunion Sep 10, 2016
     + Introduced our new class Executive Committee
     + General plan for the class
     + Communication will be a key focus as we move forward
4. Status of funds (Nikki)
   * Official Alumni Accounts: Our class account has about $5K in it. The reunion cost about $130K and we raised enough to cover all those expenses. We have no pending debts or upcoming purchases. Any money in this account will go toward the class gift that Brian is coordinating.
   * Tailgating: we have had a good year of raising money for the tailgater. We have enough to cover expenses for next year as well as some wiggle room for any new purchases we need to make. Right now no big purchases are pending. This year we added the Direct TV, a large screen tv, some new tables and assorted supplies.
5. Status of class registry- (Shane not present. Notes relayed via Nagel Sullivan)
   * The registry the Alumni Association had at the 20th-reunion point for our class was incomplete, inaccurate, and full of holes.  This isn’t entirely their fault, but we have chosen to help them out in order to ensure class information gets out particularly as we head in our 25th reunion and our Class Gift project.
   * Since June, the class registry was turned into a relatively easy to follow, online-collaborative excel spreadsheet that separates class contact information by company.  Company reps are needed to update this spreadsheet as a person from the company will know best on who was in the company, who was missing in the registry, and what their current situation is.
   * We have had 24 Company Reps sign up and make changes to their company’s listing, however that means we still need 12 reps for the following companies: 3, 7, 10, 12, 13, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, and 34.  If you graduated from any of these companies and wish to help out, or if you want to find out who your company rep is, please contact Shane McDonald: [tonteauex@yahoo.com](mailto:tonteauex@yahoo.com).  It is also a big help if you update your current contact information with the USNA Alumni Association, especially if it has been awhile since logging on.  When you do so, you can also contact me and update your contact info on the class registry to ensure ours is updated as well.  There are still classmates listed on there as Ensigns!  Thanks to all the company reps who have stepped up and continue to make changes.
   * **NOTE: Wes McCann volunteered to do 31st company at the meeting. Art Kear volunteered for 27th company.**
   * As far as our registry itself is concerned, over 160 classmates at last count have had information changed or updated or otherwise corrected.  There are still many more errors in the database, which are unknown until classmates can get in and make the corrections.
6. Class Project/donations- (Brian)
   * A bit behind – No 20th Class Gift; focused on a 30th reunion gift
   * Fundraising will be focused on USNA “Strategic Initiatives”
   * Typically would start planning in 2021 for our 30th in 2026
     + Kickstart/Makeup with a social media push
     + $30/96 months ($360 yr / $2,880 total)
     + Asked to raise $500K in 8 years (less than typical)
     + Historic rates of 9.1% participation – 8th place for ‘90s classes
   * What to Give?
     + Class Survey (100 participants)
     + Comments from survey
     + What we can afford!!
     + Opinions/Polling of our historic high frequency/high dollar donors
     + USNA Strategic Priorities
   * Goal
     + Provide a “margin of excellence”
     + Impactful to the Midshipmen
     + Meaningful to the Class (It is our gift after all)
     + Broad support with “reasonable gift” $30/96
     + Still attract large donors
     + 196 donors at the suggested level would result in $565K
   * Survey Results
     + Academic support a Clear Winner (Highest “Very Likely” plus broad support)
       1. Project Based Learning a winner in Academics
          1. Strong support for Cyber in comments
          2. Will likely suggest PBL in the broader Cyber Field
     + Mixed, yet strong, support for a “legacy” project
       1. Class of 1968 refurbishing the chapel doors given by 1868
       2. Recent monument refurb – Mexican Monument recently done
          1. Tecumseh 1st/2nd class benches
     + Athletic support strongly supported by top givers
       1. Likely will make up a smaller portion of our Class Gift
          1. Does support all midshipman athletics not just Varsity and just not Football
     + GWOT memorial had strong support – Broader than a Class of ’96 effort, but class officers will support efforts to engage at the Council of Class Presidents
   * Needs from Class
     + NEED to update contact info (With Company Rep and USNA.com)
     + NEED to engage company reps
     + Fill out corporate matching forms
     + If we desire to be “influential” amongst the classes/Alumni than we make a statement with participation rates and total $$ raised
     + Traditional model is a few big donors – We want to break the mold and think modern technology supports many donors having a large impact
     + Will ask for support from folks with giving experience or high net worth that want to help guide the efforts of large donors
     + Class Officers think that we can blow past our $500K goal. A successful 30th will guide the way for our 40th and 50th (Capstone events)
   * Contact me at [brian.reardon@1996.usna.com](mailto:brian.reardon@1996.usna.com)
7. The Class Plan- (Bill)

