



# Florida Military School

## Alumni Association



Vol. 5 Issue 1

MARCH 2008



### From the President's Pen - - Max Elliott '58

I am pleased to note that former FMS folks are getting together in small groups after becoming reacquainted through our association. That's what it's all about - finding old friends, meeting new ones, and moving forward in fellowship. Keep it up! And keep us informed so we can report it for others to share.

The FMSA Board, being geographically diverse, recently experimented with an e-mail meeting format. The meeting was kicked off on 16 March at 12:27pm. The Agenda included the 2009 reunion and activities, the 50<sup>th</sup> Classes activities, and the FMS Book. After much discussion, we settled on a name for the reunion:

### **FMS Reunion 2009** *The Return of the Knights*

Also, the 50<sup>th</sup> Classes, we decided, should include the classes of 1958, 1959, 1960, and 1961. Thornton Ridinger (1959) is the Point of Contact for the 50<sup>th</sup> Classes. More on that will follow. Activities for the overall 2009 reunion were discussed. We will try, for example, to set up a river cruise, downtown DeLand activities, pool party, Conversations with the Col, memory tour and displays, and facilitate group meetings. Of course, there will be the Sign-in, Dinner, and Business Breakfast.

We discussed the status of the FMS Book. An article on that will be presented by Sue Elliott (HM 1960) later in this newsletter.

The **Florida Military School Association 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting** will be held **18 October 2008** at the DeLand Airport in the hanger of Steve and Sydney Nash (1965). Details to follow in

subsequent newsletters. Stay tuned to this station for breaking news.

Since the last newsletter, I have had e-mail, phone or personal contact with all of our current FMSA Board and our Official Vender, **Harry Silvis (65)**, as well as **Jeff Fawsett (60)**, **Steve Nash (65)**, **Terry Bryan (64)**, **Robert Kirkland (72)**, **Roland Wiborg (66)**, **Andy Staley (68)**, **Robert Mouro (66)**, **Walter Cowart (60)**, **Troy Fletcher (59)**, **Robin Robertson (65)**, **Rick Richert (63)**, **Bill Dicus (62)**, and **Gerald Metzdorf (59)**. As before, if I have left anyone out, forgive me and let me know and I'll put it in the next newsletter. If you have news, please contact Sue or me and let us know.

Thanks to **Troy Fletcher (59)**, we have located 2 more cadets. We have found **Tommy Denson (60)** and **Bill Andrus (60)**. Thanks Troy! Welcome aboard guys!! Unfortunately, we have also learned of the deaths of three other members, **Steve Fulford (60)**, **Craig Morton (76)** and **Walter Metzdorf (59)**.

Sue and I are still searching 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!**

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)** continues to do for us! 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)

16 months to the next reunion!!

## In Memoriam -

### Walter H. Metzdorf 1941-2007

We are sorry to report that we have learned of the passing of Walter Metzdorf in Franklin, NC. He was a member of the Class of 1959

Walt, and his twin brother Jerry, were the class clowns during their years at FMS, providing many hearty laughs among their classmates, if not always among the faculty. After graduation from FMS, he served in the US Air Force for four years.

Walt had retired from a career in banking, and spent most of his working life in the central Florida area. After retirement, he moved to Franklin, NC, where he enjoyed the mountains and scenery of the area.

He was a man of strong faith and had been involved with the New Tribes Mission program in Florida and Wisconsin as well as in prison ministry (along with his twin brother). While in the Orlando area, he was active in the Rotary Club and participated in a volleyball league.

Walter and his wife Carolyn had ten children, all of whom survive him. Four sons currently serve in the armed services and another previously served.

Walt left a tremendous legacy in his children. He will be missed by them but they have inherited lasting traits of character, respect, honor, and devotion to God and Country. RIP.

(written by Thornton Ridinger '59)

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## Steven Edmond Fulford - 1942 - 2008

Steve Fulford, a member of the 1960 graduating class, recently passed away after an extended illness. Steve was from a prominent Orlando family and resided in DeBary, Florida at the time of his death. He is survived by his sister, Ann Fulford Burns, and brother-in-law, Keith Burns. Steve was married and divorced, but had no children.

Steve served his Country as a member of the U.S. Air Force after graduation from FMS. Following his years of service, Steve continued in his profession as an air traffic controller in the Bahamas. He was also a private pilot.

Steve, an FMS second year man, distinguished himself while at FMS by his promotion to captain. He served his senior year as "D" Company Commander. Steve was well respected by his fellow cadet officers and classmates. He will be missed by those who knew him.

(Written by Jeff Fawsett '60)

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## Lunch with Bill Prentiss



In the picture from Left to right, Sonny Hewitt (63), Rick Richert (63), Bill Prentiss (Faculty), Bill Edmonson (63), and Todd Tatum (63).

We decided it would be nice to take Col. Prentiss (it was hard to call him Bill) out for a lunch. Todd Tatum is a member of the University Club in down town Orlando, so why not go first class.

