

FSU Gymnasts, Gymkana, and Friends Newsletter January 2006 (Tenth Edition) 1/29/06

Within reason the Newsletter follows this word content per single entry (Times New Roman, 10 font sizes)

New entry: Resumes/history since FSU = Twenty-two (22) words per line, Twenty two (22) lines

Second, third etc. entry..... = Twenty-two (22) words per line, Eleven (11) lines

Each Edition of the Newsletter = Four - five pages, 6.5 KB

Benny & Carolyn Wallace | 51-55 | The ongoing saga of the missing "tilde"

Re: Raphael's comments on my Spanish when typed on a machine without The Spanish accent marks. I did try to put in the tilde over the "n" but when I inked it in on my screen the rest of the message went on its way leaving only an inky tilde behind! But the word "ano" goes deeper than that, no pun intended. It does indeed mean "anus" and "rectum" but not "ass" which is English slang, in that context. The Spanish word for ass, or donkey, is "asno." What Raphael may not know is that I returned to college in retirement and graduated from the U.of Arizona, majoring in Spanish, and my next door neighbors are a Cuban couple! Even so, it was partly his patient efforts to help me with my Spanish all of those years ago and living here on the border that inspired me to take on the task. I still don't consider myself fluent so I send this for Raphael: Lo siento mucho mi amigo. Otra vez, Feliz Navida y Prospero YEAR Nuevo. Estoy haciendo la lucha!.....Benny

Claire Essig & Dick Traynor | 59-62

"I finally got on my computer again after about two weeks. Dick is still having back problems and bending over. I stay busy putting on his socks and shoes and buttoning his shirts. Hope this doesn't last forever. He was 77 years young in October. He tells everyone I am his "child bride". I will be 65 years, January 27th. You guys make me feel "old". I really enjoy reading the newsletter. Keep up the good work. Can't believe we have all known each other for all these years and still keep in touch. It's great!

P.S. Oh yes, I never knew that Sandy Hennessy was your daughter all these years! Had I known I would have used her in my real estate transactions. See her picture in the paper all the time. Small world isn't it? Love you all."

Beverly Cude & Bill Beaton | 55-59

"Happy New Year, Jack: I was reading our newspaper, the Montreal Gazette, last week and in the Arts & Life section came across a book review Title: The Friendship Crisis: Finding, Making and Keeping Friends When You're Not a Kid Anymore by M. Paul. In scanning the review, 'Each old friend holds your history in their hand. They know you in ways that other people will never know you. That history is so rich and valuable. You may change and your lives may veer in different directions, but those friendships are really worth holding onto.' It struck me that that's what we're finding with the reunions FSU Gymkana members have had: old friendships are renewed and new friendships are created from either end of the years in which one was personally involved"

Mike Mann & Fran Millian | 57-67 | Re: Tom Nugent

They buried Tom Nugent Monday, many players back for the event. I recall seeing him on the "after game" shows when I was still in high school. I think you may have had classes with some of them. Story attached, photo at (<http://www.tdo.com/apps/pbcs.dll/gallery?Avis=CD&Dato=20060124&Kategori=PHOTOS03&Lopenr=124002&Ref=PH>).

Don & Connie Holder | 51-57 | Re: Tom Nugent

"We did note the passing of Tom Nugent. A few years back at a reunion in Tally, we met Tom and family in the FSU Hall of Fame building. Surprisingly, Tom greeted us with great knowledge of all us Gymnasts and complimented our past accomplishments.

