

“Once teammates, always teammates” by Charlie Christian.

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Raphael & Diana Lecuona | **52-56/65-68** | **Fernando’s (His brother) plight** | “Hi Jack! Hey, it was as usual good talking to you by phone. After enjoying my Cuban espresso coffee and that cigar I told you about in my backyard in a cool and overcast afternoon, I came inside to write you about Fernando. As I said, he suffered a mini stroke a few days ago...by now, he seems to have come out of it in fairly good shape, but he is still under observation. We expect that nothing really wrong is happening to him as of now, thanks God.

Also, he and I are going to be inducted in the Cuban Athletes Hall of Fame in Miami on Feb. 11, 2007. He plans to be there with me and our respective wives Lind and Diana. Also, my son Miguel, now 42 years old will go with us. As you can imagine it is a great honor and we are looking forward to participating in the event.

By the way, I will try and send you that film Miguel took of Jay’s Hall of Fame induction in Vegas...I tried it, but for some reason this server Safari did not take it. I’ll be coming down with Diana by the 26th of December and hope to get to see you for I’ll be in touch with Don and Connie with whom most likely we will celebrate the New 007...I will keep you posted as the get ready to fly down to Miami. Take care, Maricón (you are the only Maricón that I consider to be a true Macho!) Abrazos, Rafles (Rafael).” {Fernando’s email address is on our mailing list. If you can’t find it let me know. You know he would love to hear from you’all...jmm}

Leigh Heisinger | **57-61** | **“The Snakesicles Return”** | “Jack: As long as you are re-telling rattlesnake stories, you can go ahead and tell your readers about the time I was heading back from a day at Wakulla Springs and spotted a rattlesnake crossing the road. Somehow, I was able to slow the car down and stop with the front wheel right on the snake’s head. After making sure it was dead, me and my date (I think it was Nancy - no NOT Hightower, Harrison at that time) thought that you might like to have it to do whatever it was you did to rattlesnakes (other than make "snakesicles). So we went over to your apartment to give it to you, but you were not home. Didn’t want to just drape it over the door handle (although now that I think of it, that might have been pretty neat, too!!), we decided to coil it up on the front porch, and prop its head up with a stick. I’ll let you be Paul Harvey and tell "the rest of the story!” {For dam sure, I’ll tell you “the rest of the story”. It scared the living beejessus out of me. My knees went up to my earlobes, and a grunt from very deep within me exploded out of my mouth. I was chattering all kinds of unintelligible idiomatic expressions until I realized what it was and who put it there - posed as it was. “THAT SON OF A BUSINESSMAN”, I shouted or something akin to that. I swore then to get even. No one out foxes this fox. I had a new quest....jmm}

{Kind of reminded me of a time at the Annual Sarasota Christmas Gymnastics when I was crouched below a Palmetto bush, after nightfall, near a lighted walkway when Bill Beavers came strolling by with, and playing “Billy Charming” to, a young lassie with a cute chassie. I took a long thin curved branch and slid it out in front of them while making a loud “hiss”. He too achieved unbelievable height as his legs zoomed to ear height – an amazing feat of explosive energy..... I was impressed. As I recall he used the same “SOBusinessman” expression while we laughed together...jmm}

{Back to the email, Leigh continues...jmm} It’s kind of funny that Bobby Christians and I never crossed paths as performers in the 70’s, but I think he kind of was more around the RBB&B circus, and they stole our act rather than pay us, so I never had much use for them, although being perfectly honest, I would very much like to have performed in Madison Square Garden, but then, we cant have everything, can we??? Take care, amigo!!! Leigh

{Leigh continues, as we imagine him as a hunter, complete with Khaki clothing, hat, and laced up boots on a dangerous Safari...jmm} I had another knee episode again last night. I have a mouse/rat that has taken up residence in my kitchen stove (the bottom storage drawer). It comes out at night and feasts on anything available. It has basically destroyed the potted display over my kitchen sink, climbing over 12" up a slender stem to bite off the other 12". I call it "Hercules" as it is VERY strong and VERY wily.

