



# SOCIETY NEWS

*Serving Graduates throughout  
Southwest Florida*

## Welcome!

## Upcoming Events

### Founders Day

When: Thursday, 14 March

Time: 6:00 PM

Place: Grey Oaks Country Club, Naples

### Spring Luncheon

When: Tuesday, April 30th

Time: 11:30 AM

Place: The Landings Yacht, Golf, and Tennis Club, Fort Myers

### Save the Date!

### Joint Academy Golf Challenge

This April

### Parents Club Hail & Farewell

This June

Dear Members and Friends -

Welcome to our latest newsletter, where we delve into the critical role played by Admissions Field Force Officers and the unwavering support provided by the West Point Society of Naples in support of our cadets and cadet candidates.



Meet **Marty Bowling, '68**  
USMA Admissions Field Force Officer

### “A LIVING LEGACY”

Martin (Marty) Bowling's life has been characterized by a commitment to Duty, Honor, and Country, values instilled in him during his years at West Point, Class of 1968. Marty is a Vietnam combat veteran and after leaving the Army with a medical disability, he was a successful executive in the energy industry.

Marty met his wife Barbara on a blind date during his cow year while he was on an exchange weekend at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, where Barbara's father was stationed. Marty and Barbara married 16 months later in 1969 following Barbara's graduation from the University of Connecticut. While at West Point, Marty was the recipient of a National Fellowship and went on to obtain three post graduate degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Nuclear Engineering and Political Science and later an MBA from the University of Richmond.

One of Marty's key contributions to West Point lies in his role as an **Admissions Field Force Officer**, coordinating the northern half of the WPSN footprint in SWFL. Marty coordinates FL17 (Charlotte and Sarasota Counties) and serves in FL16 and FL18 (Manatee, Glades, and Hendry Counties). Marty also coordinates three other districts (FL03, FL06, FL07) and serves in two others (FL11, NY03).

# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings and a warm welcome to the 2024 Winter Edition of **Society News**. We are honored to celebrate in this newsletter some of the extraordinary achievements and unwavering dedication of the West Point Society of Naples community.

At the heart of our mission is the mutual support shared among USMA graduates, current cadets, and aspiring cadet candidates from Collier County north to Sarasota. I would like to thank all our donors and the exceptional volunteers contributing to our success and making everything we do possible.



I'm pleased to report that our balance sheet is strong. This fiscal year, we have raised approximately 80% of our budgeted goal of \$30,000 which we have strategically allocated to operations, alumni events, cadet support, and assisting local candidates in attending USMA. Thank you!

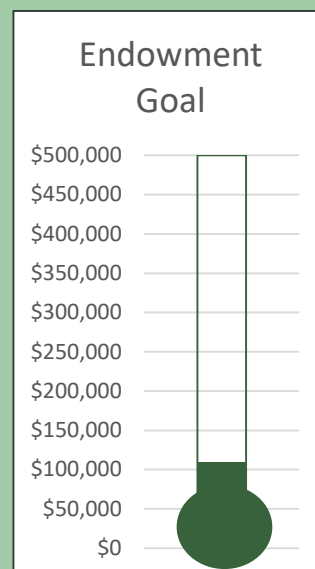
Our near-term goals include expanding our alumni community, providing ongoing support to current cadets, and strengthening our financial portfolio to ensure the sustained success of our Society. I am also delighted to share that we have achieved approximately 25% of our long-term fundraising goal of \$500,000. This endowment will eventually allow us to be self-funding.

Reflecting on the past year, we take pride in a series of significant accomplishments. From hosting a lively Founders Day event to supporting local JROTC scholarship ceremonies and organizing a memorable Hail & Farewell for cadets and their parents, we have made a positive impact. Our admissions efforts are progressing, thanks to the dedicated volunteers coordinating field force operations to guide West Point candidates through the admissions process.

