



## West Point Parents Club of Massachusetts Meeting Minutes—18 October 2009

A meeting was held at 1:00 at the Boston Globe on Morrissey Blvd. on Sunday, October 18, 2009. In attendance were: Tim & Carla McMahon, Bill Yeo, Paula Thimble, Martha Laughna, Nina Johannessen, Vivian & Jim Rezendes, Alan & Pat Small, Ann & John Walsh, George Jedras, Sandra Manougian, Cindy Doty & Mike Volpe, Donna Griffiths.

The threat of being asked to be secretary (and possibly the weather) kept attendance low at the meeting today but we still accomplished a great deal. The main focus of the meeting was gathering and packing Halloween boodle for the Yuks. If you are a parent of a Yuk, please alert them to watch for a package to arrive next weekend through the Central Guard room (thank you, McMahons!).

Tailgate—The tailgate was a huge success. Attendance was good, the food was good and plentiful and the day was gorgeous. Thank you Jodi Deuger for pulling this together for everyone. The club sent a letter to the Assistant Athletic Director, Doug Fillis, identifying the trouble we had in procuring group tickets and parking passes. Initially, the group sales representative sent letters for us to exchange for free hockey or basketball tickets as a result of this issue. In addition, Mr. Fillis responded to the letter by offering to make amends. While certain members felt that the offer was excessive, Carla will respond to his proposal by indicating that we appreciate the offer and we will correspond with him at a later date regarding our needs for next fall. The WPPC-MA covered the \$600 in the expenses that weren't covered by receipts.

Cadet Buses—Paula Thimble indicated that there will be round trip transportation available to cadets for the Thanksgiving holiday. She will send out information concerning the Thanksgiving bus by November 1. There will also be a return bus after the Holiday break on January 3. Whether the bus will be provided for round trip transportation will be determined by interest. Paula will correspond regarding the Christmas break bus shortly after Thanksgiving. A member asked about providing transportation back to WP after the spring break leave. With the large number of Plebes, it might make some sense. In the past that bus has not been offered due to the fact that it is difficult to fill as many of the upperclassmen do not come home for spring leave. Paula agreed to investigate the issue when the time is closer.

Army-Navy—The WPPC-MA block of rooms is at the Doubletree right next to the subway that leads to the stadium. The Smalls will host a light breakfast very early before the game. We will try to spread the word on their room location. The kickoff is later than in past years so we won't have to be up with the sun, maybe. Parents were strongly encouraged to go early to the stadium to watch the march-on. Watch for further news concerning details about the breakfast and the game. While the Army ticket office no longer has tickets to sell, they are still available with various online ticket vendors. The West Point Society of NE is also planning a "tailgate" for the game. They are hoping to reserve a room at The Garden. Watch for further details.

Holly Ball—Parents are encouraged to attend the Holly Ball with their cadets. It is scheduled for Saturday, December 26 and the Seaport Hotel. Parents of all current cadets will receive a formal invitation in the mail sometime in mid November. It is a formal affair which includes cadets and

midshipmen who reside in New England and attend one of the five service academies. The evening includes cocktails, dinner, speaker, march-on of cadets and midshipmen, and several hours of dancing. If cadets are interested in attending, dress grays are the appropriate uniform. The women may also wear their long black skirt (whatever that is called, sorry).

Upcoming events for the cadets include 500<sup>th</sup> night for the Cows on Jan. 23, Yearling Winter Weekend on Jan. 30 for the Yuks, and Plebe Parent Weekend on March 12-14. Generally, neither 500<sup>th</sup> night nor Yearling Winter Weekend is an event for parents.

The Club approved a \$250 donation to West-Point.org, the organization that sponsors the Parent Forum, Plebe-net, Prospective-net, etc. We also approved payments to Carol Hannenberg to reimburse her for the funds used to ship items to the deployed grads.

Donna Griffiths, parent of a deployed 2007 grad, spoke about an organization which is interested in designing language programs geared toward the needs of the military boots on the ground. Most programs of this type are geared toward business, which is not effective for the military. This company is interested in speaking to soldiers who have deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq so they can determine what types of things would be useful in communicating with the natives. They then plan to help US soldiers get up to speed with the dialects spoken in Iraq and Afghanistan so they can communicate more effectively. Anyone who has a soldier who would be able and willing to help with this project, please contact Donna Griffiths at 781-862-8979 or [grif@grifworld.com](mailto:grif@grifworld.com).

In addition to the above information which was discussed at the general meeting, the board also discussed the following prior to the general meeting:

Bill Yeo suggested that making bus reservations/payments non-refundable would make the bus coordinator's job easier. Paula is considering this suggestion but feels that isn't as much of an issue when everyone is granted leave (as opposed to Labor Day when a cadet's leave request could be denied at the last minute). Also we discussed PayPal as an alternative payment method for buses. Nina Johannessen, webmaster, will set the parent club up with PayPal and then we can decide how we will use it in the future.

In addition to the possibility of using PayPal for bus payments, Nina and membership director Martha Laughna are investigating the possibility of using PayPal for online dues payment and using an online form completion to simplify the dues payment process.

Finally, we discussed a request from Gita Srinivasan (former WPPC-MA webmaster and USMA 2008 parent) to publicize a Cambridge-based leadership seminar on the website. The board denied the request as it is not directly related to West Point or our cadets. The event features speaker Scott Stryker (Army Times' Soldier of the Year, 2007). Parents interested in this event can contact Gita at [gitasrini@gmail.com](mailto:gitasrini@gmail.com) or visit <http://whiterhinointersection.com/>

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, January 31, 2010. It will be the cow loan celebration.

Respectfully submitted:  
Martha Laughna