Anyhow, I put out several of the modern, "humane" glue step-on traps, which he stepped on, and somehow managed to drag off until he could extricate himself. So, last night I set out a snap-trap baited with banana, one of his favorites. I almost lost several of my fingers baiting it and setting it down. It was sprung this morning, and I could have sworn I heard giggles coming from behind the stove! I will try again tonight, but, (Oh! I forgot the reason for the story). I also set another trap in the storage drawer, and in getting down on my knees to do this, I REALLY tweaked the knee, and spent last night trying to find a position in bed that was not agonizing (more reason for the giggling). I will try again tonight, and see who will have the last laugh. If I had to go to substitute teaching school today, I don’t think I could have made it.”

Bill & Carol Beavers | **57-61/69-70** | **Re: 26th Newsletter** | “Jack, One of the best newsletters ever! [that’s because I wrote so much about “Iil Bucky” and “Christmas Carole” Beavers...Two of my favorite barbs/subjects.....jmm}

Your "tid-bit" on Holder was a HOOT! You haven’t lost your talent for wit and humor. Thanks for doing all of this; you will never know how much we all appreciate your work and dedication to keep us connected. Bill”

Matt Sullivan | **51 Volleyballer** | **Re: My request for his resume** “Mr. Jack. You are more than kind to send me all this info on your gymnast friends. Also I hope to write Dick Ireland and Gusic...but the time just flies by and I haven't done anything yet. I still work full time at real estate like everyone else in Florida. I did spend my working days in Chicago in the Tax Exempt Bond field. Last job was with Dean Witter. Now Morgan Stanley, as Midwest Sales Manager for retail (board room salesman) in 11 states. I left FSU in '57 and then lost track of all the old friends, so reading your letter, it good to know some people has remained together. I am going to check out your website....again, thanks for sending me the copy of the Dec. '06 Newsletter...those years at FSU (51-57) were really a great time... (I was in the army '53 & '54)...needed the GI Bill to get thru FSU.....Matt” {We are still hunting for Dick Ireland...Good luck trying to get Joe Gusic to write. He is such a procrastinating jerk. If he does tell him he owes me a resume letter also....jmm}

Alice Englert | **(Carrie's Mom)** | “Wish I could express to you exactly how much I am enjoying your emails (and the fact that you have gotten your group together to share so many wonderful memories). Wish for you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year with love. Alice” {Alice also informs us that her husband, Carrie's Dad, is now confined to an assisted living facility and she visits him daily.Alice and Carrie, we send our heartfelt love, wishes, and prayers to you and your family with hopes that he is comfortable and realizes happily how much he is loved....jmm}

Jack Miles | **50-58** | **My email to Carrie Englert Zimmerman and Alive, her mother** | **Re: Nomination to USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame** “Hi Carrie & Alice: Happy Holidays. It was my pleasure to submit this nomination to the selection committee of the USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame. It is my understanding that this process of selection, although never guaranteed, starts with someone who cares enough to compile the information needed by the committee to make a judgment. I have started the ball rolling and with God's good graces it will continue forward. This action sometimes takes a year or so. I will keep you posted of any news related to this effort comes back to me. This is my Holiday's present to you all. Have fun. Love, Jack “ {I submitted Carrie's gymnastics and business history with this email...jmm}

Carrie Englert Zimmerman | **TTT** | **Carrie's response** | **Re: Nomination to USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame** “My dear, dear Jack: This is much more than a lovely Christmas gift, it defines you. Even as a young girl, I was amazed by you. You have a personality larger than life shadowed only by a heart which continues to impress me to this very day. There is no doubt why you have grown your little newsletter into a communications piece which brings people's lives back together and beautiful black and white memories back to an unparalleled vibrancy. You are a very special man, and it is my privilege to know you :)...Carrie”

