



Meeting Minutes – Class Advisory Senate, 17 October 2023 -FINAL

1. Call to Order: Randy Helms '79, called the meeting to order at 1700.

2. Members in Attendance: See Attachment 1

3. Others in Attendance:

Ms Janet Edwards, Director, US Air Force Academy Mortuary Affairs

Cathy Almond '90, Vice Chair, USAFA AOG Board of Directors

Naviere Walkewicz, '99, Senior Vice President, USAFA AOG Alumni Relations and
Business Development

Sarah Hannah, Transition Specialist, Long Blue Line Portal

Angelica Schumacher McGillick, '21, AOG Young Alumni Program Manager

4. Previous Minutes:

<https://aog-websites.s3.amazonaws.com/usafa-org/documents/aog/governance/CAS/CAS-Minutes-18-July-2023-meeting-FINAL.pdf>

5. Randy Helms, '79, President Class Advisory Senate:

- Randy introduced the guest speaker, Ms Janet Edwards, Director, US Air Force Academy Mortuary Affairs. She has been with the AFA Mortuary Affairs Office for 31 years. In the past, Janet was made an honorary member of the AOG. There are only 25 living AOG Honorees that hold this distinction.

6. Ms Janet Edwards, Director, US Air Force Academy Mortuary Affairs (See attached slides):

Ms Edwards provided an informative briefing on the requirements and processes of burying someone at the Air Force Academy cemetery. She stated that she is very willing to give this briefing to any Class Reunions held at the Academy. She has provided this service at many reunions to date.

- Janet started with some background information:
 - Funerals are conducted at the USAFA Cemetery Monday through Friday, 0900-1400, except weekends and Federal Holidays. The Academy has the only active cemetery in the USAF.
 - The base Mortuary Affairs Officer is the first POC for a funeral: (719-333-3323)



- Pre-Need INFORMATION Website: www.usafa.af.mil/Units/Mission-Support-Group/Force-Support-Squadron/Mortuary-Affairs/
- Funeral Locations:
 - The Cadet Chapel holds Catholic, Protestant and Jewish services, and is normally used for graduate funerals; It is closed for renovation from 2019 to approximately 2027.
 - The USAFA Cemetery, the Memorial Pavilion, the Columbarium and the Community Center Chapel are used for funerals. A DOD ID Card (or an on-base Entry Authorization List [EAL]) if the security posture increases), is required; entry is through the North or South Gate for non-DOD ID Card holders with a valid Driver's License or Passport. (Note that zero guns or drugs are allowed on base.)
 - If the funeral is a Memorial Pavilion service at the cemetery, then there is no gravesite ceremony.
- Casketed Remains:
 - The cemetery plot is selected at the time of need, not in advance. No more than three caskets are allowed in one plot – they are stacked.
 - Janet stated that USAFA provides a flat bronze marker for each person buried in the grave, each with a granite base. The only cost to graduate families is for the Wings, if applicable. It is \$269.00 and is collected by Mortuary Affairs. ONLY jump wings, pilot wings, or navigator wings are allowed. A vase for flowers is also provided.
 - There are very specific requirements for the lines on the bronze plaques. Name, Branch of service, Class of __, date of birth, date of death, rank, religious symbol. Each line has 27 spaces allowed. Wings can be placed either left or right of the rank.
 - She explained that the local funeral home (out-of-state deaths) prepares the casket and ships it to Denver, and provides the US Flag that drapes the casket.
 - The receiving funeral home (in Colorado Springs) picks up the remains at the airport and transports it to Colorado Springs, then later transports it to USAFA.
- Cremated Remains:
 - The Local Funeral Home (out of state) picks up the remains from the place of death, performs the cremation, prepares the cremation certificate and death certificate, and provides the US Flag. They can either mail the urn and flag to the Mortuary Affairs Office or give them to the Family to hand-carry to USAFA.
 - A receiving funeral home is not required.



- The Family may place the urn into the ground (or watch); once again, the cemetery plot is selected at the time of need, not in advance.
 - A direct (simple) or traditional cremation is the family's choice, but realize that the traditional is more costly.
 - The outer burial container (vault) is provided by USAFA at no cost for ground burial;
 - Inside dimensions: 14.5" x 14.5" x 14.5" x 14.5"
 - Janet stated that, as with casketed remains, USAFA provides a flat bronze marker for each person buried in the cremated remains grave, with a granite base, and a vase for flowers. Bronze marker requirements are the same as for casketed remains.
- For Cremated remains in the Columbarium:
 - Janet explained that the Columbarium is located on the exterior of the East Side of the Memorial Pavilion.
 - Dimensions: 9.5" wide x 7-3/8" high x 12.5" deep. There is a companion niche so husbands and wives can be together (only two people are allowed in this site).
 - No flowers or flags may be displayed.
 - USAFA provides one 5"x 7" aluminum nameplate for both Husband and wife, with eight lines total (4 lines for the sponsor, four lines for the spouse, no additional text).
 - Family members may place the urn into the niche.
- Janet explained that the family may provide their own clergy or have Janet arrange denomination-specific support from USAFA chaplains if available.
- Military Honors will only be rendered in one location. A sponsor's DD-214 must be provided for both the sponsor and for a spouse's death.
 - If a graduate needs a replacement DD-214, they need not pay for another one.
 - Active Duty, Veteran, and retired can get one free of charge at:
www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html
 - The DD-214 must be from Active Duty, Reserve, or Guard service (not Cadet).
 - To request ANG or Reserve documents, contact the Total Force Service Center at 1-800-525-0102, or tfsc_2@mypersmail.af.mil
- Other Burial Requirements:
 - Those asking to be buried at the USAFA cemetery must not have been convicted of a felony.
 - NOTE that this is the USAFA Cemetery, not Arlington, West Point, Annapolis, or a Veteran's Affairs cemetery.