The West Point Society of Naples continues to prosper, thanks to the collective efforts of our dedicated community. Your Board gratefully anticipates the continued support and active participation of each member as we venture into the next chapter of our journey. I wish you all a happy and fulfilling 2024!

Chris Williams, WPSN President

## Exciting News



We've reached 25% of our \$500,000 endowment goal. The West Point Society of Naples is prospering, all thanks to this awesome community. I can't wait for everyone to jump in and be part of the next chapter in our journey. Thanks to all of you amazing donors!

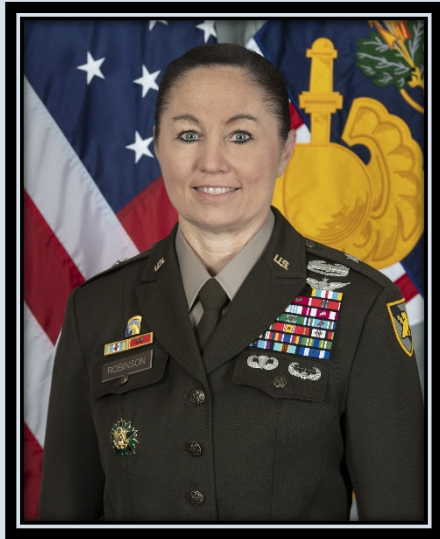




# UPCOMING EVENTS

## FOUNDERS DAY

Guest Speaker:  
Major General  
Lori L. Robinson  
80<sup>th</sup> Commandant of Cadets



- AGENDA: Benny Havens/Dinner/Program
- DATE: March 14, 2024 @ 6PM
- DRESS: Black Tie Optional, Business Suit, Miniature Medals Optional  
Cocktail Attire for Ladies
- LOCATION: Grey Oaks Country Club

**R.s.v.p.** will be through the WPSN Website

**Founders Day, 2023, LTG Steven W. Gilland, Superintendent, USMA  
With Marty Bowling, Cadets, and Cadet Candidates**



# FALL EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Guest Speaker:  
Director of Academy  
Advancement  
LTC (R) Thomas "Tom" W.  
Oakley



The annual fall luncheon was on November 8<sup>th</sup> at the Landings Yacht, Golf, and Tennis Club in Fort Myers. The location was enjoyed by all, and we were joined by the spouses of many prior members. Tom, a 2000 grad and published author, gave a general academy update with a very informative and enjoyable question and answer session!

## Fall Luncheon

# GO ARMY! BEAT NAVY!

WPSN cheers Army to victory over Navy at the annual Watch Party at The Hangout By Two Guys on December 9, 2023. Pictures below courtesy of Evan Blanco.

## Annual Meeting



Noreen (D'Arcy) Walker, Russ Schott, and Libby (Boggs) Schott with Classmate and guest speaker COL(R) Mark Bieger

The annual meeting and luncheon was held on Dec 1<sup>st</sup> at the Grey Oaks Country Club in Naples. WPSN President Chris Williams gave details on the year in review, highlighting the many accomplishments of the year, the current budget status of the society, and goals for the upcoming year. COL(R) Mark Bieger, the newly appointed AOG President, shared his insights on both AOG and West Point current activities.



Guest Speaker:  
WPAOG President & CEO  
COL (R) Mark D. Bieger '91





## Meet Marty Bowling '68 CONT FROM PAGE 1

**Marty's passion for ensuring that West Point receives dedicated and capable candidates** is evident in his commitment to recruiting and mentoring candidates through the admissions process. *"My most important legacy to the Academy is the candidates I have recruited and mentored and who have successfully graduated from West Point,"* Marty emphasized.

**He has 26 of his former SWFL candidates (35 overall) currently at West Point** including 3 of the firsties mentioned in this newsletter. In addition, he has helped a number of candidates enter USMAPS and about 10 former candidates who ultimately chose a different Academy. As of this January, Marty already has 6 SWFL candidates (13 overall) with offers or who have accepted for the Class of 2028 and expects to end up with several more SWFL candidates (15 or more overall) entering West Point this July out of the more than 87 candidates in his SWFL districts that have applied. He is also actively working with pre-candidates for the Class of 2029, who can start their application on February 1, 2024 to enter the Academy in July 2025.

