



FRANK JORDAN

— CLASS OF 1974 —

Frank Jordan, Class of '74, who recently retired in December 2022 after 42 years with New York Life Insurance, is now jumping into his personal passion as a self-described history buff.

With a particular interest in the battlefields of World War I and the European theater in World War II, Jordan has enjoyed a lifetime of learning since his family trip to Normandy, France at age 10, where his father landed by parachute on D-Day.

"One day, we were at the Ranville British Cemetery,

near Pegasus Bridge, where some of his comrades were buried. It was the first time I recall seeing my dad cry," Jordan said.

Jordan's father later explained to him that he was grieving one of his friends killed on D-Day. Growing up, Jordan's father shared many war stories with the family that sparked his interest in military history. Ever since that trip to Normandy, Jordan's interest and research eventually led him to leading dozens of battlefield tours in France and Belgium.



Soldiers' experiences and the theme of "remembrance" are what Jordan enjoys passing down. So when Riordan reached out to him this spring to guest lecture in AP U.S. History, it was an opportunity he couldn't refuse.

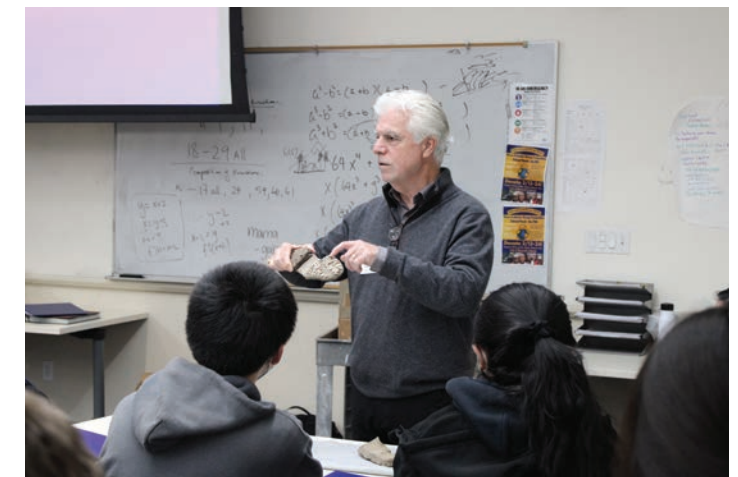
"It was awesome and judging by the feedback I received from the students, they got a lot out of it as well," Jordan said. "Some even commented that they would never get that type of information from their regular history teachers."

For the 86 total students split between two classes, Jordan said he shared battle stories, famous quotes, poems, "then and now" battlefield photographs, and dozens of artifacts he's collected over the years, including artillery shells, fuses, bullets, spent cartridges, canteens, barbed wire, and trench digging picks and shovels.

One prized possession Jordan shared was a wooden 2' x 4' World War I German headquarters sign (Ortskommandantur Belloy) which he received from American folk music legend Pete Seeger in 1998. Pete's uncle, poet Alan Seeger, was killed at Belloy on the Fourth of July 1916, fighting with the French Foreign Legion.

"Anytime you can share personal stories or literally allow students to touch history, I think they get more out of it," he said.

Jordan said sharing the history and knowledge he's accumulated with more students is "absolutely" something he'd love to keep doing.



In the spirit of giving back, Jordan was one of the first Crusaders to join Riordan's Planned Giving program - a new donation program that gives parents and alumni a chance to support future Crusaders.

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"It's just another way to give back to the school that helped set me on the right path in life," he said.

If Jordan could sum up what he learned from Riordan in one word, he said it would be discipline.

"The Catholic education, playing sports, and learning to respect one another have stood me well throughout my life," he said.

Jordan played on the Riordan football team his junior and senior years, making the All-Northern California team as a field goal kicker.

He went on to kick at USC and hit a 38-yard game-winning field goal in 1977 against UCLA that knocked their rivals out of the Rose Bowl. Then, in his senior year, he hit another game-winning 37-yard field goal against Notre Dame on the team's way to a National Championship.

"Of course, I was on Cloud Nine. It's what you dream of," he said. "You always dream of kicking a last second field goal to win a game and I was fortunate to be put in a position to do it twice and on the biggest stage against our two biggest rivals (in front of 90,000 fans and a national television audience.)"

