AUGUSTA MILITARY ACADEMY ALUMNI FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER

March - 2026

BIG BARRACKS TODAY

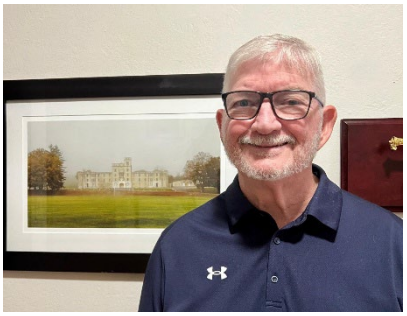
BIG BARRACKS

AS WE REMEMBER IT

An A.I. rendering of the AMA Memorial

Above: We took a picture of the actual view we will have of the AMA Campus and had A.I. insert the rendering of the Memorial into that image below.

THE AMA MEMORIAL



Chairman's Message

Douglas W. Pennock '72

March 1, 2026

Dear fellow alumni and friends,

As short as February is, this year seemed to pass by a little faster than normal. That is probably because I was busier than usual.

Vice-chair Tom Del Valle and I flew into Richmond on Wednesday, February 4, on a ridiculously cold afternoon.

We drove to Staunton, checked into our hotel, and grabbed a nice — but overpriced — meal at one of Staunton's premier eateries.

Thursday morning, we drove to Harrisonburg for a very enjoyable breakfast with Pastor Stan Farthing of the Augusta Stone Church. We made plans to use John Craig Hall for this year's Saturday Founders Day lunch during Alumni Reunion, and we continued our discussion about securing a long-term lease of church property for the construction of the AMA Memorial.

That afternoon, Tom and I met with Mr. Boyce Brannock, our attorney in Staunton, who is helping us navigate the legal procedures related to the Memorial and other Foundation business.

On Friday at about 1100 hours, Herb Maher, Lee Ramsey, Tom, and I paid a visit to our friend Jeff Slaven, Chairman of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors, at his farm. Jeff owns and operates a multi-thousand-acre cattle operation and was in the middle of managing serious weather-related challenges that could have cost him hundreds of head of cattle.
As a retired farmer myself, I felt we were intruding. I tried to leave once I understood what was going on, but Jeff insisted we stay and talk a spell.

We stood for about 40 minutes in what he calls an office — really a large barn full of tractors, four-wheelers, skid steers, spare parts… and a desk. No heat. That's a big deal for me. We were most appreciative of his time, and he reiterated his full support for AMA, our alumni, and the upcoming AMA Memorial.

We held our first Alumni Foundation Board Meeting of 2026 on Saturday, February 7, where we discussed normal Foundation business and next steps for the Memorial.

I returned to Puerto Rico Sunday morning, after spending a few minutes in the Richmond hotel parking lot at 0500 hours in 2-degree weather. It was good to get home, where the low hit 71 that evening.

We currently have approximately $250,000 in the AMA Memorial building fund. I expect that balance to increase once we secure a long-term lease with the Stone Church. I am hopeful that we will have a signed lease before our next Foundation board meeting in mid-June.

Thank you all for your continued support and belief in what we are trying to accomplish.

Cordially,

Douglas W. Pennock
Chairman

GENERALS NEWS

This post was written by Larry Nicholson '75

Lt. General USMC (Retired)

I had the honor of being asked to speak at The Virginia Military Institute on 3 February as part of the Sasakawa Peace

Foundation JUMP (Japan-US-Military-Program) series of college and university campus visits. I have previously supported JUMP programs at The Citadel, the US Naval Academy, Ohio State, The University of Indiana, and bases at Camp Pendleton, Quantico, NAS Pensacola, and more...The Jump program honors U.S. veterans and active-duty personnel who have served in Japan and, building on that foundation, seeks opportunities to identify and strengthen the alliance…The JUMP program digs deeply into current regional security issues and focuses broadly on how our two nations, along with other like-minded democratic nations in the region, can work together to establish a strong level of integrated multi-domain deterrence that prevents war and maintains the stability, security, and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region. Today, more than ever, the US, Japan, and other regional allies and partners are engaged in challenging, realistic military training to ensure our collective defense and readiness are never in doubt. Today, the US has more than 50,000 active-duty military personnel stationed in Japan.

