



John C Frost “Jack”



I grew up as the son of a geologist who alternated work in remote mining towns where he could bank part of his salary and go back to school at Stanford to take classes. My early education was eclectic, as my mother taught me four years of elementary school, I attended a boarding school in the Philippines, and I went to four schools for high school. Sports was my ticket to meeting and making friends

As a high school junior trying to figure out what I was going to do when I grew up, military service seemed to be a given, not a choice. Both my parents served in World War II and Vietnam was on the news every night, so USAFA was a logical choice. USAFA did not recruit tennis players then, but the tennis coach found me on the obstacle course, said he had talked to the tennis coach at Arizona and told me that off-season tennis started with the fall semester. The American Davis Cup team came to USAFA to prepare for a match in Mexico, so I got to play with players like Arthur Ashe.

Two mantras from my doolie summer have helped me through the ensuing 50 plus years. “Cooperate and graduate” was a reminder that nobody succeeds on their own. “Maintain your sense of humor” was another way of saying life should be fun, even for doolies. A positive attitude is contagious.

USAFA offered a cooperative masters program where we could overload at USAFA and earn an MBA in 3 quarters from UCLA, so I took a detour on my way to Plot Training at Vance AFB. After graduating UPT I chose C-130s and moved to Langley AFB. The C-130 offered great variety – we flew on rotations of up to 90 days to Europe, Latin America, and Southeast Asia so I was exposed to a lot of the world. Between takeoffs and landings we sometimes dropped people or a variety of cargo from as low as ten feet and as high as over 10,000 feet. I then got PCS orders to Taiwan and subsequently to the Philippines, where I again flew in Vietnam and Thailand with an occasional Australian boondoggle..

When Saigon fell in 1995 I was ready for new challenges and went to Southern California as a B-1 Production officer, serving as the sole onsite liaison between the Systems Program Office (SPO) and Rockwell’s Manufacturing, Logistics, and Industrial Engineering directorates. I worked for a civilian in Ohio and missed the camaraderie of my earlier assignments. In 1977 I turned 30, evaluated my options and elected to pursue a civilian career.

I was recruited by Electronic Data Systems, an IT services company founded by Ross Perot, an Annapolis grad. Ross was a great leader and had some interesting philosophies. One of those was an abhorrence of politics, which he defined as trying to take credit for achievements of others. He also said it was OK to fail, so long as you didn’t fail alone – asking for help can be a good thing. Over the next 30 years I worked in sales, consulting, and management for a variety of software and services companies.

I look back on my time at the Academy with gratitude for the experience, friendships and knowledge I got there. The saber symbolized leadership, as the cadets who wore them were in leadership role. I’m proud that I received leadership awards in Pilot training, Squadron Officer School, and several companies I worked for in civilian life. Enjoy!