



Florida Military School

Alumni Association



Vol. 4 Issue 1

MARCH 2007



From the President's Pen

- - Max Elliott '58

The holiday season which followed our last FMSA newsletter was busy and hectic for us. The slower paced days of January were a welcome relief. **Harry Silvis (65)**, our official vender, and **Asa Dean (60)**, our Web Master, have been researching and posting past copies of The Lance. **Paul Ward (71)** sent us his brother's contact information. **Robert Mouro (66)** located another cadet for us – **Bobby Howard (66)**. Welcome aboard, Bobby.

When **Col. Ward** was in DeLand for his quarterly visit, **Thornton Ridinger (59)**, **Sue Elliott (60-HM)** and I met with him for lunch at the Holiday Inn. A major purpose of the meeting was to gather facts and information for the coffee-table book of FMS history, planned for the 2009 reunion. It was a fruitful several hours and plans were made to get together periodically to continue with the fact finding and editing.

At the end of January, several of the former cadets and their wives met for lunch. FMSers present were **Jim and Wanda Turner (59)**, **Troy and Barbara Fletcher (59)**, **Thornton Ridinger (59)** and his sister, **Carol**, **William and Judy Dubberly (60)**, and **Max and Sue Elliott (58)**.

February got off to a wild start with another tornado striking DeLand. This time it came much closer to FMS with one of our cadets, **Steve and Sydney Nash (65)**, and some of our FMS supporters being right in the path of destruction. Recovery is slow but it is underway.

At the end of the month, we did meet with the wonderful and very helpful **Holiday Inn** folks and finalized our contract with them for August 2009. They are very supportive of our plans and will work with us to make this gathering even better than prior ones. Additional details are covered elsewhere in this newsletter.

Another couple of events that I am aware of took place in March. **Bob Lee** had another big birthday at his airport. We were invited by **Tim and Anne Sweeny (60)**, but were unable to attend. Happy

birthday, Bob, and our thoughts were with you! Also in March, **Thornton Ridinger (59)** was joined at his Ormond Beach residence by **Gary and Valerie Aitken (60)** and **Dennis Eyre (59)** and his daughter, **Brenda**.

We continue to work on the outline for the coffee-table book and are actively compiling information. If you have anything you would like to contribute, please let us know. We will gather as much as possible and then edit it down to a manageable level. So far, we envision something like a year book format with advertising sections where one can place appropriate personal comments. The advertising will, we desperately hope, fund the project through the publication.

We keep in regular contact with **Bill Dreggors, Executive Director, West Volusia Historical Society**. They are in the process of enlarging the Conrad Research Center so they will have more room for keeping historical documents, etc. Our set of FMS annuals will become a part of their collection, as have the DVD's from our Reunions and our FMS Directories, and other such materials. In this location, they will be readily accessible to anyone, in the future, doing historical research.

Col. Ward has agreed to donate the original entrance column lights to FMSA. Initially, we considered remounting them but because of their value and historical nature coupled with the lack of security on the site, have decided not to remount them on the original columns. We plan to erect a display incorporating them in the FMSA museum. Also, we have made preliminary arrangements to have our FMS historical plaque remounted on the newly reconstructed column.

Sue and I will, of course, renew our efforts to find those who have never been found and to re-find those who have been found previously and then lost. Please don't get lost! Keep us apprised of your mailing address changes. Again, please keep me posted and send me any changes in your contact information. **AND: If you know of any other FMSers that we don't have, please send me their contact information!**

Post Script: I can't praise **Asa Dean (60)** enough for the sterling job that he has done, and is doing, on our FMSA web site! If you have a chance, please visit the site (www.fms-assn.org) and see for yourself the fine job that our Web Master is doing for us! Again and always, many thanks, Asa!

FMSA Official Website:
www.fms-assn.org

TWISTERS HIT HOME

The Ground Hog Day twisters that cut a destructive swatch across the state of Florida gave Deland a second hit in less than six weeks. The Christmas tornado missed the FMS columns although it did go through the north part of Deland.