During this trip, I travelled with 1. Dr. Satohiro Akimoto, the Chairman and President of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. 2. Former Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) for Japan, Admiral Sakai, who is currently a professor in residence at the US Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, California, and 3. Rear Admiral Hayamizu, the current Defense and Naval attache at the Japanese Embassy in Washington DC. After the annual JUMP dinner in Washington, attended by more than 125 guests, on the evening of 2 FEB, we departed for the VMI event in Lexington, VA, with a well-planned, highly anticipated one-hour stop to visit the AMA museum.

Special thanks to Rich Van Breemen and Chris Correa, who worked incredibly hard to prepare for and support the visit. They cleared the campus roads of snow and ice and salted the walkways for the guests. They prepared handouts highlighting the story of the father of Shawn Ogimachi and his heroic service in Europe as a US Army Sergeant, who, along with many tens of thousands of Japanese American citizens, had been relocated to internment camps in the nation's interior for the duration of the war. The Admirals were absolutely fascinated by this story and the connection to AMA. Rich and Chris were wonderful hosts, detailed briefers, and colorful storytellers whom the Admirals deeply appreciated and thoroughly enjoyed during their visit to AMA. Many thanks to Rich and Chris…..BRAVO ZULU GENTLEMEN….

Semper Fidelis, Larry Nicholson '75

AMA Alumni Reunion
September 10 -12, 2026

Honoring the classes of
'46, '51, '56, '61, '66, 71, '76, and '81

Headquarters Hotel
Hotel 24 South (Stonewall Jackson)

Call 540-885-4848 to make your reservations now, and be sure to tell them that you are with the AMA group so that you get the Reunion group rate of $127.00 per night, which includes covered parking.

You may register for Reunion 2026

HERE

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Become a Reunion Sponsor

For the past several years, our Alumni Weekend has been fully funded by the generosity of our own. That says a great deal about the kind of men that AMA produced.

If you would like to help sponsor one of this year's events or venues, we would be grateful. Every contribution, regardless of size, plays a role in making the weekend something we can all be proud of.

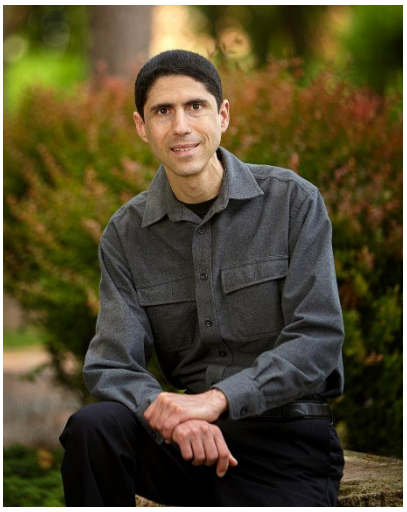
Sponsors will be recognized throughout the reunion.

Please click HERE to sponsor an event

Below is a list of this year's sponsorship opportunities.

You may sponsor a portion of the venue or the entire venue. Your choice.

Registration	$1,500.00
Hospitality Suite	$1,500.00
Band Company Breakfast	$1,000.00
Friday Banquet	$6,400.00
Saturday Breakfast	$2,300.00
Saturday Lunch	$4,200.00
Saturday Dinner	$6,400.00
Flowers	$500.00
Reunion General Fund	Any Amount



The VMI VHS at AMA

By Chris Correa

March 1, 2026

Some months ago, Owen Headley, VMI ’27, visited the museum with a few fellow cadets. They enjoyed their tour so much that Owen, as president of VMI’s Virginia History Society, planned to return with the whole club.

It was a privilege to welcome them on Saturday, February 14.