Jack Miles | **50-58** | **My email counter response to Carrie Englert Zimmerman** “Dear Carrie: There is absolutely no doubt as to why you are so successful. Your words went straight into my heart and I am very grateful for your response. Are you sure you aren't of Irish heritage? You have a superb way with words – words that penetrate to the core of one's being. Thank you. I will always treasure your response. Pleasant day or night dreams whenever you receive this note. Humbly, Jack” {There are about eight Newsletter recipients who are in the USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame and know personally the nominating Committee members. Carrie is a glorious product of the Tallahassee Tumbling Tots, an outgrowth of Dr. Price's gymnastics dynasty. You might even think of her as Doc and Billie's surrogate granddaughter...and very much one of ours. It is in all probability too late for the 2007 nominations. But certainly she will be right there up front for the following year. I want you, if you have the power, or chance to, put in a good ...no great word for Carrie's into the ears of the judges. As a reminder Carrie's was written up in our Newsletter (2nd Edition) second page...here is a few excerpts: “As a member of the United States Olympic Team in Montreal for the 1976 Summer Games. In her sport of Gymnastics, she was the first American woman to ever score a perfect “10” in floor exercise and also was the first to hold the double title of national champion in both floor and balance beam.” “Captain and member of competition and exhibition teams in China, Japan, West Germany, England, Ireland, Canada, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, Captain and member of exhibition teams touring U.S. with Russia, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, New Zealand, East German and Canada” : “In 2003, Microsoft named Carrie ‘One of America's Top Ten Savviest Businesswomen”

Don & Patsy Rapp | **53-55/58-60** | **Re: The potential FSU Gymnastics Monument** “Jack A bronze “last forever” tribute to Florida State University Gymnastics is a must. Ideas need to abound for procedure, precise goal, theme and content, campus site, etc. Oh yes, then there is money.

The more ideas, and the more idea elements that can be created will eventually lead to a final plan. Lots of preliminary ideation is the first step. At this first stage, there are no rules, even ridiculous ideas must be voiced, and then later rejected so we can contrast each idea with all the rest and finally the best will survive.

Ideas have already been tossed out. Here's another. Notice I'm not thinking of money. My involvement was mainly with Gymkana from 1953 - 55. I am speaking from that era. Please now use your imagination to see a life size parallel bar. I envision seven hand-standing gymnasts, with fourteen toes pointed and bodies perfectly poised. Underneath some very young tumbling tots doing something flexibly magnificent. To the one side, a spotter assisting with a back flip. On the other side, a trampoline with a back flipping-twisting trick called a whatshamacallit, hanging in mid air. (I'm sure the sculptors can

figure out how to do that). On one end is a rope climber sitting on the ground ready for the ascent. And to the other end is a free X simulation on a hard surface with a gymnast doing a pommel horse kind of move on the floor.

And if you have any money left, you could put in a few beauty queens, and perhaps some dancing with a Barbara Vickers type split. And with your extra time, you might even put in a likeness of Don Holder performing his famous award winning Indian club routine.

I am quite sure that this scene would depict the crowded reality of Montgomery Gym on a rainy winter day with gymnasts, dancers, a thousand tumbling tots and Doc looking out of his office door, perhaps wondering why he ever got mixed up with Katie Montgomery.

Now seriously, any statue must depict passionate motion, i.e. turning, twisting, effort, sweat, safety, and most of all the diligence of perfecting motor skills that demand body-mind control of biology fervently endeavoring to push the limits of human controllable space. Don Rapp"... {Don: I love that last run on sentence... Thanks, I will forward this to the "Statue Committee" for consideration.... By the way, I didn't know you drank... I don't imbibe anymore myself.... it made me too intelligent. My audiences resented it and I had to receive rehab from Sister Sarah Bellum from the Order of the Sisters of Perpetual Guilt..... Irish Catholic you know....jmm}

Benny & Carolyn Wallace | 51-55 | My choice to enter this news filled Xmas letter...jmm

“Jack: Too much for the Newsletter but here are our news for 2006. Sed yours! We started out slowly because I had vision problems resulting in cataract surgery on both eyes over a period of two months. All went very well and, thanks to new technology, I had lenses implanted that completely eliminated the need for glasses. It's quite miraculous. With the lenses of just two years ago one's far vision could be corrected but glasses were often still needed for reading. Not so for me; I wear only non-prescription sunglasses and can read very tiny print without glasses.

