



James R. Jenkins '57

No. 21322 ■ 28 Nov 1934 – 8 Feb 2010 ■ Died in Manitowoc, WI
Interred in Ft. Howard Memorial Park, Green Bay, WI



James Roy "Jim" Jenkins was born in Green Bay, WI, the son of Roy and Irene (Hintz) Jenkins. Jim proudly achieved Eagle Scout status and also became an assistant scout master. He was an avid stamp collector starting in the third grade, enjoyed reading, model trains, and solving puzzles, and later in life his hobbies expanded to include wood-working.

After graduating from West High School in Green Bay, Jim entered West Point in July 1953 and joined the ranks of Company M-2 after "Beast." Jim was consistently on the Dean's List, but studies did not hinder his love of practical jokes, to the detriment of many under-graduates in M-2—often the target of his wit and humor. He stranded several third classmen illegally using the 48th division elevator on their way to reveille (he released them just in time to make formation). He flew balsa gliders from his fourth floor window and contributed a great deal of his time, while the rest of us were studying, to his assignment as the photo editor of the 1957 *Howitzer*.

Jim chose Signal Corps as his branch upon graduation and was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division signal battalion following signal basic and airborne schools. In 1959, Jim was reassigned to 10th Special Forces Group in Germany, one of the first tech service officers assigned to Special Forces. He was instrumental in installing and operating high powered base radio systems for communications with Special Forces teams operating in clandestine locations.

After Germany, Jim was sent to the University of Arizona where he earned a master's degree in electrical engineering and was elected by his fellow students to the National Engineering Honor Society. His concentration in computer science and

programming would play a key role in his future accomplishments.

From the University of Arizona, Jim was sent to MAAG in Vietnam. Following this tour Jim received orders for what he considers to be his most rewarding assignment, the staff and faculty of the Department of Earth, Space and Graphic Sciences.

Jim's arrival at West Point in the mid sixties coincided with the decision by the Academic Board to incorporate the study of computer technology into the curriculum. Jim was one of a handful of personnel at the Academy with computer knowledge, so he designed two elective courses in computer-aided decision making and computer programming. In addition to teaching, he authored two computer textbooks for use in the courses and edited a third. These courses were highly acclaimed, and soon he was teaching the staff and faculty of all departments as well.

From West Point he became a student again at Command & General Staff College and introduced the staff and faculty to the advantages of computer technology by writing a series of computer programs to simulate the stochastic detonation of nuclear weapons to be used during classroom map maneuver exercises. These programs provided for more instructive iterations during the allotted class time than the old manual method of rolling dice. CGSC then called upon Jim to produce a study recommending aspects of computer science to be taught at the college. His long and detailed report served as a road map for several years at the college while the curriculum was updated. Jim not only received his CGSC diploma that year but two letters of high praise from MG J.H. Hay, the school commandant.

Jim's second Vietnam tour was as director of data processing at the Long Binh Depot. In nine months he led the directorate from being unable to keep up with the heavy logistical demands of the forces in the field to increasing the output of the data center over 300%. MG Woolwine gave him two letters of commendation and both the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star.

Jim then was assigned to the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Communications and Electronics, but in 1973, at the request

of the Office of Telecommunications Policy, he was assigned to the executive office of the President. Once again he was at the forefront of changing policy brought on by the merger of computers and telecommunications during the early 1970s. He played a key role in convincing all departments and agencies of the executive branch to adopt a single set of compatible communications protocols. These standards avoided the confusion of multiple languages and laid the ground work for future network implementation, such as the world-wide web.

Jim retired from the Army in 1977 and became a vice-president of CONTEL Corp., successfully building a state-of-the-art nationwide data communications network for them and taking early retirement in 1991 when CONTEL was acquired by GTE. He then became an independent consultant, working for Fortune 500 companies and international consortia. He successfully managed large fiber optic projects and large scale communications technical proposals in Saudi Arabia and Brazil as well as in the United States.

After the first Gulf War, Jim worked with the West Point Society of Atlanta to present many executive seminars for West Pointers being released during post-war down-sizing. These seminars, aimed at gaining job interviews, interview appearance, proper presentations, successful negotiations, and what not to say during interviews, were greatly appreciated by the attendees. Jim's broad experience and expert advice helped many members of the Long Gray Line gain the employment they sought.

Jim fully retired in 1997 and settled in Manitowoc, WI, close to his boyhood home, with his beloved wife Barbara. He finally was able to complete construction of Barb's doll house, that he had promised for years, and devote time to his much-loved stamp collection.

After a bravely fought and long battle with Myasthenia-Gravis cancer and colon cancer, Jim joined the "ghostly assemblage" on 8 Feb 2010. He was buried with full military honors at Ft. Howard Memorial Park in Green Bay, WI.

Well done Jim. Be thou at peace.

—*Jim's family & M-2 classmates*