Virginia Military Institute's Virginia History Society

Ella Davenport '26, President Owen Headley '27, Vice President Hayden Barret '27, Daniel Merk '27, Aleck Tiller '27, Kyle Troutman '27, Zachary Richardson '28, Connor Taggart '28, Wei You '28, William Stacpoole '29, Nathan Wells '29, Prof. Alex Paul, Prof. Zachary Zeibel

A notable subset of the group is this quintet:

Class of 2027 Brother Rats

From left to right:

· Ohio's Owen Headley is a history major and S5 Sargent in the cadet public relations and recruiting department. He's commissioning into the army.

· Also studying history is Michigander Hayden Barret. He too is an S5 Sargent in the cadet public relations and recruiting department.

· Aleck Tiller came up from North Carolina to pursue international relations. He's an S2 Sargent on the cadet academic staff and is a member of the student government. He has commissioned into the army.

· From Pennsylvania, Kyle Troutman serves on the honor court while pursuing his history degree. He's commissioning into the army.

· And future marine Daniel Merk majors in international studies.

The afternoon started with a tour through the museum, a dive into AMA's origin, culture, traditions, and evolution, and a fascinating conversation with the cadets on the similarities, differences, and connections between the academy and VMI.

In the parlor, they took particular interest in the WWII bomber jacket worn by Tommy Roller '36 (below right). Cadet Wei You (second from left at the top) translated the traditional Chinese characters on the jacket's blood chit. It communicated across a language barrier America's good intentions for the Chinese if Tommy had to bail out of his C-46 over their territory.

By far, the main event for the cadets was the barracks. They were fearlessly eager to brave any danger to explore it. I had the unfortunate duty of explaining (with pictures) why a view

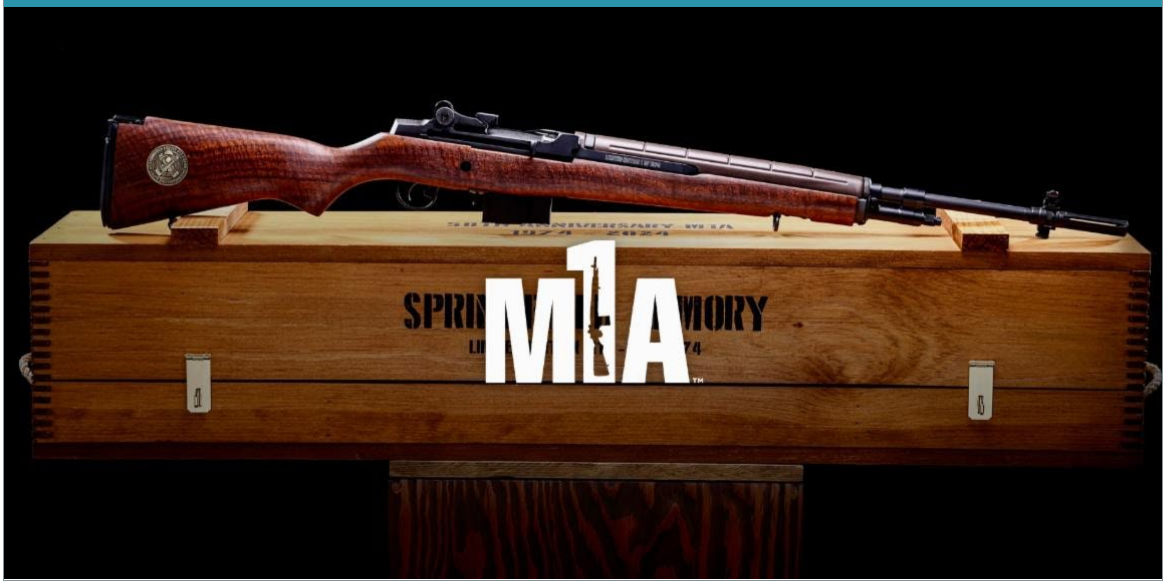
of the courtyard and walk around the perimeter were all that was possible, but there was plenty of history to reveal along the way.

While circling the west wing and telling stories of Cow Patty Beach, the covert convenience of a first stoop room, and how to make a French 75 cannon fire not-so-mysteriously **in the middle of the night**, I froze in my tracks and stared at the ground.