One story which Jamile can expound upon, is that Tom recruited Jamile for the football team to play in the backfield on a goal line attempt to score by having Jamile receive the ball, step on the centers back and do a front somersault over the goal line and thus score the six points. To my knowledge this never materialized. Another great building block for FSU has passed"

Chick & Jennie Cicio | 54-59 | Re: Tom Nugent

"Well Jack....Another gentleman has left us physically but he will always be remembered as our football coach during our stay at FSU. I'm proud to say he acknowledge with a vocal Hi or a wave as I tumbled on the field as Sammy Seminole etc. I remember him at Sunday Mass at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. I remember him and his daughters at Tumbling Tot classes. I remember him in the Hall of Fame room....He said, how do you jump so high (Straddle toe touch) seeing my picture. He will be missed, especially by those he coached. As Mike Mann said, "Make your own trail" (Emerson) Tom Nugent did just that. Coach Nugent will be in my nightly prayers and also prayers for strength for his family. Ciao"

Bruce & Rita Davis | Coach | Re: Tom Nugent

"I don't know if you saw it, but Tom Nugent died at age 92. He was the FSU football coach that Dick Gutting tumbled for. He was a newscaster in the Miami market and lived on Hibiscus Isl. I dated his daughter when she went to Barry University back in the sixties.

I have completed stories on all the FSU Hall of Fame gymnastic recipients except Jamile who I am doing now. I have completed Price, Lecuona, Roetzheim, Holder, Cicio, Miles and Gutting. Holder will be out on Feb. 1st. Jamile March 1st. I will then do others like Signorelli, Regnas and Sontegrath." {Interestingly, Tom Nugent's daughter was one of my daughter's best friends in Tallahassee. small world...jmm} {Bruce has been doing a fantastic job. Contact him if you would like copies...jmm}

Jack Miles & Nancy Dye | 50-58

It is a very small world indeed..... My son, Chad, is in his last year of studies at a private school in Fort Lauderdale - St. Marks Episcopal - which is recognized as one of the top schools in South Florida. Student fees etc. to attend the school are over \$11,000.00 annually. Chad has attended St. Marks for the past ten years including Pre-K. There was no way I could have afforded those fees so I always applied for a scholarship, whose allocation was mainly at the discretion of the Headmaster, and it was always granted. The Headmaster had been very friendly to me and extremely helpful to Chad. This year – the Headmasters retirement year, to my amazement the Headmaster told Chad and I during a lunch together that: He had taken Gymkana classes at FSU, His children played with my children when he attended graduate school, He knew Bess my former wife; He was coached by a coach he admired, Chick Cicio. He worked for the State for a several years along side another gymnast, Joe Taylor, that I had been a “legend” to him, and that he, Dr. James “Jim” Coolee, always looked up to and was amazed by what we gymnasts were able to perform. Simple mathematics will show you the thousands of dollars in aid Chad has received. All of this because of Gymkana, Chick, and Joe, and other gymnasts had been such wonderful people and friends as Jim Coolee was attending FSU. I am humbled. What can I say in the form of gratitude except you have my love -----all of you.

Jack {1929-1997} and Almira Sharp | (51-56)

Several of you have asked about Jack and Almira so I thought I would include these quotes: “John “Jack” Douglas Sharp was born in Philadelphia on August 19, 1929. He graduated from Germantown High School in 1947. On October 21, 1950 he married Almira Joan Mortimer. Together they lived throughout the United States and the world. At Florida State he graduated with a B.S. in Mathematics in 1953. It was at FSU in 1952 that he became National NCAA Champion on the Swinging Rings. For his gymnastics achievements Jack was inducted into Florida State University’s Hall of Fame in September 1997. Throughout his distinguished career as an Air Force Meteorologist, he continued his education, receiving a B.S. in Meteorology in 1954 from Penn State University and a M.S. in Meteorology from FSU in 1962. In April 1974, Jack retired at the rank of Colonel but he never hung up his eagles wings. He then worked for Northern Natural Gas Co. until 1985. In 1977 he received his M.S. in Agency Psychology and enjoyed counseling people in his home in Omaha. Once again he “retired” by taking on a new challenge and starting Vortex, Inc, a weather consulting company which he sold in 1988 in order to move back to the Philadelphia area, where Almira and he could be closer to much of his family. This period of retirement found him active with the Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing, Pa... He served on the Military Advisory Council of the Center for Defense Information and he continued his lifelong interest as a member of the American Meteorological Society. He enjoyed tutoring English as a Second language through Volunteers in Teaching Alternatives. His favorite aspect of being involved with each of these groups was making new friends.”