MARTY FINDS HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH THESE FINE AND TALENTED YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE VERY REWARDING. HE CALLS THEM HIS "LIVING LEGACY"

**His mentoring approach for West Point candidates reveals the depth of his dedication.** Marty navigates the complexities of the admissions process, emphasizing the importance of connecting with candidates and their parents, addressing concerns, and showcasing the unique attributes of West Point. Marty shared that the admissions process has dramatically changed from when he completed his entrance exams at Fort Moore, GA (formerly Fort Benning) in a single weekend for the SAT, fitness test, medical exam and interview. Now the application process requires more

information and may take up to a year or more. Marty is often asked by graduates and others whether the academic standards have been lowered since he attended. His answer is *"the candidates now entering the academy are well qualified academically and the academic standard is higher than when he applied"*.

**Marty emphasized the importance of gaining candidates' trust and providing ongoing support throughout the long admissions process.** For a "senior" person and stranger to gain trust with 16 and 17 year-olds and their parents is tricky but critical, especially when distance precludes face-to-face interactions. But by helping candidates overcome the many obstacles and personal challenges that almost every candidate faces during the application process, he develops a trusting and long-lasting relationship.

**As Marty reflects on his career and life successes, he attributes much of it to the formative years spent at West Point.** He and Barbara shared that *"We believe we should do all we can to help and support outstanding young men and women who want to go to West Point and develop into leaders of character to protect and serve our country"*. His financial gifts to the Academy support cadets in obtaining a "world view" through AOG supported programs. As an Admissions Field Force Officer, he has been able to help candidates not just get through the application process but also make the commitment to become leaders in service to the nation. In summary, Marty finds his involvement with these fine and talented young people to be very rewarding. **He calls them his "Living Legacy"**.



LTG Gilland, Superintendent, with Barbara and Marty Bowling



# FIELD FORCE TIMELINE

## Supporting Cadet Candidates

[www.westpoint.edu/admissions](http://www.westpoint.edu/admissions)

Field Force Activities in Bold



Fall, Junior Yr.

- **Admissions Briefing (Aug)**
- **College Fairs (Sept)**
- **Mentor Juniors and Below**

Spring, Junior Yr.

- **Admissions Briefing (Jan)**
- Candidates Open Candidate Questionnaire and Apply to Summer Leader Experience (SLE) (1 Feb)
- **College Fairs (March)**
- **Candidate Informational Meetings/Mentorship Begins**
- **Congressional Academy Days (Dates Vary by District)**
- Main West Point Application Opens (15 May)

Summer

- SLE (if accepted) (Jun)
- **Field Force Interviews Begin**
- Congressional Nomination Applications Begin

Fall, Senior Yr.

- **AIM Briefings (Aug)**
- **College Fairs (Sept)**
- Complete West Point Application (**Goal Oct – Nov!**)
- Congressional Nomination Applications Due (Sep – Nov)
- **Mock Interviews (Sep – Oct)**
- Congressional Interviews (Oct – Dec)
- **Mentorship/Monitor Candidate Progress**
- Nominations Announced (Dec - Jan)

Spring, Senior Yr.

- **Mentorship/Monitor Candidate File (Deadline Jan 31!)**
- USMA Offers (as early as Nov!)
- Candidates Officially Accept (NLT 1 May)
- Candidates Introduced to Parents Club (NLT 1 May)
- **Accepted Candidate Founders Day Social (Mar)**
- **Candidate Recognition at High Schools (Apr – May)**

High School Graduation!

- **Cadet Candidate Boot Camp (May)**
- **Cadet Candidates Report to Beast! (Jun)**



# FIELD FORCE UPDATE

## Supporting Cadet Candidates

Top right – Russ Schott and Tim Ford at admissions table at a college fair; bottom left -- mentorship lunch with cadet candidates; bottom middle – cadets at a college fair on CPRC (Cadet Public Relations Council); bottom right – a college fair in full swing!