Almost 3 weeks after the Great Ice Onslaught of ’26, the north and west sides of the barracks were still paved in “**snowcrete**” that was just starting to yield. Embedded in the surface was an intact pane of glass.

For several years now, as the wooden window frames have dry rotted, the barracks has been increasingly dropping whole windowpanes, which shatter, encircling the building in antique shards. This lucky piece must have fallen onto the snow before it hardened. I explained this to the cadets, who might’ve wondered why I was all amped over a plain glass rectangle. As an unlikely artifact with ample symbolic value that will soon be one of a kind, it deserved commemoration, so I asked the senior cadet, Ella Davenport ’26, to include it in the group photo. The pane is now safe in the museum, and Rich already has creative ideas for its preservation.

Even after a full afternoon, there was so much more history to cover and more for me to learn about the cadets' current experience and future plans. They were up against the clock, but I'm looking forward to future visits. Professor Zeibel wrote that the whole group "had a terrific time visiting the AMA Museum, and we so appreciate your thorough and fascinating tour." Professor Paul thanked the AMA museum "for being a wonderful host! We really enjoyed the visit, learned so much, and have been sharing our experiences and the fascinating history of AMA with others….Please feel free to express how memorable this trip was for us. It will be hard to find a more engaged audience that could relate so easily to AMA than our group of VMI cadets."

