



# Florida Military School

## Alumni Association



Vol. 5 Issue 2

MAY 2008

### From the President's Pen -



- Max Elliott '58

In this issue you will read about the loss of two of our computers. Sad as it was, we are recovering. I think I have successfully reconstructed all our databases.

On the lighter side of the street, planning is underway for the **FMS Reunion 2009, The Return of the Knights!** The initial classes, 1957-1961, are using the reunion to celebrate their respective 50<sup>th</sup> reunions, with the center class, 1959, serving as the hosts with the most! I would like you 1958ers that plan to attend to contact me.

Please note that the reunion will be held at the Holiday Inn in DeLand, July 30<sup>th</sup> through August 2<sup>nd</sup> (Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday). The year will be **2009!**

Another point of business is the **Florida Military School Association 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**. It will be held **18 October 2008** at the DeLand Airport in the hanger of Steve and Sydney Nash (1965). Details to follow in the next newsletter. Thanks, again, Steve and Sydney!

Since I have lost all my email messages, I no longer can list those I have had email contact with lately. I have been in touch with **Ms. Alda Earp (Faculty)** and Sue will have more on her recent accident elsewhere in this newsletter. Ms. Earp has faithfully attended every annual meeting and we hope she will mend fast enough to make the next one!

As before, **If you know of any other FMSers that we don't have, please send me their contact information or have them contact me!**

And, as always, I invite you to visit the FMSA web site ([www.fms-assn.org](http://www.fms-assn.org)) and see for yourself the fine job that our Web Master, **Asa Dean (60)** has done and continues to do for us! We can't thank Asa enough! Keep an eye on the site for all the latest on the **FMS Reunion 2009, Return of the Knights!**

FMSA Official Website:  
[www.fms-assn.org](http://www.fms-assn.org)

14 months to the next reunion!!

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### BAD NEWS – GOOD NEWS

The Bad news is that both Max and Sue have experienced catastrophic computer failures in the past 60 days. Sue's came first and just, as she was getting back up to speed on a new computer, Max's unit was fried. Needless to say, this is more than a coincidence so they are both working with the local power company to find the reason and make sure it does not reoccur. Even the back-up drives were lost so the process of reconstructing records and data had to begin. Presently the mailing lists and email address files are back in order and Sue is back at work on "the book".

The good news is that through the efforts of Bill Dreggors we were able to move the FMS Museum into a new room at the Deland Hospital Museum. We now have a beautiful, air conditioned room of our own so our exhibits are safe and secure. (See article and photos elsewhere in this issue)

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### Faculty News - Ms. Earp Takes a Tumble

We received a troubling phone call recently. A loyal supporter of FMSA, and "her boys", Ms. Alda Earp had fallen and was hospitalized in Ocala, Florida. She broke both her left arm and her left hip. When a friend visited her she requested that she notify Max and Sue but she didn't have their number with her. By some careful sleuthing, her

friend, Lucille Johnson, did manage to locate the Elliotts and gave them a call.

Ms. Earp will be moved to a rehab center shortly but it will be awhile before she is able to get back home. We are sure that cards or phone calls will help brighten her days. Her contact information is:

Ms. Alda Earp

Oakhurst Rehab and Nursing Center

1501 SE 24<sup>th</sup> Road

Ocala, FL 34471

Room 706

Phone: 352-369-5229 (in her room)



We were also happy to receive a donated console television set that will allow us to have our CD's & DVD's available for viewing. The one missing item is a 5 disc DVD player, but we hope someone will be able to donate that. Then we will need copies of all the FMS CD's and DVD's and we will be all set.

We have started a collection of FMS Commencement programs. So far we have 1957, 1959 and 1967. If anyone has any of the others that they would be willing to donate, we certainly would like to have them.

Another item that would be a great addition to our exhibit would be a Digital Photo Album. Now that we have access to power, we do have many photos that could be exhibited digitally. There are quite a few pictures that need framing and piles of clippings that will require laminating to preserve them. We plan to use

the metal frame parts that you can assemble to custom sizing. We have been locating frames in junk shops that are available at affordable prices and Sue Elliott is taking them apart and will reassemble them to fit our pictures. We are using both gold and black for our frames. Once we sort out the clippings we wish to preserve, then we will investigate the best way to get them laminated at a reasonable cost. Thornton will be more than happy to receive any further items for donation and preservation. This is a project that we feel is worthy of support since it will be a lasting record of

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## FMSA MUSEUM MOVES

Thanks to the efforts of Deland historian, Bill Dreggors, our FMSA Museum has a new home. We now have a wonderful room of our own on the second floor of the Deland Hospital Musuem. A real plus is the air conditioning.