This tornado was much stronger and did extensive damage to the south and west sections of Deland. One section that was almost a direct hit was the Hontoon/ Lake Beresford area on the western edge of Deland. One of our FMS cadets, Steve Nash ('65) and his wife Sidney were victims of the storm's wrath. Their home was badly damaged, and they lost two vehicles. Steve reported that his boat was "in a tree", but they were both safe. Steve was very upbeat about it all but we know that the damage was extensive. Although we do not have photos of his house or street, the one below is a neighbor in his area, looking at his once "two-storied" house.



For those of you that attended one of the Deland reunions, we were saddened by the news that the Beresford Lady Riverboat also took a direct hit. It was slammed into the dock and when the fury passed, she was sitting on the bottom near her berth. Ruth Kneibel and her husband Richard, put so much of themselves into building that ship. Ruth has a brother who attended FMS so she feels very close to our organization. When we first talked to them they were still in shock and very discouraged.



At last report, the Lady had been raised and engineers were trying to determine the extent of the damage to her concrete hull. So many people have fond memories of the Lady. One generous man has offered to redo the interior if they can get the hull repaired. There was even a rumor that it was hoped that cruises could be resumed in six months or so. We hope to be able to cruise on the Lady in 2009.

FMSA 2009 REUNION SET

The dates have been selected and the contracts signed for the next official FMSA reunion gathering. It is still un-named, but that will come later.

The dates are July 30th, 31st, August 1st, 2nd in 2009. Everyone has enough lead time so they can make their plans to attend. You will note that we are starting on a Thursday and running through the Sunday this time. With advance planning, this could make a great family vacation.

The Holiday Inn has guaranteed us our 2002 rates of \$59 for a single/double or a Triple/Quad, and \$99 for a Jr. Suite. They are really working with us on keeping the costs low and by selecting the dates during their "slow" period and by signing so far in advance; we are able to have the use of the entire property for our meetings, etc. No, you don't have to book your room yet, but I am sure they would take your reservation if you insisted.

Thornton Ridinger, ('59) will be making the plans for the Golden reunion classes (1957-1960) and will be reporting on them. Special activities for those classes will probably be planned for Thursday. By adding the extra day, it allows more time for small group gatherings. We will also schedule the Memorial Service differently so we don't have to stop and rearrange the rooms, etc. And yes, we will get to dance this time. Speeches and such will occur at other times.

More activities of interest to the women are also being considered. Watch the future issues and check the FMSA website to see what is developing in the way of activities, etc.

FMS in Print

Plans are underway for a quality, coffee-table edition of the Florida Military School history. The idea was the brainchild of Charlie Mussallem ('69) and has been developed by the FMSA committee. A rough outline has been developed and now the work begins to flesh it out with the outstanding developments of each year in

the school's history. The best of photographs and news clippings will be included, as well as pertinent comments from cadets. This will be a book you can all be proud of and keep for your family. The committee hopes to have this ready so that each cadet who registers for the 2009 Reunion will receive one in his registration packet. Here's another reason to plan to attend.

If you have any outstanding photos to submit for consideration, they will be treated with care and safely returned to you. They should be sent to Max Elliott at PO Box 5 in Pierson, FL 32180. Cadet comments and memories will be solicited at a later date.

18 LANCES LOCATED

By Harry Silver, ('65)

Since the December newsletter we have located and put on the alumni web site, eighteen (18) of the Lances. In that they were published: twice a month, monthly or every other month, this represents 10% to 15% of the total published. These represent the years: 1958-1959: 1962-1963 & 1964-1965 for the most part.

Please check with your parents if they are still living or find that box of stuff from FMS in your storage. These we are finding these very valuable as we write the history of FMS. If you find a Lance that we do not have please make a good copy of it and send it to me. You can scan and email them to

kennesawgraphics@bellsouth.net,

fax to 770-421-1745 or copy and snail mail to Kennesaw Printing, 2690 Summers Street, Suite D, Kennesaw, GA 30144.

TREASURERS REPORT

Expenses were \$397.89 for the last newsletter and \$61.25 to the state of Florida for the annual corporation fee.

Income was \$14.20 for the sale of a directory, and E.J. Jones made a donation of \$186.62 for a sword.

