

“Once teammates, always teammates” by Charlie Christian.

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Happy Anniversary to me – First year Anniversary of the Newsletter

Benny & Carolyn Wallace 51-55 Debby, their “New” baby in 1956 {While searching for some background information Mike Mann requested for use in the Web-site, to my surprise I found a very good VHS colored tape which included about ten minutes of Benny & Carolyn Wallace showing off their new born baby, Debby, back in 1956, Contacting Benny, I found out that he had never seen the VHS and had only some black & white still pictures of those times fifty years ago. I then asked Tallahassee residents Frank & Francis Dennard, who were converting some other VHS tapes to DVD, if they could cut out Benny & Carolyn’s part and put it on a separate DVD. They very graciously consented and would even mail it directly to the Wallace’s in Arizona. Alerted, Benny secretly never told Carolyn of the tapes existence, but now knew it was on its’ way. To make the story more interesting Debby, the baby then, was now about to become a grandmother herself...this was the email I recently received as a result of the surprise DVD.....jmm }

“Jack: Wonderful surprise, especially for Carolyn! I asked her if she knew anyone named Dennard and played dumb. I put the disk on the machine and her jaw hit the floor! We called at 4:15 PM our time but we’re 3 hrs. earlier here (AZ doesn’t do DST). We’ll try later tonight. That must be David; Bess {my son and ex-wife...jmm} we recognized, of course. We think the shots had to be taken at the end of 1956 when I finished F-86 school in Panama City where Debby was born on Tyndall AFB. She was four weeks old and we went through Tallahassee on our way north to my first assignment in Michigan; I was a brand new FIRST lieutenant! {Benny retired as a Colonel...jmm} We made another stop in Atlanta at the Curry’s. This set off a wave of nostalgia, as you might imagine. I want to send my thanks also to Frank (his e-mail address is on the package). I don’t remember him but I suspect that he came along a bit later.

Again, this is a beau geste of the first magnitude and we are very grateful. I know you did it as a favor but I insist on covering the cost in dollars knowing full well that the sentiment is beyond any sort of compensation, except our profound gratitude. Our only images of the kids at that age are black and white photos (we had no movie camera at the time) so we will especially treasure these.

Next week we will see Steve {their son...jmm}, who lives in Colorado and will surprise him with it. We’ll mail the other to Debby (Frank sent two), who is about to become a grandmother! It will be a howler for her kids to see her when she was brand new. We’ll call..... Benny and Carolyn”...{They did and we talked and laughed for an hour. They also called Frank and thanked them. Boy, that felt good to do something like that. We live in a wonderful age. Thanks so much for the good hearts of Frank & Francis Dennard and the wonderful foresight and ability of my ex-wife, Bess, had in taking such good quality heart-touching films of their new born.....jmm }

Barbara Sheehan Withers 54-62 Re: 21st Edition of the Newsletter and Jimmy Hanks & "Charlie" Photo's

“Dear Jack, I just returned from a week at Chautauqua Lake in New York (where Don & Patsy Rapp summer and where Don teaches the children who attend camp there to juggle - among other exciting things including rope tricks etc.) and found both newsletters #20 and #21 waiting for me - what a joy it is to read the messages from everyone - I too had tears in my eyes from some of the memories. Mike has also done such a great job with the web page - you two guys are awesome! Thanks for all you do! Fondly, Barbara

Mike Mann & Fran Millians 57-67 Re: Email to Larry Bestmann from Mike Mann about Chick. Sammy Seminole

“Larry -Can you do anything with this? In particular add some color whether it is 100% correct or not also improve it otherwise. Chick just sent it to me and says it is the only one he has. I was beginning to think he had forgotten me but he said he ran into computer problems that held him up. {His computer “problems” are that he is a saver and hates to “delete”. thereby overloading up his files...I can hardly ever get through to him...jmm}.