- The Academy cemetery follows USAFA policies, not VA policies, except for grave marker requirements.
- For burial or cremation clothing, anything is allowed.
- If a non-DOD spouse dies first, the sponsor must sign a Burial Agreement stating that if the spouse pre-deceases the veteran, then the two of them will be buried in the same plot/niche.
- Documents: no paperwork or documents are required until the time of death occurs. When death occurs, scanned and faxed copies are acceptable for the Mortuary affairs Office.
- Families may have an on-base reception following the funeral at the family's own expense. Locations on base include the Falcon Club, Golf Course Club House, Stadium Press Box, (BUT not Doolittle Hall at present time).
- A child must be in the DEERS system at the time of death to be buried at the USAFA Cemetery. They cannot be put into DEERS after death has occurred.
- COST: There is no cost to the family for the plot or niche, the outer burial container (vault), the opening/closing of the grave, the permanent grave markers with granite bases, or the vase. Families must provide the casket(s) or the urn(s) for burial.
- FLYOVERS: The Exception to Policy process is required; it goes to the Air Staff for coordination; a letter of request, DD-214, and biography must be included. It will take no less than five business days to process.
 - USAF aircraft may be used, but the family must find a volunteer unit and individuals for the flyover.
 - If private aircraft are used, then only USAFA approval is required.

7. Cathy Almond '90, Vice Chair, USAFA AOG Board of Directors:

- Cathy briefed that there is a new AOG Board schedule. The Board has decided to go to 3 meetings per year and a possible coordination zoom meeting instead of four annual meetings: April, July (to coincide with the Long Blue Line weekend), and October.
- She also stated that the Board is looking at how to improve engagement with the newer graduate year groups. They are also doing preparation for the next AOG Board election: establishing a nomination committee and analyzing how best to reach out to all graduate groups.
- At the recent out-of-cycle AOG Board meeting, the Board approved the Budget for 2024 for the AOG and the Foundation.



8. Sarah Hannah, Transition Specialist, Long Blue Line Portal/ Naviere Walkewicz, '99, Senior Vice President, USAFA AOG Alumni Relations and Business Development:

- Naviere introduced her new staff: Ms Sarah Hannah - she will be in charge of the Long Blue Line Portal development.
- Sarah then used a live Portal demonstration to show the capabilities of the Portal.
 - It will be exclusively for Cadets and Graduates.
 - She briefed the features of the Portal and how to use it.
 - She stated that the Portal can be used by Senators instead of sending an “Email Blast” through the AOG to communicate with their classes.
 - Each individual graduate will have to add themselves to the Portal.
 - Tom Hayden asked if the AOG could simply add all graduates’ contact information from the AOG database, and sign them all up at once? Naviere stated that no, they could not do that. Tom suggested that this will not preclude having to do an “Email Blast” to the class, as not all grads (especially older grads) will take the time to go into the Portal and figure out how to add themselves.

9. Other Business / Round Table:

- There was zero Round Table discussion.

10. Randy Helms, '79, CAS President, gave brief closing comments:

- Randy asked all senators to think about two issues for the next meeting:
 - Should the Class Advisory Senate change its annual schedule to mirror the changes recently made by the AOG Board, to change to only three annual meetings, or is it fine as is?
 - Based on a past poor showing at Senate meetings, should there be an institutionalized minimum attendance requirement for Senators to attend Senate meetings? Normally there has been an average of about 30 senators or backups at a CAS meeting.
 - The Executive Committee will discuss these issues first at the next meeting on 5 December 2023.
 - Randy established an ad hoc committee of Senators to get together with the AOG to discuss possible improvements to the Reunion support. He appointed AJ Ranft, Tom Hayden, Dan Beatty, and Randy Helms as the committee to get together with the AOG.
- He thanked Senators for their continued support. He then adjourned the meeting.



11. Next Meetings:

- AOG Board, 19 April 2024
- CAS Executive Committee, 5 December 2023
- CAS, 16 January 2024
- CAS Schedule: <https://aog-websites.s3.amazonaws.com/usafa-org/documents/aog/governance/CAS/New+Schedule+July+2022.pdf>

12. Close/Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 1910.

Minutes submitted by: Tom Hayden '74, CAS Secretary

Minutes approved by: Randy Helms '79, CAS President

Attachments:

1. Members in Attendance
2. Mortuary Affairs slides

ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY



AS OF: 17 Nov 2023

Atch 1: Members in Attendance:

59 Larry Fortner
60 Dick Sexton
61 Patrick Buckley
61 Terry Storm - G)
62 Dave Holt
63 John Borling
63 (Lou Matjasko - B)
64 Doug Jenkins
65 Jim Vick
66 Larry Bagley
67
68 Hartsel Beckett
69 Tom Fleming
70 Mick Davey
70 (Roger Hill – G)
71 Tom Berry
72 Ski Wagasky
73 A J Ranft
74 Tom Hayden - Secretary
75 Bruce Mitchell
76 Dan Beatty
77 Joe Niemeyer
78 Wayne Hermendorfer
79 Randy Helms – President
80 Derek Hess
81
82 Jim Ratti
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85 Scott Dumbald
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89 Joe Matchette
90 Oliver Washington
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92 Rick Bailey
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96 Gigi Simko
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99 Paul Ferguson
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08 Ashley Fregley
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Names in () are non-senators

“B” = Backup

“G” = Guest