

CAPT Spencer Johnson USN (Ret)
President, United States Naval Academy Class of 1963
1604 Trawler Lane
Annapolis, MD 21409
21 November 2018

Dear Spencer,

This is the final report on the Class of 1963 55th Reunion which was held in San Diego, CA, on 24-27 October 2018. This report will assess the reunion experience against the stated goals and objectives as well as describe some highlights from the event. A detailed financial accounting of all receipts and expenditures is attached. A Lessons Learned report will be sent under a separate cover.

This Reunion was unusual in that it was a 5-year milestone USNA Class reunion that was not held in Annapolis as is the customary practice. The impetus for deciding to schedule this off-site milestone reunion was due to the scheduling of the 2018 Navy/Notre Dame for 27 October in San Diego. The combination of playing a major and very popular Navy football game in a traditional West coast Navy town where many classmates had served supported the decision to make this our 55th Reunion weekend. Other critical factors were that the local Class alumni had successfully run a mid-term reunion in San Diego in 2011 and had over two years to plan the event. As it turned out, that extra time was necessary for the success of the reunion planning process and the Reunion itself.

The paragraphs below provide an evaluation of how well the 55th Reunion Planning Committee met its stated goal and objectives for this reunion.

Goal: *Celebrate the USNA Class of 1963 55th Reunion by ensuring that classmates and guests have an enjoyable reunion experience that maximizes the opportunities for memorable classmate interaction while highlighting the Navy – Notre Dame Football game and our special ties to San Diego.*

- In general, the overwhelming feedback from reunion attendees has been positive. The combination of the big football game, the wonderful and meaningful San Diego venue and fabulous weather made for a uniquely positive experience. Class interest in this reunion was high from the start. We ended up with 489 registered attendees that included 250 classmates and 14 widows. Our classmates expressed appreciation for the detailed planning that was evident in how well the reunion was run.

Objectives to support this goal:

- Emphasize San Diego's links to the Class of 1963 by holding Class functions in unique and/or special places that captures our Class's special Navy/San Diego ties. This goal was accomplished in part by holding Class events in special venues with a Navy theme:
 - The Class Dinner was held on the USS Midway Museum, a ship on which many classmates served
 - The Memorial Service was held at Fort Rosecrans National Ceremony where some classmates are interred
 - The Class Luncheon was held in the Admiral Kidd Conference Center that many classmates frequented during their junior officer days
 - The Reunion coincided with San Diego Fleet Week with many Navy and Marine themed activities taking place on the pier across the street from the primary reunion hotel.
 - A special private ship tour was arranged for the Class of 1963 on board the USS Harpers Ferry (LSD-49)

- Emphasize highlights of Class of 1963's history including its role in past Navy-ND games. This was accomplished in a variety of ways:
 - The official reunion program emphasized this theme by including the official Class history
 - Several speakers at the Class Dinner on the Midway recalled our historic record of Navy-Notre Dame games as well as highlights of our Class history at the Academy
 - Special posters displayed in the main reunion hotel showed highlights from each of our four years at the Naval Academy as well as during post-graduation service by our classmates.
 - A special poster highlighted our Class participation in the Vietnam conflict

- Plan a non-taxing, leisurely pace. Provide as much opportunities as possible for Classmate interaction. This was partially accomplished. At our advancing age, the definition of "leisurely" changes. There are expectations for certain events to be held at a milestone class reunion. Much like traditional Annapolis fall reunions, finding time to place those events in a football weekend was challenging. Over half the attendees came a day early which helped as did having the Class Dinner on Thursday night. Class interaction was promoted at the Registration Reception Wednesday afternoon, the Reception on the Midway flight deck before the Class dinner and the Tailgate before the game. In addition, the hospitality suites at both hotels were kept open during slack periods to promote classmate gatherings.

- Limit the need for personal transportation to/from planned events. This was accomplished to a large degree. A lot of time and effort was expended on hiring enough buses to take attendees to and from all major events. From all reports, the bus schedule was effective and the buses performed well.
- Provide opportunity for individual Company activities. This was accomplished by planning for companies to have an opportunity for their own private functions on Friday night.

While not a stated objective, we tried to involve our link-in-the-chain Class of 2013 in as many of our activities as possible. In the end we pleased to have Class of 2013 reps as our guests at our Class dinner, Memorial Service and Luncheon.

In summary, the USNA Class of 1963 55th Reunion met its goal to provide a meaningful event to celebrate the Class reaching this milestone in its years of service to the US Naval Academy and the nation.

Very Respectfully,

Phillip Marsden

Chairman

The USNA Class of 1963 55th Reunion Planning Committee