In late March I was cleared to travel and we took a 15 day cruise to Hawaii from Los Angeles and back. We like days at sea so we took just a one hour flight to Los Angeles and then spent four days at sea enroute and four more on the return. It was wonderful to sit on our balcony way out in the ocean. Very different from the days when I crossed that stretch many times strapped in a jet for several hours and air refueled from a tanker! We had spacious accommodations, even a full size couch and tub, which we feel is very important if you spend a lot of time at sea. The shows were outstanding and we took a shore excursion at each of the five stops on four of the islands, the highlight of which was a one hour helicopter ride on the big island of Hawaii. We whizzed along the beaches and cattle ranches and right up to the waterfalls on a lovely clear day. Best of all, they weighed us and Carolyn and I were the lightest so we got to sit up front with the pilot; best seats in the house! We stopped in Ensenada, Mexico on the way back. On the cruise we celebrated my 75th birthday (C. is 72) and my 31st year of retirement.

We sat out the long summer in Tucson but it was a mild one this year and the second wettest rainy season ever! In the fall we drove around New Mexico and Colorado for ten days watching the leaves turn, visited four national parks not seen before and spent three days with son Steve in Ft. Collins.

Then we rested for two weeks and drove to Texas. Our first stop was at an elegant B&B in the beautiful hill country. We stayed three days and went on to Austin for three more days to see the sights. Then a final three days in San Antonio, our primary purpose of the trip, to celebrate the 50th reunion of my pilot training class. All three of us at my table survived and were in attendance as was our instructor, now a retired three star general, who came with his wife, on my invitation, to party with us and relive our youth. We were all four second 2/lts. In our twenties at the time and we were his first students. It was a wonderful treat to meet again after 50 years!

In November two of Carolyn's high school classmates visited for five days (a third one was ill and unable to attend) and I took refuge at the officer's quarters on base. They gave me very nice rooms and I was pleased to escape the chatter even though I spent several hours driving them to places in and around the city. Each year they meet in New York City or San Francisco for shows, restaurants, museums and touring but this time Carolyn invited them to see a bit of the southwest. After they left we had a much needed rest and enjoyed the excellent Tucson weather for the final weeks of this very enjoyable year of 2006. Happy holidays! Benny and my Carolyn”

Jim & Arlene Fadigan | 52-56/58-62 | Re: Visit with Bob Bollinger

“Hi All and Happy Holidays: Larry Bestmann and I visited with Bob Bollinger at his home a couple of weeks ago. He is still one of the most interesting, bundles of talent I have met but is now suffering from a nasty combination of cancer, diabetes & emphysema. The shell of the man we all knew still houses the spirit and wit that has won the hearts of all of us. It was both a pleasure and a challenge to try to outwit or out think Bob, but the timing and obvious fatigue and pain were always evident. Few complaints from him but the non-verbal cues just cut into your heart.

Recently he was inducted into the Gymnastics Hall of Fame and that did wonders for him but what he really needs is an occasional call or card from the friends and people that he loved and shared his love of gymnastics with. I would also like to suggest that we create a Bollinger story section in the newsletter and limit the stories to one each issue. I have been around a group of gymnasts from our 'era' that didn't have pockets full of Bollinger stories they love to pass on. He brought so much to the sport and to us with his crazy, loveable free spirit and talents. During our visit, and in spite of his illnesses, he kept Larry Bestmann and I in laughing and never allowed us to out wit him - at least while he was awake.

Hope this finds all of you well and helps us all appreciate our blessings in spite of the nasty teasing of old age. Love you all
Jim Fadigan “

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | **57-67** | **My Christmas wish**

“Jack - About the only thing I have to add is that **all I want for Christmas** is the loan of a 1949 and 1950 FSU Annual for a week if anyone has one. Mike”

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | **57-67** | **Dr. Grace I. Fox's passing**

“I figured some of you folks probably took a class or two from her. From this mornings paper. Mike {Yes, Mike she was a terrific person and educator. We gymnasts really liked her a lot....jmm} Please review Dr. Grace I. Fox; (<http://www.legacy.com/tallahassee/DeathNotices.asp?Page=Lifestory&PersonId=20176956>)

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | **57-67** | **A young Pioneer endeavors to revive Gymnastics at FSU**

“Hey Ray - I just stumbled across your club announcement (<http://fsu.campusrec.com/sportclubs/gymnastics.shtml>).