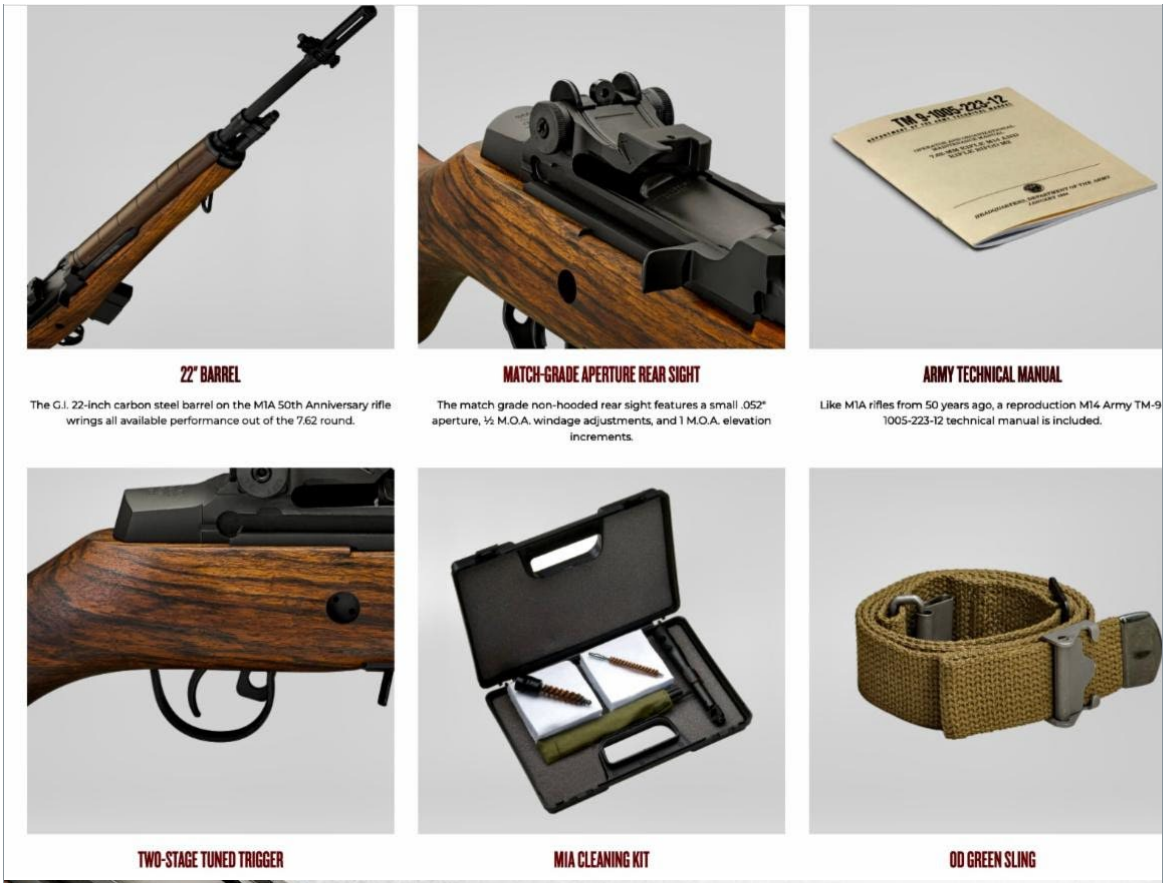


Springfield M1A
50th Anniversary Rifle

Watch the Video

This year, we are offering a very special rifle for our annual Rifle Raffle.
In celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Springfield M1A version of the iconic semi-auto M14, Smithfield Armory produced a limited production of 1,974 units. This beautiful collector's rifle includes a handcrafted wooden display case, laser-engraved operating rod, a certificate of authenticity, and additional accessories.

Tickets will go on sale immediately. Ticket prices are $25 per single or $100 for a five-pack. You may purchase your tickets online HERE, or you can send a check to the Museum at: PO Box 100, Ft. Defiance, VA 24437-0100



AMA Alumni Foundation, Inc.
2026 Annual Election Nomination Announcement

In 2022, changes to the AMA Foundation By-Laws were approved, thus solidifying the annual AMA Alumni Foundation Board member election procedures. As a result, online electronic voting procedures were

permanently approved, with the “cycle” for annual elections occurring in the spring (i.e., April elections).
In accordance with the By-laws: Section 4.3. *Terms*: *Each Director shall be elected for a three-year term, commencing on the date of the annual meeting at which they are elected and continuing until their successors have been duly elected and qualified, or until their death, resignation, or removal. The Board of Directors shall be divided into three classes with staggered terms, with each class as nearly equal in number as may be (i.e., five/six).* Accordingly, one-third of the Directors’ terms of office shall expire/rotate each year. There are a total of **five positions/vacancies** up for consideration in the 2026 “cycle”. The following five board members, whose term expires this year, have expressed their desire to serve another term:

Victor Gomez, ’68 Jorge Rovirosa ’70 Garry Granger ’71 Herb Maher ’72 Tom Del Valle ‘73

As specified in the Board-approved June 2024 revisions to By-law Section 4.4 *Nomination of Directors*, the call for Board nominations shall take place no less than **thirty (30)** days prior to the designated annual election start date. Notice shall be provided to all members via the AMA website, email, and social media outlets. Nominations are welcome and encouraged for those wishing to become involved in the AMA Alumni Foundation's governance. In addition to the five incumbents, any AMA Alumnus or qualified member may present a nomination for a qualified candidate, or may nominate him/herself, for the position of Director. The By-laws Article II: Membership, Section 2.1 & 2.2, delineates board member qualifications, which can be accessed/downloaded **here**. Nominations must be received no later than three (3) days prior to the designated annual election start date, with no exceptions. Nomination “window” formally opened on **Wednesday, March 11, 2026,** and will close on **Friday, April 10, 2026.**