### JOIN THE SWFL FIELD FORCE - BUILD A LEGACY OF SERVICE TO THE CORPS

The field force is a team of volunteers whose goal is to help identify SWFL's most promising students and mentor them in achieving the exceptional honor of being accepted for admission to West Point.

- LTC(R) Russ Schott coordinates field force activities in Lee and Collier Counties

(Congressional Districts FL19 and FL26). To join the team in this area, email Russ at [russ.schott@gmail.com](mailto:russ.schott@gmail.com).

- Mr. Marty Bowling coordinates field force activities in Charlotte and Sarasota Counties (Congressional District FL17) and serves in Manatee, Glades, and Hendry Counties (Congressional Districts FL16 and FL18). To join the team in this area, email Marty at [the\\_bowlings@comcast.net](mailto:the_bowlings@comcast.net)



Marty Bowling with the Mock Interview Panel. The mock interviews give candidates a chance to practice their interview skills and receive feedback prior to their Congressional interviews.



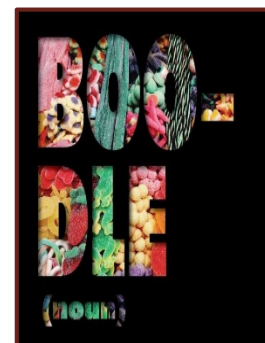
# SUPPORTING CADETS

West Point Parents Club of Southwest Florida



## 300 Boodle Brigade: Mission Completed!

Our club partnered with WPPC of South Florida to fill, package and send a total of 49 boodle boxes to deployed military personnel!



All enjoyed a great game as we cheered Army to victory over Air Force at the West Point Parents Club of Southwest Florida Watch Party! Canned/non-perishable items were collected for Community Cooperative.

## Army Defeats Air Force!



## Thank you to all our Secret Santas

We wanted to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU to all who participated in our Adopted Family Holiday Giving Drive. We worked together as a team and were able to provide a local family with all the items on their wish list, in addition to other goodies. On Tuesday, December 19th, several parents gathered to wrap all the gifts that were donated by club parents, old grads, families, and friends. This has become an annual tradition that many look forward to and every year we are truly amazed by your giving spirit and generosity! A couple of elves filled up their sleigh on Friday, December 22nd and drove to Lehigh Acres for an early Christmas delivery. We met Mom at the family home and she was truly shocked at the sheer amount of gifts we had gathered for them. We lost track of how many trips it took to unload the sleigh! In her own words, "This has been a blessing and has lifted so much off of me. Thank you for helping and may God bless each and every one of you."





# SUPPORTING CADETS

West Point Parents Club of Southwest Florida



## Cadet Boodle Run in Feb

Just in time for Valentine's Day, the parent's club will send boodle boxes to all cadets from Bear Mountain Bakery

### New Parents Welcome

Join us as we welcome Class of 2029 cadet candidates and their families

## Upcoming Events

<https://www.facebook.com/wppcswfl>

For more information about the Parents Club, follow us on Facebook or contact Patty Holston [pattymholston@gmail.com](mailto:pattymholston@gmail.com)



## Congressman Donalds visits SWFL Cadets

Congressman Donalds visited with cadets from FL District 19 during the Army-Holy Cross Football game on 11 November. The Congressman's son plays for Holy Cross. In addition to the football game, the Congressman received a short tour of the cadet area, attended the pre-game parade on the Plain, and talked with the Superintendent. This is the first time our Congressman has visited West Point in anyone's memory.