{Almira was a member of the Color Guard for the West Oak Lane Drum and Bugle Corp which Jack and I joined in our teens. He was a bugler and I was a snare drummer. We all had a great time going into parades in: The July 4th Parade in Gettysburg, Pa., The Philadelphia Christmas Parade, and The Mummies Parade, et al. Jack and I also competed in the Penn Relays in Pole vault as well as in gymnastics. I remember him and I sitting on a gym mat in our teens when I said, “We are going to take first and second on the rings in the Nationals. I’ll take first and you can take second”. Needless to say he reversed the standings...and that good hearted exchange of views went on for years. As good fortune would have it. It was Jack who lifted me, all the time whispering encouragement, to **my** first National AAU rings title win. A year later it was my turn to lift him to the rings, as I whispered to him that he was going to win **his** first National NCAA rings title – which he did. Because of our respective family situations, Jack observed that we had both become each others father. He always claimed, “You can borrow confidence”. He encouraged me to join him in traveling to FSU and joining Price’s collection of great gymnasts. We raised our first born together along with all the older married gymnasts and created a truck load of wonderful memories. Jack was academically superior with keen plans for his and Almira’s future. He often said of Almira that, “She is the best person that ever came into my life.” Together they raised three wonderful children. And, as you probably read in one of our past Newsletters their grandson graduated from the Air Force Academy. As the weather officer with his B-52 crew they flew in and out of atomic clouds following their paths. It was discovered by the military that this was not a prudent idea. Many of his Air Force buddies passed away because of Cancer while Jack, with his superior physical condition, fought it for decades. - Until he could no more. I said it then and I’ll say it now, “Jack Sharp was thee greatest influence in my life”. Almira, a lives in Pennsylvania in a Quaker community is still an active Yoga instructress and Church member and has a wonderful bunch of children & grandchildren...jmm}

Beverly Cude & Bill Beaton | 55-59

“Jack what a wonderful new career you have {Handy Man for three wealthy single ladies..jmm} and of course with your charm you have made many new beautiful rich lady friends, as you help them fix their Wilma damage. At least one good thing may have come from that storm. I am headed to Paris in the morning. My son Bryant, who is a chef, is off this month (tennis club he works at, the Chattanooga Club in Cashiers NC, is closed January & February). He interned in the Dijon area of France back in the late 1980's after graduating from Chef school, so we are going back to visit Paris, Madrid and Dijon and dine at the restaurants where he slaved as an intern...hope we get to eat at the Chef's table some of the time. I will be back January 30th. Love to all”

Jimmy & Sanjuanita Janie Hanks | 52-56

“For Christmas I bought myself a combination fax machine and paper shredder. Either I hooked it up wrong or a lot of you are faxing me confetti.

Years (Continuously) Married Contest (Recorded as of this date)

Chick & Jennie Cicio	55 years, 56 in April, 06
Don & Connie Holder	55 years, 56 in August, 06
Benny & Carolyn Wallace	52 years, 53 in May, 06
Carmine & Daneen Regna	51 years,
Jim & Marlene Jackson	50 years, 51 in July, 06
Don & Patsy Rapp	50 years, 51 in November 06
Sam & Topsy Bailie	49 years, 50 in June 06
Jon & Boots Culbertson	48 years, 49 in June, 06
Jay & Ellie Schwarzman	48 years, 49 in September
Jack & Almira Sharp	47 years
Beverley & Bill Beaton	45 years
Claire & Dick Traynor	42 years, 43 in February 06
Bill & Carole Beavers	37 years (for good behavior)
Dick & Susie Gutting	37 years, 38 in June, 06
Derek & Nancy Lawler	35 years
Jimmy & Janie Hanks	27 years
Fernando & Linda Lecuona	18 years