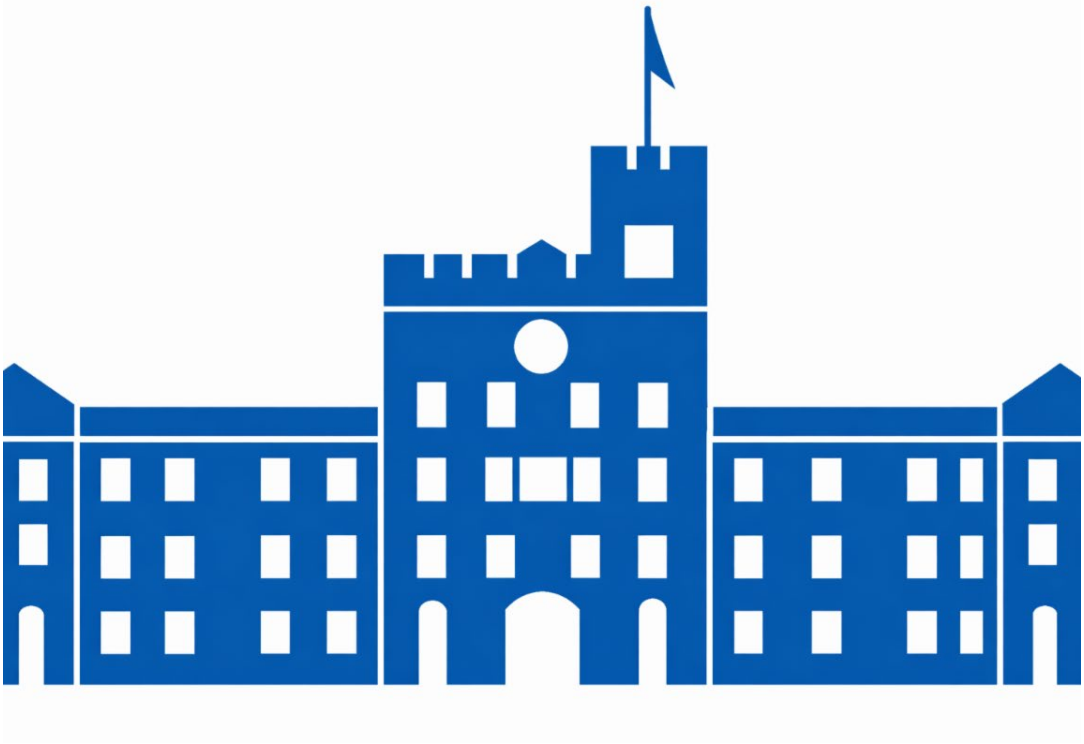
Appropriately, the Election Committee is preparing an electronic ballot for online voting using Google Forms. If you currently receive the AMA Email newsletter, you will receive a link in your email to cast your ballot. If you DO NOT currently receive the AMA Email newsletter and wish to participate in this election, you must add your email to the monthly email distribution list by clicking **here**. The **FIFTEEN DAY (15)** voting window will open no later

than **Monday, April 13, 2026,** and will end at **Noon (Eastern DST) on Tuesday, April 28, 2026**. This election process will be publicized in the special newsletter, via email announcement, on the AMA website, and on the social media/Facebook sites.

NOMINATION AND VOTING TIMELINES

- **Wednesday, March 13, 2026**: Nomination announcement made on email, website, and social media. Those desiring to be nominated should contact Doug Pennock at **chairman.amafoundation@amaalumni.org** And please include John Arthur (**john.arthur@cdg-1.com**) on the email, as well.
- **Friday, April 10, 2026:** The nomination deadline/window formally closed.
- **Monday, April 13, 2026:** Electronic voting for the election commences (15-day window).
- **Tuesday, April 28, 2026:** Electronic voting ends. Results provided to the Chairman and Board members.
- **Saturday, May 02, 2026:** Special Zoom Board meeting with new members to conduct elections for Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- **Monday, May 02, 2026:** The election results and the newly-elected Board Officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer) were announced in the Museum Newsletter email and on social media.

Augusta Military Academy Alumni Foundation Scholarship



AMA LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

THE DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED, AND THE APPLICATIONS ARE DIGITAL

The NEW "postmark" deadline for receiving the AMA Scholarship applications for this year is NOW 11:59 PM April 30th, 2026

Don't wait, get your applications in the mail early!

The following link to the AMA Legacy Scholarships includes all the information you need to apply.

Applicants – Make yourself familiar with the SSR (Scholarship Scoring Rubric). Understand what the judges are looking for and how best to model your application

Garry Granger '71
AMA Scholarship Chair

A monthly pledge from everyone who reads this newsletter supports the Museum's operating costs.