Cadets (Standing L-R): Darby Horne '24, Ryan Logan '24, Charles Ferrente '27, Ryan Ziegler '27, Kelli Ahlquist '25, Ben Records '27, Congressman Donalds, Jack Laterra '25, Austin Henning '25, Jacob Azizi '26, & Antony Tinerella '25; (Kneeling L-R): David Liu '26 & Joey Turchetta '27.  
[Not pictured Liam Holston '25 & Robert Fritz '26]



# MEET A SWFL CADET

## CADET THOMAS J. KOICHEVAR

Class of 2024

Company G-2 and E-1

Academic Major: Cyber Science

Branch: Cyber



Meet Thomas Koichevar, a distinguished graduate of Pine View School in Osprey, FL, whose journey from the classrooms of high school led him to the hallowed halls of West Point. Originally in Company G-2 before scrambling to E-1, Tom has left an indelible mark during his time at the Academy. His dedication and prowess shine brightly as a key member of the Army Pistol Team, contributing to the team's triumphant victories over Navy in all three years of his active participation. Tom's exceptional skills were duly honored when he was recognized in 2023 with Honorable Mention All-American Pistol, a testament to his commitment to excellence in sportsmanship.

Beyond the firing range, Tom's academic pursuits showcase his intellectual curiosity and commitment to advancing technology. His independent research delves into enhancing the Linux network stack, with aspirations to publish his findings. As part of his Capstone Project, he is focusing on safeguarding industrial machinery from both power and cyber threats, showcasing a dedication to applying his knowledge to real-world challenges.

Tom's leadership extends beyond the academic realm, with experiences ranging from Air Assault School to a CTLT assignment in Armor at Joint Base Lewis-McChord where he was assigned to a Stryker Cavalry Troop. His cadet leadership roles have included Beast Squad Leader, cadet company Platoon Leader, and he is currently serving as both the Company Store Officer and Company Trunk Room Officer. Reflecting his commitment to serving at the forefront of cybersecurity and technological defense, Tom eagerly anticipates being a Lieutenant, aspiring to be a 17D, Cyber Capabilities Development Officer, or a 17A, Cyber Warfare Officer.



# MEET A SWFL CADET

## CADET RYAN J. LOGAN

Class of 2024

Company D-1 and A-4

Academic Major: Electrical Engineering

Branch: Aviation



Meet Ryan Logan, a remarkable individual whose journey from Island Coast High School in Cape Coral, FL, to the prestigious West Point is nothing short of inspiring. Graduating in 2020 with a clear sense of purpose, Ryan, originally in Company D-1 before scrambling to A-4, embarked on a four-year adventure that revolved around his passion for robotics. In 2023, as the captain of the Robotics Team, he led his team to competitions at the Kennedy Space Center in NASA's Lunabotics Mining Competition, showcasing his dedication to pushing the boundaries of innovation. Ryan's commitment to academic excellence is evident through his participation in Academic Individual Advanced Development (AIAD) programs at Picatinny Arsenal and Adelphi Army Research Laboratory (ARL). His focus on swarm robotics and autonomous systems reflects a keen interest in cutting-edge technology. Notably, his work was recognized at the ARL-USMA Technical Symposium at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, demonstrating his contributions to the field.

Beyond his academic pursuits, Ryan's involvement in the United States Special Operations Command's Ignite at MIT Lincoln Labs showcases his dedication to finding practical solutions to real-world challenges. Currently leading an Astrobotic Capstone, he is pioneering the development of an autonomous mining system for NASA's Lunabotics Competition, leaving an indelible mark on the intersection of robotics and space exploration. As a Platoon Leader in his final semester and a future Aviator, Ryan branched into Aviation due to the inspiration and legacy of his grandfather, CW3 Logan, a Vietnam Veteran aviator.

*The results are in!*  
**Branching Assignments  
for SW Florida's  
Class of 2024  
Cadets**

Darby Horne - Aviation  
Ryan Logan - Aviation  
John McIntyre - Armor  
Aeryn Sachs - Field Artillery  
Tom Kochevar - Cyber





# DID YOU KNOW?

## Highlights of West Point's Physical Pillar – The Indoor Obstacle Course Test (IOCT)



...that the IOCT has its own Wikipedia Page?