He appears to be sitting on a bar and I am going out on a rail to say it is probably the cross bar to the goal post at the first FSU-Florida game in Gainesville. I was there, in the choice FSU student seats almost under the goal post. Chick climbed the goalpost, sat on the cross bar and the cheerleaders tossed him a French bread Alligator they had prepared. Chick waved it around a little before breaking it across his knee and then proceeded to eat it. The U of F student seats almost exploded. The U of F students were down one side of the stadium, there was an aisle between and then the FSU students in those choice end zone seats. Later in the game, probably third quarter, FSU was approaching that same goal and Chick stood defiantly at the goal line, left arm bent with hand/wrist on his hip. The right arm was extended straight out and holding a javelin with the point in the grass near Chick’s heal. A U of F student slipped down out of the stands, snatched the javelin and ran up the aisle between the two groups of students with Chick fast on his heels. A whole wave of U of F students peeled out their seats to run after Chick. Another wave of students, this time from the FSU seats, peeled out to run after them. I stayed where I was, wanted no part of that fight, I always wondered but never found out what really happened back behind the stands. Mike “ {Chick wasn’t killed – some parts are still alive.....jmm }

Jack Miles 50-58 Hurricane Ernesto Thank goodness. Hurricane Ernesto lost almost all its’ strength when it hit the Cuban Mountains. It was a blessing for us here in South Florida, Except for days the winds that followed, smelled like Taco’s y Refried beansCha!, Cha!, Cha!

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | 57-67 | **Subject: Strozier Library, Special Collections, Lucy Patrick**

“Frank Dennard faxed me a cover from the 1949 Gymkana show that had obtained from the Strozier Library, Special Collections unit. Interestingly, it is billed as the "Second Annual" Gymkana but appears that it may have just been typed and maybe printed pages stapled together or something similar. Not nearly as professional as some of the later ones that we have.

He said that he had gotten it from Lucy Patrick and I spoke with her around noon today. She is going to look for the missing programs for us but says they may never have been given to them. I gave her the URL for our web site and she was completely blown away by it. In particular being able to see the Ted Mack performance since she remembered Frank getting the copy of the 1949 program cover. She said if they could find them they would make some arrangements for me to get copies, whether they did it or could allow me to do it over there. She also expressed an interest in getting our originals after we were through scanning or copying them. She also inquired if we might be willing to volunteer to help them. She said that they had lots of pictures of things like the Gymkana performances where they had no idea who the people involved might be. I told her that I would and that I would see if others might be interested. I told her about the reunion and that would be the time when we would have the most people around with many from south Florida. Mike”

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | 57-67 | **Still on the trail of Laird Anderson, missing Newspaper recipient**

“Jim Joanos has some kind of family relationship with the publisher of the Wakulla Times which just came in today. Due to, or because of, that he writes a little Seminole sports column for them every month. He had written a very nice column about the old Volley Ball winning championships and losing scholarships. I just called him to give him our web site URL as a possible source of material and I would expect it to produce something in a month or two. He told me he had been roommate of Laird Anderson that he called FSU's last rope climber. (Guess he was unaware of a couple of other later ones - including me.) He said that Laird was going to be one of the honored "Grads that made good" would be here for the home coming activities.

Bill & Carole Beavers | 57-58/60-61 | **On the trail of Laird Anderson, missing Newsletter recipient**

“Subject: Re: Judge Jim Joanos & Laird Anderson...Just Googled Laird, He has an impressive list of achievements. He is on the Journalism faculty at American University & a retired Army Col. He will be honored by the College of SS of FSU at Homecoming. Bill B.”

Laird & Florence Anderson | 55-58 | **Lost Gymnast “Found”**

Mike contacted Judge Jonas, who through Bob Perrone emailed Laird's Alumni information. With this along with the info Bill Beavers sent I was able to call Laird at his home. I opened the conversation with, “Laird?, he said “”Yes” I continued “We are holding a FSU Alumni gymnastics meet and we needed a rope climber and wondered if he was in shape enough to compete? We had already lined up Bob Hicks, Jimmy Hanks, Benny Wallace and Mike Mann.” He freaked. We talked happily for a long time and he sounded great. He is so excited that he will be connected with all of you. He will be pulling up the Web-site and has a ton of joyful catching up to do. Presently he lives in Washington D.C. and is a retired Colonel from the reserves and Prof. Emeritus from the School of Communications, American University and much much more. And as Bill & Mike wrote, Laird will be honored at the next FSU Homecoming. His contact address & numbers is on the attached updated emailing list. More on Laird & Florence soon...jmm.