Have you stumbled across us yet at (<http://fsugymnastics.org/>)? We are the bunch from the days when FSU gymnasts were NCAA and AAU champions. Jack Miles sends out a by monthly newsletter keeping us all in touch and up to date. We have evolved into having a reunion every year on Alligator Point, the Memorial Day weekend, hosted by former gymnast and Tallahassee Accountant Barbara Withers at her home.

As an FSU gymnast you automatically qualify for membership if you don't mind a bunch of old farts talking their days of past glory. There is an e-mail address for Jack Miles on the web site if you are interested in being added to the Newsletter mailings.

Good luck in your endeavor to get some gymnastics going at FSU again, if we can be of any help just let us know. OBTW, Tully Gym at one time had two huge display cases filled with gymnastic trophies and awards. Someone noticed that they were gone some time in the 70's and now no one seems to be able to find them. Mike” {Wow, can we identify with this guy....jmm}

Mike Mann & Fran Millians | **57-67** | **The teaching of Civics**

“I took Civics in high school from a Mrs. Mays, an excellent teacher but in this class a piss poor assigner of grades on merit but that is another story or issue, I thoroughly enjoyed the class and really learned a great deal about our government and it's functions. On Bill Maher's last show of the season he had Richard Dreyfuss on that had just returned from studying the TEACHING of Civics at Oxford. In the course of the show he gave two discourses on the teaching of Civics separated by about ten or fifteen minutes. Fran and I both thought they were excellent at the time and she later asked me to tape the show from "HBO On Demand" so she could send it to Emily who teaches American History and Government in a Virginia high school.

Today, I finally got around to taping that show for Emily and in the process I heard Dreyfuss' discourses again and in the process decided it needed a wider distribution than just to Emily. I converted just those portions of the show for display on the Web.

Two warnings; First, you will need a high speed Internet connection to be able to view these.

Second, this is from an adult, political-comedy show from a cable network. There is some discussion by other guest and the language is not tame. If you can't take it then don't listen but you will miss an excellent discussion of the value of teaching Civics.

(<http://fsugymnastics.org/Mike's-Stuff/Dreyfuss/R-Dreyfuss-Clip-2.htm>)

{Preface the video with a little human interest - I was so glad to see Richard Dreyfuss in this video. I spent twelve weeks on a movie set with the then eighteen year old Richard in a film, “Hello Down There”. It was a bad to nothing film that ran maybe a week. The movie featured Tony Randall, Janet Leigh, Jim Bachus, and Richard. I was doing stand in, body double, stunts, and a small run on – anything for a buck. Anyway, one day in between shots I was sitting with Tony and Richard and they began a game between them. Tony would say a line from a book, play, or movie and Richard would come up the next line. Then Richard did the same and Tony would add the following line. I sat there dumbfounded as the two guys with encyclopedic brains played the game for a long long time until called for the next take. I have to tell you I was so impressed and then fully realized why the two had such a great career in the industry. Besides being genuinely nice guys they were brilliant..... as you will see in this video that Mike offers....jmm}

Jim & Arlene Fadigan | **52-56/58-62** | **Response to Mike's email above**

“Mike: Each of us has walked through his or her Life 101 thinking we know where we are going. We meet so many people but not so often do we meet someone who we can truly admire. Even if we admire them we still want to compete with them. Some just catch us off our egotistical guard and really stick out and just plain impact us with what they do not just what they say. In my life, you are one of those special people. I'm sorry I didn't get time in the past to know you better and hope I will get to know Mike better in the future.

You have done so much for such an important group of people we both can identify with, but you are also a talent and a person that we all can admire. And for such a group of "HAMs" that's quite an accomplishment. Thanks - a lot! Jim”

Barbara Sheehan Withers | **54-62** | **Response to Mike's email above**

“I continue to be awed by Mike's enthusiasm, energy and accomplishments. Thanks, Mike”.

Beverly Cude & Bill Beaton | **55-59** | **Response to Mike's email above**

Is Bev allowed to join the chorus? Without your expertise, Mike, there wouldn't be that fabulous web site which I so proudly display to anyone I can get to sit down long enough! Actually, it no longer can be viewed in one sitting, it contains so much. Suffice to say they are amazed at the layout, the depth and the content. Thank you so much! :-)

Visit your Web-Site <fsugymnastics.org>

(Which also includes all back copies of the FSU Gymnastics Newsletters)