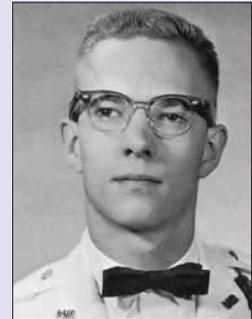


Augusta Military Academy

Oral History

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I'm Alive and Well Today Thanks to AMA

As with many other boys who attended AMA, I had not been a very good student. The only class I passed my last year in public school was typing. I had no interest in school or anything else except girls and cars.

My parents decided that the only way to keep me out of the army and being killed in Viet Nam was to send me to military school. How they decided upon AMA is a mystery. That decision, however, probably is the reason I am alive and well today. In the long run, I still did my time in Viet Nam, but that is another story.

We visited AMA in the spring of 1961. We met with **Major Savedge** in **General Roller's** office and then he took us on a tour of the school. My parents asked if I wanted to visit any other schools and I said "no". It didn't matter, I would have gone wherever they decided. I wasn't a good student but I was disciplined.

I had just received my uniforms and gotten to my room when "Doc" Savedge asked me to work on the business end of the "Recall". I wasn't much of a student, but I did understand money, so I agreed and was honored to have been asked.

Being a "Recall" staff member was work, but it did have its privileges, such as getting to town more than once a week and going to Washington and Lee University for the Yearbook Convention, but the greatest was being one of "Doc Savedge's boys".

There couldn't have been a greater friend and mentor than Major Chuck Savedge. He rarely solved problems for you – he set you in the right direction to solve them yourself. If you needed someone to listen, he was always there but was never judgmental.

Memories of that first year include watching the fights behind the building from my center-back 2nd stoop window, getting up very early for a hot shower, bracing, the pre-Christmas vacation banquet in Doc's room, being on the Privilege List and Honor Roll most of the year and the "Night of the Bombs".

Around time for taps that night, a trash can exploded. **First Captain Bosley** pulled everyone onto the stoops at parade rest and in no uncertain terms suggested that no further such behavior take place. Well, a few minutes later, BOOM! Back onto the stoops with the threat that we would be

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there until someone confessed. Yea, sure, that was going to happen.

After about 10 minutes with no volunteers, he relented and sent us to bed. Ten minutes later, BOOM! Back onto the stoops. My roommates and I were prepared this time, we had on several layers of clothing so as to be prepared for a long night. Did I mention it was freezing? We were out there for about 30 to 45 minutes that time before being allowed to return to our rooms. After that, no more explosions.

I did learn the next year that **John and Eugene Aragona** were the culprits. Eugene was my roommate the second year.

My second year I became Business Manager of the “Recall” and the Cotillion Club. A little more responsibility, but Doc thought I could handle it. Grades weren’t too bad, but I was failing Physics. After Christmas break, I was transferred to **Colonel McCue**’s class.

The first weekend’s assignment was designed to determine what the class had learned the first semester. It had to do with determining what materials were in Midas’s crown and in what proportions. That weekend, I taught myself first-semester physics. When we went to class on Tuesday, everyone had the same answers as the “Brain” of the class except me. As it turned out, my answers were correct.

The second semester Colonel McCue taught me enough Physics to make the first year Physics classes at East Carolina College a breeze. We need teachers like Colonel McCue today.

Other memories of that second year were having electricity all night, thanks to Colonel Dean having a light over his door, surrounded by ivy. We tapped into that light and no one ever knew. Visiting the school today, I see that someone improved on our system with much better wire.

Thank you Mom and Dad, AMA, Doc Savedge, Colonel McCue, **Captain Hanson** and the many others who helped make me the person I am today.

You can view the 1963 RECALL here:
<https://galleries.amaalumni.org/Recalls/Recall-1963/>