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## COLOR GUARDS OF FMS

Harry Silvis ('65)

The color guards over the 15 years of the school are interesting to look at. I have reviewed pictures from all the years and have put together some interesting information. The 1957 picture of the color guard is not usable and I would appreciate anyone sending me a good picture to put together with the ones we have.

First, there were two school flags. The first was used from 1957-1961. (Cannot see a good picture of the first and would appreciate a good picture if anyone has one). The second was first used in 1962 and later it had "& College" removed. There were 4, 6, 7, 8, & 11 cadets on the Color guard. There were 5 years that there was a second rank.

The Florida flag was added in 1961. The NDCC flag was added in 1965 and was displayed from the second, third & fourth positions over the years (there are only 10 remaining NDCC programs in the country today).

Springfields were used except for 1960-1962 when M-1's were used. Both guards carried the weapons on the right shoulder until 1963 when it was changed to being left & right. We will have a DVD of the color guards for the reunion next year.

## NASCAR & FMS

Harry Silvis ('65)

There has been a link with FMS & NASCAR since the beginning of the Daytona Speedway. We have tried to get info from NASCAR but it has been very little. Some of us also tried to get the job of being the color guard at the 50<sup>th</sup> race recently at Daytona. My son Kevin saw the pre show of the race and saw the color guard for a very brief time.

David Tooker 63' said, "We did the opening ceremony for the 500 each year I was there, starting Feb 1958. The band played the national anthem, we posted the colors and the cadet corps got to march around. We were ensconced in the infield until the race was over. Mr. Schafer, one of the FMS financiers - whose sons went there - sponsored the Fireball Roberts (#21 - Pontiac, I think (and MacNamara Pontiac was in on it, too) and we had his car there and even put it into the yearbook. (two pages in 1960 yearbook) After a while, I think only the band, the Lancers and the color guard went."

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## QUARTERMASTER

Harry Silvis ('65)

I ran across the alumni site for the closed Roosevelt Military Academy recently, and they referred to what I do as the quartermaster, and I liked it. We have closed our retail location, and transferred our business to our new home. Next project is to get pictures of the items to update the web site. We still have a very large inventory of items so watch the web site for the updates!

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## FMSA 2009 REUNION UPDATE

Sue Elliott

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. 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. 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. The general Reunion activities will commence on Friday. We are thinking of activities like historical tours, shopping tours, boat trips and other out and about type activities. We are working with the downtown people to set up a special evening downtown as well.

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.

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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## 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 began 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 Elliots, 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.

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## TREASURER'S REPORT

At the annual meeting in October, we reported a bank balance of \$4,357.12.

Since that date, we have had three donations totaling \$700.00

Expenses have been \$413.63 for the newsletter in November and dues paid to the West Volusia Historical Society of \$150.

The bank balance as of March 15, 2008 is \$4,493.49

Respectfully submitted,  
Thornton Ridinger, Treasurer

**FLORIDA MILITARY SCHOOL ALUMNI**

c/o Max Elliott  
P.O. Box 5  
Pierson, Florida 32180

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**FMS er'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.*

**A recent note from Jeff Fawsett ('60)**

"I had a nice two day overnight visit from Jim Turner late last year and spent the same with Jim and Wanda in Valrico just before New Years Eve. We had an enjoyable lunch in Brandon with Dennis Eyre, 'Fletch' and 'Rail.' More recently, both Jim and his grandson, Chris, have visited with me for lunch when on other business in Gainesville. Your fellow Seminole devotees were treated to an elegant lunch for big contributors at a Gator Boosters function at Ben Hill-Griffin Stadium over looking the "Swamp" prior to the Tennessee basketball game. I had attended previous booster luncheon functions before games, but this one was spectacular. I think it might have Chris reassessing his plans to attend upper division studies at FSU after a junior college stint is completed. It takes a lot to make a Seminole consider changing the 'chop' for a 'chomp.'

Dennis was here for lunch last week on his way to Atlanta to visit his son. These FMS related visits and other contacts give more meaning to the past and enhance my enjoyment of life

You and Sue, as well as Thornton and others are appreciated for all the work you have done to make that possible."

Jeff

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**The 50<sup>th</sup> CLASSES** – 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1961  
Thornton Ridinger ('59)

I don't have an update on the plans for the 50-60's classes. So far, all we have talked about is a Thursday evening banquet at a nice restaurant.

*Other plans and ideas to be developed in the near future. Of course, ideas, suggestions and volunteers are always welcome.*

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**M I A – Lost Cadets**

We have lost contact with **Thomas Bader (65), Whitney Thompson (61), Don Tomlinson (63), Albert Whitler (Faculty), and Wesley Leake (65).** If you know the whereabouts of any of these, please let us know.

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Countdown to the reunion.....

Are you ready?....

Will you be there?

**See you in 2009!!**