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indoor\\_Obstacle\\_Course\\_Test](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indoor_Obstacle_Course_Test)

One of the hallmarks of West Point's physical education program has always been the Cadet Indoor Obstacle Course Test (IOCT). Initially administered in 1944 as a more robust evaluation of a cadet's physical ability, the course has undergone various iterations. Still required as part a cadet's physical program, the course currently consists of 11 events - low crawl under barrier, tire footwork, two-handed vault, 8 ft horizontal shelf, horizontal bar navigation, hanging tire, balance beam, 8 ft vertical wall, 20 ft horizontal ladder, 16 ft vertical rope, and 350 m sprint (carrying a 6 lb. medicine ball for the first 120 m, a baton for the second 120 m, and empty-handed for the remaining 110 m). The IOCT is still administered in Hayes Gym today!



## Every Cadet's Four-Year Physical Curriculum Includes

### Seven core curriculum classes:

- Boxing (PE116)
- Military Movement (PE117)
- Survival Swimming (PE109/32X)
- Combat Applications (PE360)
- Fundamentals of Personal Fitness (PE215)
- Lifetime Physical Activities (PE2XX)
- Army Fitness Development (PE450)

### Competitive Sports:

- Intercollegiate (NCAA, 28 Teams)
- Club (16 Competitive Teams)
- Company Intramurals (11 Sports)

### Three fitness tests:

- Indoor Obstacle Course Test (IOCT)
- Occupational Physical Assessment Test (OPAT)
- Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT)

<https://www.westpoint.edu/physical-program>

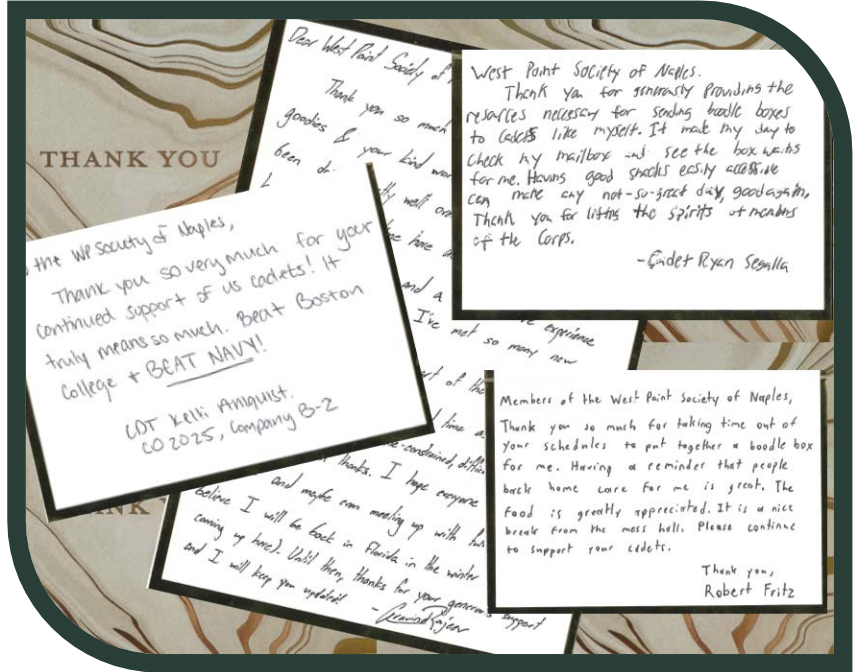


# THANK YOU!



A few recent thank you cards from SW Florida Cadets

A special thank you to Silvercrest Asset Management Group for sponsoring the Army Navy Watch Party!



SILVERCREST  
ASSET MANAGEMENT GROUP

Proudly Supporting the West Point Society of Naples | BESPOKE INVESTMENT SOLUTIONS

WWW.SILVERCRESTGROUP.COM



*Your donations make a difference!*

The West Point Society of Naples would like to extend its heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated supporters for their unwavering commitment to our mission. It is with your generous contributions and steadfast encouragement that we have been able to make a significant impact on the lives of local JROTC students, cadet candidates, and cadets.

