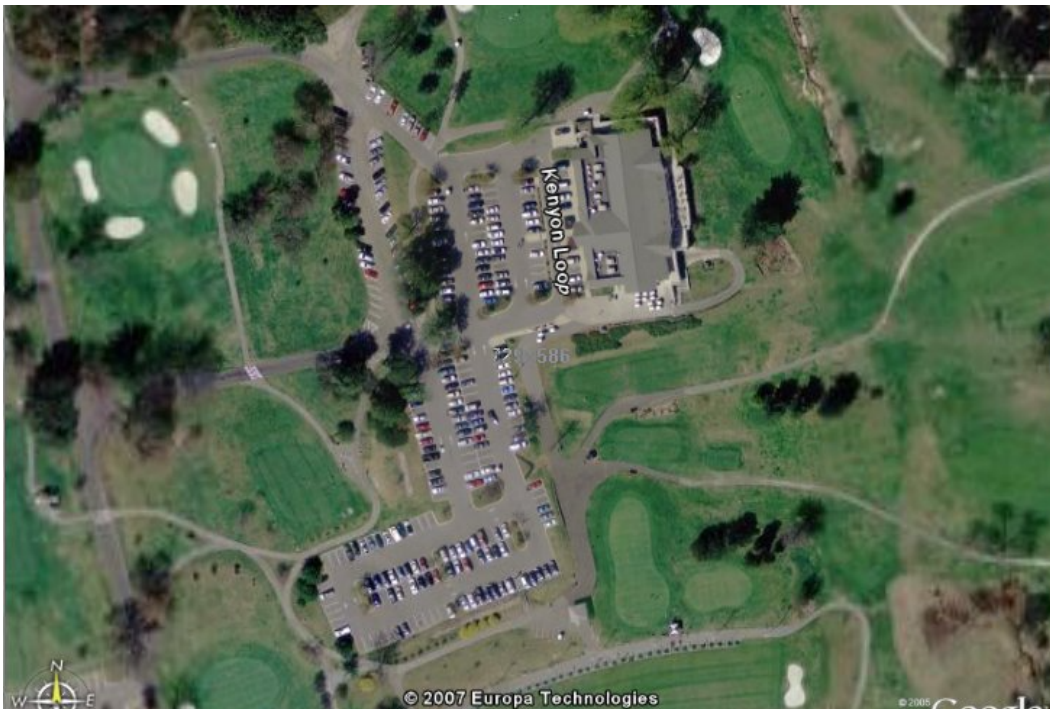


Air Force Academy Graduate



Aerial View of Fort Meade Golf Complex circa 1997

I think it was late summer or fall of 1997 while I was working for Lockheed Martin on a task for the National Security Agency's 'S' Group at Friendship Annex, familiarly known as FANX, pronounced "fan ex." 'S' stood for "Support" and I was working in a branch of S8, developing web-based applications. My branch chief was George Poteet, a good man, true gentleman and a pleasure to work for.

George was enrolled in the "CY-600 Cryptologic Management" course at the National Cryptologic School, also located at FANX. He would come into the office after school every day to check his email, inbox and make sure there weren't any problems that needed his immediate attention. At the end of his very first day of school, I was still in the office when he came in. I asked him what he thought about the course so far. George told me that they had an exercise the first day where the students were divided up into four groups. Each group had

to choose a group leader. There was a young, “gung ho” student, a recent Air Force Academy graduate, who leaped up and volunteered to be the leader of the group. This “kid,” as George referred to him, was all fired up with energy and determination. George went on with more details about the “kid” and the day’s activities.

It was a nice afternoon. Shelia was working late at Nations Bank so I decided to get in a few holes of golf before going home. I drove straight to the Courses at Fort Meade, slipped the bag strap over my shoulder and walked to the starter’s window. There wasn’t anybody on the first tee so the starter told me to head on out. I was on the tee box, getting ready to swing my driver when I noticed a young fellow running down the cart path toward me. Obviously, the starter had just told him that if he hurried, he could catch me on the first tee.

The young man called to me, asking if I could join him. “Of course, I said. Have you played this course before?”

“No, I haven’t,” he answered. “I just flew in from Colorado yesterday.”

Thinking to myself that this just has to be the “kid” George was describing, I said,

“I know. You’re here for the CY-600 course.”

“How did you know that?”

You volunteered to lead your group for the class exercise this morning.”

“Who are you,?” he asked? “How did you know that?”

“I know a lot of things,” I answered.

“Where do you work,” he wondered?

“I work at the National Security Agency.”

I can still picture the look on his face and it was at about that time that I couldn't keep a straight face anymore.

I vaguely recall jerking his chain off and on as we went around the course, but have forgotten the details of those less memorable exchanges.

P.S. I left Lockheed Martin and the job with 'S8' in 1998. Shortly afterward, George Poteet hit the Maryland State Lottery for something in the neighborhood of 24 million dollars. He threw a big party at Kaufman's Seafood Restaurant off MD Rte. 32 for everyone who worked for him. He also came to our house for visits after winning. It couldn't have happened to a nicer gentleman.

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