Jimmy & Sanjuanita Janie Hanks 52-56

”Jack, I'm so glad we are in contact. Thanks for being my friend. Here's a pic {Picture of Jim in entire clown outfit...jmm} of before I joined the team. I'm the one squirting the oil. Bill Stephens is the one being squirted upon. I don't recall who the third clown is. He just sent me the picture tonight. Anyway, I had gotten married and had to come up with funds to stay in college. I finally got a promised \$25 scholarship from the coach to help buy books....AHHHHH memories. The money was promised if I made the team. I did. I never got the \$25 nor even a letter for being on and helping the team. I guess I still hold the record for the fastest time climbing the rope at FSU. I placed 4th in the National NCAA in California and 3rd in the Nationals AAU in NY. I never understood it???? By the way, I roomed with Jim Tanaka in NY. Funny I should think of it now after all these years. Have a nice evening”

Jimmy & Peggy Tanaka 51-57

“Peggy and I just returned from an experience of a life time. We climbed the snow capped peak of **Mt. Kilimanjaro** in **Tanzania, Africa**. It is the **highest free standing mountain in the world** at **19, 340' (5,895 meters)**. The day we arrived, January 4, 2006, there was a freak rock slide on the western trails at 17,000'. Three Americans were killed instantly by the huge boulders. One, a 53 years old mother with three of her grown children climbing with her and two others from the Appalachians. Subsequent to the rock slide accident, three porters and a medical doctor (pediatrician) from the US died from high altitude sickness. All separate incidents. We knew we had our job cut out for us. Our six months of preparation of climbing every surrounding mountains, hills, terrain didn't even come close to preparing us for the climb up **Kilimanjaro**. The jungle floor temperature of 90+ degrees to minus 10-15 degrees at the top, with a decrease of one half of the atmospheric pressure above 12,000' and the final ascending 45 degree angle with an added sandy volcanic ashes underfoot made for a most challenging and treacherous climb. The entire climb took us six days round trip. We stayed overnight at various altitudes for acclimatization purposes (climb high, sleep low). We both some how survived the rock slides, the high altitude, sleep depravation, bad food and water, lack of bathing, 40+ hours of trekking, etc. I can assure you that this **Mt. Kilimanjaro** climb is not for the couch potatoes. I was celebrating my **72nd Birthday**. Perhaps, in the future, I'll select a more relaxing form of celebration?” (National Geographic) {Don Holder said it best for all of us. “ Peg & Jimmy, You both continue to amaze not only Connie & I, but our entire Gymnastic community. Certainly you are our role models”}

Beverly Cude & Bill Beaton 55-59

“Happy New Year, Jack: I was reading our newspaper, the Montreal Gazette, last week and in the Arts & Life section came across a book review Title: The Friendship Crisis: Finding, Making and Keeping Friends When You're Not a Kid Anymore by M. Paul. In scanning the review, these lines leapt out at me: “Each old friend holds your history in their hand. They know you in ways that other people will never know you. That history is so rich and valuable. You may change and your lives may veer in different directions, but those friendships are really worth holding onto.” It struck me that that's what we're finding with the reunions FSU Gymkana members have had: old friendships are renewed and new friendships are created from either end of the years in which one was personally involved. Hope all is going well with you,.....Happy Saturday afternoon”

{The following is long but so compellingly written. Bev describes her experiences in an ice storm. It was amazing and fascinating the parallels between the emotions and happenings of “Her” Ice storm and our Wilma – sans the temperature. Maybe we should all consider moving to Tucson near Benny and Carolynbut then..... they would consider moving. jmm}{Bev} “We're having weird weather....since the week before Xmas when we got 15 - 20 cm snow (enough to close schools, which is rare indeed).....we've had temperatures hovering around the freezing mark, plus gray days, freezing rain, or as today, just cold, dreary drizzle....6 - 8 degrees C (around 40 F for you).....but about to plummet to -18 C which is just below 0 F for you....)....crazy stuff.....anyway, have a good day,

.....Sorry to hear that you had such extreme damage done to your home by that fury Wilma....while the climate must be a great incentive to live where you do, the increasing frequency of such devastating hurricanes makes one wonder.....although, is anywhere not affected by nature is some way???