* Designed to supplement the bylaws and will soon be linked on the class website
* Articulate vision, long term goals and policies of the committee to support the class

Vision:

Tightly connected class committed to reinvesting in the future of the US Naval Academy

Long term Goal – A Legacy Contribution (e.g. GWOT memorial; Academic Chair; Athletic Facility)

Mid-Term Goal – 30 Year Class Project

Near term actions and benchmarks to support the above

Improve Communication Path (Strengthen Class Bonds)

Process refinement (Active USNAA Involvement; Support Class)

Enhance class relationships (Strengthen Class Bonds; Positive 1996 image)

Establish a 30yr Class project and supporting benchmarks

* This class plan is the first one we’ve made; a framework and a living document that we will update as the environment changes and will go over at the next annual class meeting
* Full plan will be posted on the website

1. Official 96 website- (Cara)
   * Communications to and among the class can be improved. Currently have 3 modes of communication: Classmail, Facebook and Shipmate, but they don’t fully meet our needs
     + Classmail is only as good as the database (which right now isn’t great… working on that) and in addition, only 2 people can send out emails with it
     + Facebook has limited participation by choice, and is also largely for social/informal content. So we don’t reach everyone AND important announcements get pushed down with pictures and stuff. Terrible mechanism for searching for old content, even if you know a date of post. Didn’t serve us well last year in the weeks/months leading up to the reunion.
     + Shipmate is awesome for historical purposes but is SUPER time late by the nature of the publication process. Keep sending updates and photos, but not the place to promulgate official class info in a timely manner.
     + …but we need a more concerted effort across a variety of platforms in order to reach everyone in a timely and appropriate manner. That does not mean we abandon any of the aforementioned platforms. It just means that going forward we will be more strategic, more decentralized in our communications.
   * Enter… the official class website. Cara has done a great deal of work developing a website for posting information. Operating through USNA Alumni Association on the new usnaclasses.net forum so it’s a free platform for us, updates and other technical considerations happen for us, we just build and drive the site from within their hosted environment (Cara is currently webmaster).
   * Can be a central repository for information (more formal than Facebook) with all executive committee members able to author and publish posts, comments/questions enabled. Includes contact information, news and events posts, and static pages for class project, Shipmate (with an electronic submission form), class history (need help with this!), In Memoriam, and more.
   * The drawback to going the Alumni Assoc hosted platform route is that we are slightly limited in being able to push the boundaries of technology – not allowed to sell merchandise or incorporate a store, limited in access to plugins, but at the current time it is a far better option than hosting our own site. We will revisit in one year to see if we have outgrown the platform and to ensure it continues to fully meet our needs. The good thing is the Alumni Assoc really wants classes to migrate to their new domain, so they claim they are willing to add functionality at my request. I plan to capitalize on that, probably beyond what they ever had foreseen. We’ll assess the reality of their claim down the road.
   * Went live yesterday. Find it at <http://1996.usnaclasses.net> and see what we’ve got cooking so far. Keep in mind that it is not fully built out yet, so continue to check back for updates/added functionality as we get more of it going (networking/career transition section coming next!)
2. Brian Hoke update- (Mike Martin)
   * USNA would not do anything at the game due to the volume of people they would have to also do something for in the future
   * Update on Alumni Hall position
   * Routing package up to the Superintendent to counter the current regulations regarding getting classmates on the wall in Memorial Hall – hinged on being in uniform, but we are highlighting that the nature of warfare has change
3. Council of Class Presidents semi-annual meeting- Oct 30 (Nagel)
   * Planned main topic is “Class Governance”
   * Any issues to bring to COCP?
4. 20 year reunion feedback (Nagel)
   * 153 responses total
   * 82 filled out anonymously
   * 127 of the 153 attended the reunion (about 1/3 of the reunion attendees)
   * A few people were upset with the “single price” weekend price. Here’s the breakdown:
     + Fri night- $10.5k
     + Sat tailgate- $62.1k
     + Goodie bags- $21k
     + Administrative fees- $1.1k
     + About $2k leftover. Rolled into our official class account
   * Fri Night reception
     + Hot- Not much we can do about that
     + Loud/Small venue- Difficult to know what size venue before registration is complete. Not as many options when you compete with other reunions over a football weekend. A lot of people registered close to the weekend.
     + No food- There was confusion on cocktail hour vs reception. There was a set budget for Fri night. Almost all went to the hotel for bartenders, the space, and alcohol.
     + Registration line long- Aggravated by not opening registration earlier and people getting upset because they didn’t get a goody bag
     + Spouses wanted name tags
     + Goodie Bags- There was a finite number of bags because they had to purchase them 8 weeks before the reunion. 300 bags purchased when only ~200 people were registered. In the end ~340 people registered so the last 40 people would not get a goody bag. This was probably the largest source of consternation of the weekend. When some people were told they didn’t get one due to late registration, they took one anyway which then shorted the last of the folks to check in Fri night.
   * Saturday tailgate
     + 101 out of 125 gave it a top rating.
     + Hot as heck- Nothing we could do about that except maybe some big garage air movers. The air-conditioned bathrooms were a big hit.
     + Tent inside vs outside the stadium- tough choice. Some want to see the game...Some want to see each other and didn’t care about the game. When we had it in the stadium for our 15th, people complained about having to buy stadium tickets. When outside the stadium, people complained about not seeing the game.
     + Probably flip flop… 15th was inside, 20th was outside, so we will probably do the 25th inside (we will never keep everyone happy)
     + Catering- People were very happy with catering. Amazing, abundant food. Good open bar.
     + Booze- Brain Facquet rocked it with his signature drinks.
     + Wanted a photographer- Very expensive so they opted not to have one. Would be a good idea for the 25th because everyone was so busy talking that pictures were forgotten sometimes. Thinking of timed company photos.
     + Kid activities big hit.
   * Memorial Service
     + Light attendance. Lots had to leave to return home. Some didn’t understand what it was.
     + Strong recommendations to continue this tradition
   * Goodie Bag- See above on quantity issue. 40% loved the bag and the contents. 30% was OK. 20% didn’t like it.
   * Comms leading up to the weekend- Difficult when we use facebook vs class mail. People on fb seemed satisfied. Others did not get enough info.
   * Hotel Room- People used a mixed bag of blocked rooms, Air BnB, VRBO, local friends/family. Looks like there was more interest in blocked rooms than they had available.
   * Pricing options- 40% want one package price for the weekend. 50% want broken down pricing. Pros and cons to both options. The academy strongly suggests 1 price option. They have lots of history with pick-and-chose method not going well.
   * Hotels- Evenly split between Lowes, Westin, Historic Inn, Annapolis Waterfront, and do-your-own-thing. Only one vote to do something out of downtown.
   * Goodie Bag-
     + 40% want mandatory bag
     + 20% want an optional goodie bag
     + 24% could go either way
     + 8% Want on-line store
     + 8% want nothing
     + Most want a mid-range $60 bag
   * Scheduling the weekend-
     + 17% want to schedule it on risk before the game schedule is put out and.
     + 66% want to wait until the schedule is published
     + 63% say it has to be on a home football game and
     + 17% are willing to watch a game in the N Star room
     + 42% want in on Homecoming weekend and
     + 39% want it in Oct but not Homecoming weekend
5. 25 year reunion planning (Nagel)
   * Several people have volunteered to help
   * **Thomas Leahy** has volunteered to run point on the entire event. We will be looking for others to help him out
6. Tailgating update (Nagel)
   * This year- TV, new high-top tables,
   * Next year- Make a bar. Use your command coins in the bar top – ***send any of them you have from previous or current commands to Nagel (he will send out his address)***
   * Long term plans- Need to build a little MR for new trailer (or repairs) in the next few years.
7. Army/Navy game activities
   * Pre/post game
   * Spirit Spots?
   * Sheet posters?
8. Open floor/discussion
   * San Diego events for Navy vs Notre Dame- People in San Diego should put something together. Coordinate lodging. Tailgate. Any volunteers out there?
9. Close proceedings