We are profoundly grateful for your dedication to our society, as it is the driving force behind our success in furthering the ideals of duty, honor, and country.

*Thank You!*



## How to Get Involved

- Sponsor JROTC Awards
- Sponsor a Cadet Candidate to attend the Summer Leadership Experience (SLE)
- Sponsor a Cadet Boogie Run
- Sponsor a Cadet and/or Cadet Candidates/parents attending Founders Day
- Represent WPSN at an award ceremony or an event
- Visit a local High School
- Attend our events
- Bring a guest to an event
- Sponsor a guest speaker
- Donate money, stocks or bonds
- ***Become an active member!***

*To join/renew active membership:*

<https://westpointsocietyofnaples.com/joinrenew>

*To make a tax-deductible Donation:*

<https://westpointsocietyofnaples.com/make-a-donation/>

## Meet your WPSN Board of Directors

President – Chris Williams '87  
Vice President/Events – Evan Blanco '80  
Secretary – Cathy Speer '72 Spouse  
Treasurer – Matt Shanahan '99  
Arnie Haake '69  
Jodie Glore '69  
Pete Lilly '70  
Mike Zolidis '70

Gary Speer '72  
Garrett Dietz '73  
Mike Kostoff '79  
Doug Whitehead '85  
Russ Schott '91  
Libby Schott '91  
Derek DeVecchis '13

## A NOTE FROM YOUR EDITORS

We are excited to launch our new newsletter and would like to invite you to be an integral part of it. Your ideas, experiences, and insights matter to us, and we want to hear from you. Whether it's a topic you're passionate about, a

story you think deserves attention, or even your personal experiences related to our newsletters' themes, we are eager to include your input.

Please share your suggestions, thoughts, and content ideas with us so that we can create a newsletter that truly resonates with our readers.



# Serving Graduates throughout Southwest Florida

## 2023-2024 RAFFLE

"Duty-Honor-Country" by Paul Steucke  
Year Printed: 1993

We received the West Point framed print from the family of one of our Society's founding members. This is the fifth print in a series of 14 published by Vladimir Arts USA, Inc. and includes a Certificate of Authenticity. This print also includes the General MacArthur Foundation seal and countersigning by Bob Hope, Colin Powell, H. Norman Schwarzkopf, William Westmoreland, and James Ellis.

Raffle tickets are \$25 or 5 for \$100 and can be purchased at any of our events or on our website. The winning ticket will be drawn at our Spring Luncheon on 30 April 2024.



Raffle tickets can be purchased at:

<https://westpointsocietyofnaples.com/2023/11/12/arts-prints-for-sale/#raffletickets/>

## Membership Info

Your dues and donations help support the many activities sponsored by WPSN. The rates for active membership:

- Annual \$35
- Three-year \$100
- Lifetime \$400

The membership year runs from July 1st to June 30th.

Celebrate lifelong friendships

Support cadets from SWFL

Engage the next generation of officers in the US Army



## OUR MISSION

The mission of the West Point Society of Naples, an exclusively non-profit organization, is to:

- (1) further the principles and welfare of the United States Military Academy;
- (2) provide an organization with activities for its members to associate in order to foster the aims, ideals, standards and achievements of the United States Military Academy;
- (3) promote a better understanding of the Military Academy by the public throughout Southwest Florida; and
- (4) inform, encourage and assist talented young men and women of the admissions process of the US Military Academy.



**We are based in Naples, but our membership area covers all of Collier, Lee, Charlotte, Glades, Hendry, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties.**

West Point Society of Naples is a 501 (c)(3) / tax exempt organization

[West Point Society of Naples](http://www.westpointsocietyofnaples.com)



## LINKS

[United States Military Academy](#)

[West Point AOG](#)

[SallyPort](#)

[USMA Alumni Info](#)

[GoArmy Sports](#)