.....At this time of year in 1998 we had our infamous Ice Storm....we were among the "lucky" ones being without power for 5 days only....of course that meant no heat, which was the worst, no communication except by battery powered radios, candles & flashlights gave us light, had to heat water on propane stove to stay clean...showers not much fun!..... and so on.....no refrigeration...(problem solved by putting frozen foods in a cooler outdoors with the ready made ice added.....other food kept cold that way too)....barbecues allowed us to cook, albeit under adverse conditions outside....and one of my greatest worries was that my huge cat was diabetic....I had to inject him with insulin every day and said insulin had to be kept cool, but of course, not frozen.....I managed, but it was nerve wracking.....

.....The first night of the ice storm was scary....the wind was fierce, power out and what really upset me was the sound of huge branches, weighted down with ice, breaking away from our beautiful big treesin many cases they landed on parked cars....blocked streets, as I'm sure happens in a hurricane.....it really looked like a war zone.....one also had to pay attention when walking (sliding) in the event a branch came down on you...(that did happen in a few instances).....worst of all were the farmers who had livestock to feed and try to keep warm....many were without power, some of them for 1 - 2 months, so this was total devastation for them....

.....Remember you told me that our RCMP {Royal Canadian Mounted Police...jmm} went to New Orleans to help out....good for them, but during the Ice Storm, power crews from the states of New York and Vermont spent weeks here restoring power stations and lines.....they were a godsend and we were very grateful....without their help we'd have been in big trouble even though other provinces sent manpower too. I must say, though, that with your horrific 9/11, doctors, nurses, firemen headed to New York from here....many from our local fire station nearby....money was also collected at that fire station through the sale of fire hats for little kids (I bought 2 for my little ones), commemorative pins and baseball caps with NYFD on them...raised a lot.....and I remember people in the Maritimes took in passengers from those planes from overseas that had to be diverted from New York that awful day. It's great to have mutual aid like that.

.....P.S.as predicted, temperature had begun its downward trend by evening....rain had become snow (driving hazardous)....when real January and February weather arrives, I'll let you know (that means about -20 to -26 degrees C)....that ought to make you shiver!!!!and then I start worrying about the poor little squirrels and birds not smart enough to fly south (but they always seem to bounce back in the spring).....speaking of not being smart enough to fly south, I guess you could include me..... :-)

....Seeing as you plan to use my weather description in your writing, I should set the record (literally) straight on the 15 - 20 cm snowfall I mentioned.....that actually was the forecasted prediction....but, that morning during rush hour it had already reached that level; however, by the time it was all over, a record breaking 42 cm, (almost 17 " for you) had fallen in one great big "whomp"!....so maybe you could change what I said....normally, 15 - 20 cm is not enough to close schools, but this was during Xmas exam period, so if only a handful of kids didn't make it, it would have messed things up for them and their teachers in terms of writing and marking.....so **42 cm** really messed things up!

..... The only good thing about it was that the world around us was strikingly beautiful with piles of pure white everywhere, branches of trees laden and bending under the weight of the snow, little kids in brightly coloured snowsuits pulling toboggans and romping around on the snow banks and frustrated car owners, who were unfortunate enough to be parked on the street, rescuing their vehicles from under huge mounds of snow...no fun there!

....back to reality, the temperature at this moment is -12 degrees C or 10 degrees F for you, still dropping.....given the northeast wind, it feels much worse when wind chill is factored in. So thank your lucky stars where you are, you're cozier than I, and have a relaxing Sunday, I hope."

Mike Mann & Fran Millian | 57-67 | Re: Cirque du Soleil, {In an email to Bill and Carolyn Beavers et al}

"We have returned from St. Pete and the Christmas visit. Last night we went to a performance that I immediately dubbed Gymkana Mucho Grande. You probably are more familiar with the French name, Cirque du Soleil. I think recall someone commenting in the FSU Newsletter after catching a performance earlier this year that Hartley Price had been born about fifty years too soon. It should be added that he was also probably under budget by at least a million or two. Great show, we were with several kids that had never been to one before and it literally just blew them away. I was exhausted just from watching at the pace they maintained for the whole evening. "

Bill & Carole Beavers | 57-58/60-61 | Cirque du Soleil, {Response from "Bucky" Beavers}

"Terry & Sheri Morris, and I saw the first two productions of Cirque here in Atlanta in the 90's . We all agreed it was what Hartley had in mind. Much as I hated that show, (Gymkana, not Cirque du Soleil), and its degradation of the "pure sport", he was indeed a visionary and sharp as Hell to involve so many segments of the student organizations in its production. Sometimes it takes time to see the wisdom in others actions."