Jack Miles | 50-58 | **Re: Email to Mike Mann about USA Hall of Fame**

“Mike: I just had a long talk with Larry Banner from the Gymnastics Hall of Fame. We are working on some stuff I am putting together for him. Especially my High School coach's history - Dr Leopold Zwarg who is an early pioneer and also in the Hall of Fame. I told him all about your being the Web-Master for the web-site and how close we are as friends. He pulled it up on the computer as we talked. He loved all that he saw. He asked, very politely, if we would be interested in having a small logo on the site where a viewer could pull up the USGF National Hall of Fame. I told him that you and I had talked about mutual collaboration between sites. He started to talk about some pertinent information and I said that he should talk to you and get me out of the middle so I don't say the wrong thing without your knowledge. It would be a great connection. I gave him your phone number (He has unlimited minutes on his phone service). That enables us to talk at long length. I also gave him your email address. You will enjoy talking to him. He is a great guy. ..Jack” {Contact numbers in our emailing list...jmm}

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | 57-67 | **Re: USA Hall of Fame, above**

“Jack - I spoke with Larry for about a half hour around four this afternoon. He did not realize that we already had a link to his web site but I have also added his logo to the main page. He said he was going to see if he couldn't get someone, forgot the name already, to send me a CD filled with gymnast photos, maybe some of ours there or just maybe stuff I might be able to use somewhere. He is going to provide a link from any FSU gymnast write ups like Don, Jack, Jamile, etc. to our web site. I told him that I would go through his list and let him know if he had other people out that were FSU alums. I was able to call his attention to a number of things on the web site that he was not aware of yet. He seems to like the site a great deal and wants to help us out. He may also be able to provide some written material that is extremely difficult to obtain. I am working on a "Site Map" to add to our mix.....Mike “{Mike added the “Site map”...jmm}

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | 57-67 | **Communications between Robert Perrone, FSU Historian & Mike**

Bob to Mike – “Judge Joanos just told us about your site. Wow, I'm impressed. I was recently appointed as the historian for the FSU Hall of Fame and because of that position I'm responsible for gathering as much information on our various teams and athletes as I can I have several 1950's winter sports media guides which include gymnastics but I don't see your name on any of the teams - I am missing a couple of media guides though. Can you tell me how you're associated with FSU gymnastics?

Andrew and I also have a web site you might be interested in. Until I was appointed historian it was only dedicated to football,

basketball and baseball so we're far behind on all of the other sport Mike, I see some pretty good athletes in the cc line. I hope you'll allow me to ask you some questions in the near future. I agree with you that all of our sports should be recognized and I know FSU gymnastics won two NCAA championships and several NAAU championships and many Seminoles don't know that. I know Judge Joanos has always been working toward the goal of having all sports recognized and I'm trying to help a little bit. I live in Jacksonville and am not involved in the day-to-day activities with our Sports Information Department. I do know all of them though and I don't believe there is a more dedicated group of individuals in the country. The link to our site is: [nolefans.com](http://www.nolefans.com) but this would be quicker if you want to look at summary pages for individual sports: http://www.geocities.com/nolefan_fsu/summary Before I became the historian the site had football, basketball and baseball only. Now I'm far behind in the other sports.....Bob Perrone”

Mike to Bob – “As historian, can you help us find our missing trophies? At one time there were two display cases full of gymnastic trophies in Tully gym that were removed at some point to make room for the all important football stuff. Several of us have been trying to locate them over the years but no one seems to know what storeroom they might be in. One of our numbers, Larry Bestmann, is a professional photographer and we would like to get photos of those trophies for our web site.”

I was a late arrival and too old when I started to accomplish very much. I was too small for football, and being from north Florida that was the only sport that was known during my high school years. I did manage to do a little competitive diving and swimming though. I was working my way through school nights at the Tallahassee Motor Hotel on north Monroe when Jack Miles started working across the street at one of Gilbert Chandler's other places, the Lakeshore Motel on Lake Ella. We had a mutual interest in skin and SCUBA diving at the time and roomed together for about a year and I started going over to the gym with him. I met and later roomed with Bill Beavers for several years. We were roommates his last year when his, and all the gymnastic, scholarships were cut. He later returned to Tallahassee and we roomed together again. We also did skin and SCUBA diving, canoeing and the like. I did a little competing as part of the Gymkana "club" team, see (<http://fsugymnastics.org/Personal-Pages/Mann,-Mike.htm>) but again, too old and started too late to accomplish much.