This past week, Thornton Ridinger, Max & Sue Elliott moved our items and the display case down from the third floor room we had been sharing with the World War II exhibit. Our new room also has a wall of lockable cabinets for storage of other FMSA

items. Because of the limited space we had previously had, many of the donations were stored either in our attics or storage units. We were able to bring them all out and add them to the displays.



the school. We do have a complete set of yearbooks and they will be stored in the West Volusia Historical Society Research Library over at the Deland House Museum. Bill Dreggors also oversees that museum and they will thus be available to people doing historical research.



Both of these museums are open to the public so you will be able to stop in and visit when you are in Deland. The docent is on site at the Hospital Museum Tuesday through Saturday, and will be available to open our room to visitors.

Our exhibit continues to be a work-in-progress but even now, it is quite impressive. Be sure to stop by and see it! Any donations can be funneled to either Max Elliott or Thornton Ridinger.

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## FMSA REUNION 2009

### *“The Return of the Knights”*

#### UPDATE

Sue Elliott

Can you believe that our next reunion is only about a year away? As we reported, the dates are July 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2009. Everyone has enough lead time so they can make their plans to attend. Has your class begun their plans for this special event? It is not too early, especially if you need to reserve a facility, so get your group organized and plan some fun.

You will note that we are starting on a Thursday and running through the Sunday this time. Thursday will focus on the 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960 & 1961 classes as it will serve as their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Thornton Ridinger is coordinating the plans for that.

The general Reunion activities will commence on Friday. We are working on activities like historical tours, shopping tours, boat trips and other out and about type activities. We are also working with the downtown *Mainstreet DeLand* people to set up a special evening downtown for Friday evening as well. If there is a special type of activity that you would like to see planned, now is the time to let us know.

Special times will be set aside on Saturday, for quiet talks with the Colonels...Col. Ward and Col. Prentiss.

While the men are occupied with this, we are planning activities for the ladies, such as shopping and activities around the pool. As promised, we will not have speeches and such at the Saturday evening banquet. Yes, dancing will be available, too.

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 will gladly help you make your reservations and to plan this as a family vacation as well. Contact Lillian Hess at the Holiday Inn for assistance (386-738-5200).

Thornton Ridinger, ('59) is coordinating the plans for the Golden Reunion classes (1957-1960). Special activities for those classes will be planned for Thursday. If there are other classes that wish to arrange a special event, there is time to do so. We will gladly report these activities as we are informed about them.

The official countdown will soon begin. The ball is rolling and 2009 is right around the corner and will be here before we realize it. The committee would welcome any suggestions or ideas that you might want to contribute. This is your reunion and we want to include the things you want to do.

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## TREASURER'S REPORT

There have been no deposits and only one expenditure since the last Treasurer's Report.

The March newsletter expenses were \$410.76.

The current balance is \$4,082.73,

Respectfully submitted,  
*Thornton Ridinger, Treasurer*

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## FMSer's Socialize

We always like to hear about the activities of our friends so if you have been out and about with other FMS people, please drop us a note or send us a picture.

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## The 50<sup>th</sup> CLASSES –

### 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1961

Thornton Ridinger ('59)

At the 2009 reunion, we are planning a special event for the "first classes" of the school -- Classes 1957 through 1961. Each of those classes had graduates that had been in attendance during the first year of the school's operations. A special banquet is being planned for Thursday evening, as

**FMSA, Inc. c/o**  
Max Elliott  
PO Box 5  
Pierson, FL 32180.

well as Friday activities in conjunction with the opening of the full convention/ reunion. This is a call for a volunteer from each of those classes to help with the planning and to be responsible for contacting your classmates to encourage their attendance.

Please call Thornton Ridinger at (386) 677-2312 or e-mail at [tridinger@earthlink.net](mailto:tridinger@earthlink.net) if you are willing to take the lead for your class. Thank you for your consideration.

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## **Countdown to the reunion.....**

Are you ready?....

Will you be there?

**See you in 2009!!**

## **FMS BOOK**

Sue Elliott

The FMS book (coffee-table edition of the Florida Military School history) encountered a major setback recently with the catastrophic crash of Sue's computer. Some of the material had already been transferred to an external hard drive for safekeeping, and ironically it was that hard drive that caused the crash of the main computer. In the process all was lost. Four or five specialists tried their best to retrieve any of it but alas to no avail.

After a period of mourning, Sue has again begun to assemble the book. There was some hardcopy available and that is being redone. Perhaps it was an omen that the first attempt was not satisfactory. In any event, work is progressing again. After a brief, two week vacation presently being undertaken by the Elliotts, we will move forward.

So far few cadets have offered comments or snippets to be included. This is your opportunity to be included in history so please submit your comments and memories, and photos as soon as possible. Every class year will be represented in this volume. Excerpts and snippets will be used as part of the narrative.

They should be sent to

Max Elliott at PO Box 5, in Pierson, FL 32180.