



Anna Stein, granddaughter of '45.



Old Grads (in white polo shirts and baseball caps) marched alongside New Cadets.



The Grahams: '55, '80, '12.



Class of '45 reps.



Spectators with hand-lettered encouraging messages lined Washington Road. Photos, this page, are by Olejniczak/ASSEMBLY unless otherwise noted.

# MARCHBACK FOR THE Class of 2012

BY J. PHOENIX, ESQUIRE

It was a good Marchback for the New Cadets of the Class of 2012, with sunshine, blue skies, a few fleecy white clouds, and temperatures in the sixties as the marchback began at dawn. By the time the last New Cadet company reached the Victor Constant Ski Slope, the temperature was approaching 80 degrees.

H Company had begun the march at about 0530 hours (5:30AM), when there was just enough light to see several hundred meters, and the New Cadets, cadre, and 160 Old Grads were scheduled to reach the Supe's house, Quarters 100, at about noon. Because the lead elements of the marchback reached the ski slope around 0900 hours (9AM), however, lunch was served *al fresco* there before marching the final two miles through Washington Gate and down Washington Road to the Plain.

Actually, lunch was not so much "served" as it was "tossed," after being hauled up the ski slope in large cartons by carrying parties, tossed to the New Cadets by their platoon sergeants, and consumed in a matter of minutes. There was not, as in days of yore, the mandatory polishing of combat books for the final leg of the march because contemporary "rough out" boots just require a little brushing. Care of weapons, however, still was a common task among the ranks of New Cadets.

As noted earlier, 139 graduates marched along with the New Cadet companies all the

way from Camp Buckner while another 21 were bused to the ski slope to march the last two miles. The 50-Year Affiliate Class of 1962 was out in force, but the oldest graduates present were from the Class of 1945, including COL (Ret.) Richard Williams, who marched all the way from Buckner; Ted Flum, who marched the last two miles with his granddaughter, Anna Stein; and the irrepressible Hayden of Army. Three generations were represented by Todd Graham '55, Bruce Graham '80, and Todd Graham II '12. All of the graduates then formed at the Class of '48 Lodge for a group photo before moving to the West Point Mint parking lot. There, three representatives of the Class of '45 took their positions at the "right of the line" of graduates, the Class of '62 unfurled its "Can Do" banner, and the Old Grads marched through Washington Gate. There, they formed up to cheer on the eight New Cadet companies as they passed, before falling in behind for the march down Washington Road.

The Army Mules joined the march, all combed and trim, and it seemed that every few meters there was another group of spectators with hand-lettered signs congratulating the New Cadets, specifically or in general. After the New Cadets rendered "Eyes Right" while passing the reviewing stand at the Supe's quarters, they continued on to Diagonal Walk, where they halted and then sat down on the grass to wait, study their *Bugle Notes*, and do pushups for various infractions, real or imagined. Of the 1,302 New Cadets who began Cadet Basic Training, 1,251 remained on that day, marching behind a banner displaying their Class Motto: "For More Than Ourselves." ■



The Army Mules made an appearance.



Still in step after all these years.  
Photos, this page, by Graham/ASSEMBLY