Bob to Mike - Andrew and I also have a web site you might be interested in. Until I was appointed historian it was only dedicated to football, basketball and baseball so we're far behind on all of the other sports.

Mike to Bob - We have a reunion every year over the Memorial Day weekend on Alligator Point hosted by Barbara Withers. The web site is a result of this year's reunion and accumulated frustrations over things like lost trophies, forgotten glories, and National Championships. To hear folks talk these days you would think that football was the only sport that ever won one. However, we know different, not only were the gymnast the first at FSU but they were the first in the whole state.

We are, of course, all for getting out the amazing news that sports, other than football, do actually exist. Hope that helps to clear up my "missing man" status and help explain the web site. What is the URL for your web site? We would like to check it out.....Mike

Chick & Jennie Cicio	56 years, 57 in April, 07
Don & Connie Holder	56 years, 57 in August, 07
Benny & Carolyn Wallace	53 years, 54 in May, 07
Carmine & Daneen Regna	51 years,
Jim & Marlene Jackson	50 years, 51 in July, 06
Don & Patsy Rapp	50 years, 51 in November 06
Sam & Topsi Bailie	50 years, 51 in June 07
Jon & Boots Culbertson	49 years, 50 in June 07
Jay & Ellie Schwarzman	48 years, 49 in September
Jack & Almira Sharp	47 years of marriage
Lennart & Karsthin Malmelin	47 years of marriage
Beverley & Bill Beaton	45 years
Claire Essig & Dick Traynor	44 years of marriage
Nancy Lamb & Bob Durocher	42 years, 43 in Dec. 06
Bill & Carole Beavers	39 years, 40 in July, 07
Dick & Susie Gutting	38 years, 39 in June, 07
Wayne & Heather Thompson	36 years, 37 in January 07
Derek & Nancy Lawler	35 years
Harmer & Magdalena Weichel	34 years
Jimmy & Janie Hanks	27 years, 28 in November 06

Don & Connie Holder | 51-57 | **FSU Athletics – Bob Perrone** | “Hi All: Connie and I had Bob Perrone over our home for dinner and Gymnastics discussions. Bob seems very sincere in his efforts to re-establish Gymnastics to its proper standing. He also feels that the new administration has the same feelings as well. He needs as much info as he can get in regards to the NCAA. Jack has already mentioned the problem years ago concerning whether an entry for All Around only was given any points to the team. That will have to be investigated. Bob said he has access to the old Flambeau paper and can pull much info from that source. Don P.S. For all that did not hear the news, Bob has been appointed the Historian for FSU Athletics. If that title is not exact, please correct me.” {This was such a warm, generous, and brilliant move on the Holder’s part.....Wow! what a team...jmm}

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | 57-67 | **Re: USA Hall of Fame, above** | Don - Technically, and probably administratively, I believe that is Historian for the Hall of Fame. Not that it matters that much since except for a few Mode Stones and the like that bent over backward for the f---ing FOOTBALL team every one in the Hall of Fame is an athlete...Mike

Don & Connie Holder | 51-57 | **Email to Holder's from FSU Athletics – Bob Perrone** | **Subject:** Thank you very much, “Dear Connie and Don, Thanks again for inviting me into your home. Your dinner was wonderful and the company was even better. Please tell Patrick {Holder's son.....jmm} for me it was good to meet him. I just want to tell you I'm very glad I got a chance to meet you. If our other gymnasts are anything like you FSU has a lot of alumni to be proud of. I'm also very encouraged with all of the pictures, handbooks, newspaper articles, medals, trophies, etc that you have. With all of that and the web site that Mike has created I think your sport will soon be very well documented. Bob”

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | 57-67 | **Web Site Videos** | “The web site now offers several video selections; part of "Gym College" a 1955 RKO Sportscope featuring FSU gymnasts, Jim Jackson & the TTT - video from a film Hartley took to India on his 1958 sabbatical, a clip from Ted Mack's Amateur Hour featuring Bob May, Frank Dennard and Lulu Dann in a performance, and some historical Wakulla springs films.

We initially offered both a High Speed (DSL or cable modem) and a Low Speed (56 or 28kbi dial-up connections) versions of the videos. However, it soon became evident that the low speed versions just were not practical. For instance, Gym College is about seven minutes long and would take about four hours to download for the "low speed" version. The "high speed" version takes about seven to eight hours to download over dial-up.