Our current bank balance is \$5,294.12

Respectfully submitted, Thornton Ridinger,
Treasurer

FMS COLUMNS UPDATE

As previously mentioned, the financial output for this project exceeded the donations received. Jeff Fawsett or Dennis Eyre report that if anyone would like to contribute to this project to help defray the costs that were involved, the guys would appreciate any help. As this was not an FMSA project, please send any contributions directly to Jeff Fawsett ('60) at: 4824 SW 19th St. Gainesville, FL 32608-0391. (352) -377-1425.

Arrangements have been made with the original contractor to reattach the plaque to the finished column. It will soon be restored to its original glory.

FMSA board members Dennis Eyre('59) and Thornton Ridinger('59) recently had the pleasure of getting together with Gary and Valerie Aitken('60) during their visit to the sunshine state from their home in Canada. It was fun reminiscing about the old days and catching up with what each had been doing lately. Gary and Valerie were visiting Gary's mother, who, at the age of 92, is still living independently in her home in Daytona Beach. On their way home, they also intend to visit with Joe and Janet Casey ('60) at their home in Maryland. One of the greatest things about FMSA has been the opportunity it has given us to re-new old friendships and to make new ones. Hope the rest of you are doing the same.



CADET IN PATH OF
GROUNDHOG
DAY TORNADO



After the horrible early morning tornadoes ravaged The Villages, Lady Lake, DeLand and Orange City, we have found out that Steve 65' & Sydney Nash were in the path of the DeLand Tornado.

A note Harry Silvis received From Steve a few weeks ago:

"The inside of our house is in good shape except for some water damage in one bedroom and cracks in the ceilings. Our new sunroom is totally destroyed, our carport is falling in and the roof is going to be replaced. Our entire back yard is covered with whole trees, we cannot see but about an 1/8 of our pool. Our entire fence all the way around the house is destroyed. Our boat has a huge tree on it so when the tree guys get here the adjuster will take a look at the boat. Both of our cars are at Deland Ford, for repairs. Our master bedroom bath window a palm tree came through it. We had a lot of water, sand, leaves and glass in our bedroom and bath. The back hall and laundry room has the same mess."

Florida Military School Alumni

c/o Max Elliott

Post Office Box 5

Pierson, Florida 32180

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

“We are in good spirits and we are thankful to be alive and well, with a home we can live in and our cat is now an inside cat. She hates being in all day but she is helping me with the clean up”.

“Our insurance adjuster will be here today so in a week or so we will get the check for repairs and we have people lined up so hopefully all will go smooth but I am sure not so fast as there are so many people much worse off than us.”

“I just thank God for watching over us and keeping us safe.”

In that Steve was retired from Progress Energy Power Co., and often responded to restore emergency power in hurricanes and tornado situations, his many buddies pitched in to return the favor to Steve and quickly restored his power and assisted in the initial clean up. Steve and Sydney had enough insurance coverage to fairly well cover everything. Also, their home was built to withstand hurricanes.

EXCEPT FOR THE YARD!

We at FMS owe a lot to Steve and Sydney as they work very hard each time on the reunions as well as being the hosts for the yearly annual meeting at their hanger. Steve put a lot of work into restoring the school sign and was a big help in the project to rebuild the destroyed column. They have been our liaison with the city of DeLand and have come through with all our

needs. We wanted to do something for them, so we found out that the insurance did not cover any of the destruction to their yard.

Harry Silvis 65' has been in contact with their many friends in DeLand about this as he is on Steve's email list and Steve uses Cc: to send messages. Harry contacted the whole list that includes: family, School friends and workers from jobs. Everyone wanted to do something for them, and the yard seemed to be a project that was needed. A local friend, Pam has talked to their landscaper and he will work with us on this. Pam is contacting their many other friends in DeLand and will take care of the funds and give the funds to the landscaper. If any of Steve's FMS friends would like to participate in this gesture, you can make your check payable to her and put Nash in the memo.

Pam Johnston
203 North Kepler Road
DeLand, FL 32724

Thanks, Steve for all your help to FMSA. We really appreciate you!

(Editor's Note: This article is not being included in the newsletter being sent to Steve. His copy will have another filler article instead.)

Note: This is just another example of “**Cadets helping Cadets**” as Col. Ward often said.