Jack Miles & Nancy Dye | 50-58 | Cirque du Soleil

Stu Goldberg sent me a gift of a fabulous video tape of the Cirque Du Soleil production, "Dralion". So I was really revved up when my wife and son got tickets of the "Varekai" production in Miami. Last night we saw the theater in the round show. Needless to say it was really terrific. The performers all looked sooo young (perspective from my age I'm sure). I sadly recalled that I once had a butt like they have. However, I never could do a one hander the way this girl did (and Oh what a healthy young body she had – age again). You know the kind of performer who can sit over and onto her own head. I especially liked the two big swings where they catapult off doing triples, twisters and all trampoline moves from one swing to the other – or into a catching, cloth like, net. I would love to fly like

that again. Thank God, they didn't try to look like bland, audience ignorant gymnasts. It was a great show. Go see one or more of them.

4

Benny & Carolyn Wallace | **51-55** | Benny found another gymnast, Gene Abrahamson

"Funny that you wrote. I just got off the phone with Gene Abrahamson."... "I will send him all previous newsletters, including this next one, plus whatever pictures that I have. He lives 200 miles from his son-in-law, who has the computer, so you may want to send things by mail in the future because he doesn't get to his son-in-law's very often. You can work that out with him, I suppose.

We have nothing much for the newsletter except another cruise in late March. Had some eye surgery that has completely eliminated the use of my glasses! It's a new lens technology approved just this past March and quite miraculous. There are one or two other parts that have also grown weak so I'm looking into it!" {I don't believe they have perfected brain transplants yet. I think you'll have to wait for that Benny. The other problem area I believe they can help...It's such a small problem....jmm }

Benny & Carolyn Wallace | **51-55** | 11/23 dated article recovered

"I read the bit about Jimmy Hanks being wounded; he probably got the Purple Heart. It reminded me of a question that I asked our Senator, John McCain, a POW and fellow fighter pilot – Navy issue – who flew his mission in the north, as I did, where the big guns were. I asked why those of us who never got shot down or captured don't get free car tag like POW's and purple guys here in Arizona? You weren't supposed to get hurt or shot down, I thought; don't they give anything to the good pilots? It's often that you catch a politician without an answer! When he's president maybe I'll get a night in the Lincoln bedroom.

Along that line, one of my squadron guys – along with several others – was POW for several years and later became a Florida Congressman – a democrat, no less! His name is Doug Peterson and he has a strange story: I'm told that he married a Vietnamese woman, was appointed by Clinton as ambassador to Vietnam and lived in the embassy just blocks from the prison where he spent five year or so. Bush replaced him with a republican and I heard he moved to Australia. Funny old world."

Alice Englert | **(Carrie's Mom)**

{Alice sent a great picture, a head shot of Alice with Cathy Rigby. I couldn't even see the flying rigging wire coming down to carry Alice away. It's amazing what they can do for special effects and what these prematurely grey stunt women can do...They both looked cute...jmm }

Jack Miles & Nancy Dye | **50-58**

{I was twisting and turning while looking into a full length mirror. My son walked in and caught me. I grunted, "Can you see my abdominals sort of like eggs in a basket?" You said, "Yeh, soft boiled"...smart ass kid.....jmm }

Comment: I don't like to pass on video clips submitted to me by email but I would be remiss if I didn't recommend

<http://wandascountryhome.com/mywindow/index.html> Which was sent to me by several readers including Nancy & Bob Troutman.

It applies to us friends.