We do have a workable alternative if someone has a low speed connection but REALLY wants to view the videos. Start the download in the evening after you have taken your last look for the night and then let it download all night long and it should be ready to view the next morning. You could just sit and watch it, but it is just too frustrating; it downloads for a bit - maybe 30 to 60 seconds, and then displays that much, stops and downloads more, then show that little portion, over and over again for what seems like forever. Just let it download and run all night long and it will be completed and ready for you to watch the next morning.

Each video begins with a red curtain opening and then closing again at the end. If you come in the next morning to find a closed red curtain then that means it has played all the way through during the night and is just sitting there waiting for the next instructions. In the upper left hand corner of the little square where the video is displayed there are little video controls; play (a black delta), stop (a black square), pause (two vertical lines), fast reversed (double left point arrows) and fast forward (double right pointing arrows). Click on the "play" delta and the video should play straight through from the beginning without stopping and in the normal amount of time. If you want to see it again then click the "play" again when it get to the end.

If you ever get completely out, or kill/restart your browser then you will have to start the whole seven hour download over again from the beginning. Mike”

Jim & Arlene Fadigan | 52-56/58-62 | **Email from Jim to Larry Bestmann** | “Thanks Larry from all of us for doing such a nice thing for Mike and all the other things you have contributed. I wasn't aware you did that job on his family pictures. What a nice thing to do. So nice to have all of these talented, competitive and thoughtful "Hams" back in touch. Jim”
{We started this Newsletter with Benny getting a video surprise and now we have one of our bunch helping another.... I love it when you are able to reconnect with your teammates. Jim has also sent heartfelt emails to others, including myself, showing his appreciation for the wonderful things that are happening at this point in our lives.....jmm}

Jim & Marlene Jackson | 55-58 | **Tumbling Tot Film on the Website** | “Dear Mike, We were visiting our daughter past weekend and asked her to try to get the tumbling tot film and she got it. {On the web-site...jmm} We were so impressed. The way the captions read Jim Jackson etc. and the borders of the film were so perfect, very attractive and professional looking. I enjoyed seeing the pleased smile on Jim's face. He loved teaching the tots and I appreciate what you have done by honoring Jim in this way. He needed it after nothing was said about him in some book about tots. He was in charge of the tots and said o.k. to Dr. Price when he would ask Jim to hire thus and so as he needed the money for college even though sometimes they were not Jim's choice. He really enjoys teaching children gymnastics. Jim has written an article about Wakulla Springs and the underwater movie he made there about The Creature from the Black Lagoon. It was printed in the Reminisce Magazine a few years ago. Jim wants to know if you are interested in having him send it to you. Best wishes, Marlene”.....{You should open the fsugymnastics.org web-site find the Tumbling Tots section and open Jim & Marlene's film “The Beginning Early 1950's. It's a very enjoyable presentation. As many of you know his daughter is Victoria Jackson, actress, formerly of Saturday Night Life Fame.....jmm}

Raphael & Diana Lecuona | 52-56/65-68 | **Response to a query as to what meet this shot was taken** | “High Jack! Sorry I didn't acknowledge the beautiful photo you sent us! I've been somewhat busy with one course I have been "begged" to teach at Texas A&M International University here in Laredo, from which I had retired three years ago. I'm teaching a course which is entitled "The Irony of Democracy.” The irony of it is that here is a former Cuban teaching "Americans" including some from Mexico, how the US political system works....and I do have a lot of fun out of it all. Back to your picture...not sure which meet we were in, but you have a kind-of-melancholy look...Don seems too pissed off, as if thinking "What the &@*%X?", while I seem to be wondering what in the world is happening! Of course, I knew we three were beautiful, but not that much. It was good to have a shot of Ronny Amster there. Well, thanks again, Jacko. Best regards to Chad, and as for you.... , well...I do love you, man...but not necessarily the way you would like...besides, Don would be jealous and Jay would kick your ass...or kiss it, whichever comes first! Rafles”
{One of my favorite candid shots is included in this Newsletter. I believe the guys in white were from one of the United States military academies in 1954 – dual meet...subject to correction....jmm}

Jack Miles | 50-58 | {My #2 son, Michael, told me by phone that he really enjoying exploring all through the web-site. What about you and yours?}