MUSEUM

DOCENT DUTY

THANK YOU!

Visitors in February

48

SET UP YOUR MONTHLY DONATION HERE

Museum Volunteers

Elizabeth Andrews

Be a Volunteer Docent for a weekend. You may be surprised how much fun you will have!

Online PX has been discontinued

Online PX sales have virtually ceased, so we have decided to discontinue the Online sales feature. You can still purchase items and bricks at the PX, but you must do so in person, by phone, or via email.

You may call the Museum during regular business hours, Wednesday through Sunday, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm. Email - museum@AMAalumni.org

Purchasing a Paver Brick allows you to recognize anyone you knew while attending AMA.

All Paver Bricks are placed in a permanent location along the sidewalk running East of the Museum

Visit the Brick virtual map HERE

Brick Order Form

Frank Spencer Jr '49
Friend, Volunteer &
AMA Chaplain
1929-2023 Godspeed

17 oz. Mug
Only $14.00 (Plus tax and shipping)

To order items from the PX, call the Museum at 540-248-2007

Wendell August Forge metal serving tray

$50.00

Doug Pennock's Viewpoint

March 1, 2026

Dear Readers,

All of us were sent to AMA for different reasons, but I suspect most parents simply wanted their sons to receive a good education. Sounds simple enough, right?

Yet we all know that what we learned at Augusta Military Academy went far beyond academics. I won't attempt to explain what that was to everyone, because each of us took away many things in different ways, yet when we compare notes, the takeaways somehow sound very familiar. Instead, I'll speak to one of my greatest takeaways from those six years in Ft. Defiance: Honor, Brotherhood, Perseverance, and love of country.

Last week, as I watched USA Hockey defeat Team Canada for gold at the Winter Olympics, I felt a familiar surge of pride. Those young men represented our nation on perhaps the world's largest sporting stage, and they did so with grit and class. It made me proud — but it also transported me back to another gold medal game.

In February of 1980, I was returning from a business trip in Miami. I caught the first period of the USA Hockey team's Game against Russia on the taxi's radio. I watched the

second period on television inside the Eastern Airlines Admirals Club, shoulder to shoulder with several hundred anxious travelers. The energy in that room was electric.

I boarded my flight midway through the third period, resigned to missing the ending. Then, about twenty minutes into the flight, the pilot came over the intercom: "We have beaten the Russians."

The cabin erupted. Grown men and women shouting. Strangers embracing. A surge of national pride so raw and spontaneous that I doubt I will ever witness its equal again. I can only imagine that every American airliner in the sky that day mirrored the celebration in ours.

Moments like that remind me of AMA.

What we experienced on that campus in Ft. Defiance forged friendships that have endured for decades. Not everyone outside the AMA family understands it — and most never will. But we do. We shared something uncommon.

I know that the 1980 USA Hockey team left Lake Placid bonded for life. I am just as certain the 2026 team will carry that same bond forward.

Brotherhood born of challenge.
Pride born of shared purpose.
Love of country born of understanding sacrifice.

Those lessons were not confined to the classroom.

God bless the USA!

Doug out

Trudy Pennock and Marc Aronson '68, editors.

MISSION STATEMENT "To preserve the traditions of the Augusta Military Academy and to honor the memory of the life and times of its alumni, faculty, staff, and supporting families through permanent and temporary exhibits and diligent conservation the museum's collections of artifacts, archives and photographs."

The AMA MUSEUM is operated by the AMA Alumni Foundation, which is a 501(c)3, non-profit organization. The museum is manned by a paid staff. Former cadets volunteer their time and talent most every month. Funding for the museum is totally dependent on tax-exempt financial gifts and donations made by the alumni, former faculty, and friends of Augusta Military Academy, as well as the community and visitors to the museum.

Augusta Military Academy Museum | 540-248-3007
| **Museum@AMAalumni.org** | **http://www.amaalumni.org**
1640 Lee Highway
P.O. Box 101
Fort Defiance, VA 24437