



The Kablegram



Stanton Military Academy Alumni Newsletter

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Fourth Quarter — October 2005

Stonewall Jackson Hotel will host the banquet; registration and barbeque will be held in the Mess Hall

2006 reunion set for weekend of April 7-8

Planning for the 2006 SMA Alumni Association reunion, scheduled for the weekend of April 7-8, is underway. The 2006 events will focus on returning to venues that will be familiar to most of the attendees — the Stonewall Jackson Hotel in downtown Stanton (recently reopened after an extensive renovation) and the former SMA Mess Hall.

A few changes have been made in the reunion process, to streamline the weekend's events and reduce the number of steps alumni need to take to be involved.

The Board of Directors will meet at 9:00 a.m. at the SMA-VWIL Museum. Registration will begin at 11:00 a.m. inside the Mess Hall and will continue until 3:30 p.m. There will be no registration at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel on Friday, April 7. Alumni will be asked to report directly to the Mess Hall.

The SMA-VWIL Review is scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on Kable Field. As in the past, alumni will form on the asphalt in what we hope will be a full company of two platoons and march onto the field after the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL) Corps of Cadets has formed there, pass in review in front of the corps, and dismiss on the opposite side of the field.

The Kable Legion of Honor will be

presented during a mid-parade ceremony, if it has been determined that there is a candidate for the award. The VWIL Corps of Cadets will then pass in review in honor of SMA alumni, reforming at the end of the field. The VWIL Howie Rifles will then provide a precision drill exhibition for alumni.

The parade will be followed by the Memorial Wall plaque installation ceremony at the SMA-VWIL Museum.

The reception and barbecue will be held in the Mess Hall from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., with dancing from 9:00 p.m. Current plans call for a deejay to provide music for the dance.

Alumni are encouraged to make reservations at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel as early as possible in the new year. A group of rooms, at a special SMA Reunion rate, has been blocked off for the 2006 event. Alumni should contact the hotel at (540) 885-4848.

Saturday events will begin with the annual business meeting at the hotel at 9:00 a.m. At the same time, alumni wives and guests will be invited to attend a meeting and briefing, similar to the event held at the 2005 reunion, at the hotel. Dr. Brenda Bryant, VWIL Director, and several cadets will be present to answer questions.

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VWIL graduate killed in accident in Egypt



First Lieutenant Sarah Small, U.S. Air Force, a 2002 graduate of VWIL, died in an accident September 19 while on a training assignment in Egypt. Please turn to page 5 for the complete story.

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Reunion 2006



Celebrating Our History...
Building Our Legacy

April 7-8, 2006
Stanton, Virginia

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE HILL

We are making a difference!

When an organization such as ours develops programs, we often wonder if we are truly making a difference by doing so. Without visual evidence or reassuring feedback, it can be difficult to measure the impact of what we do.

This is not the case with our involvement with the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL). When you visit the campus of what was once Staunton Military Academy, you need only make it known that you are an SMA alumnus, and you'll hear questions and compliments from VWIL cadets.

"You cannot imagine how much we appreciate what the SMA alumni are doing for the Corps of Cadets", is just one of many comments that have been heard by our members on visits to VWIL.

I had the pleasure of spending the first weekend of activities for the 2005-2006 academic year at VWIL, which they refer to as "Cadre Week", when the incoming freshmen are indoctrinated and taught the military side of their lives.

During one session, I found myself being asked: "How did the SMA cadets do this?", referring to everything from sword manual to use of guidons, parade protocol and other aspects of cadet life.

Staunton Military Academy history is an integral part of the indoctrination process, and it is part of the document given to nULL's (those we used to call "rats"). They are required to know the history and are required to visit the SMA-VWIL Museum and appreciate the legacy that they are helping to foster.

VWIL cadets staff the SMA-VWIL Museum on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, and are sufficiently educated in our history to provide guided tours for visitors.

I sometimes find myself in the middle of a group of cadets who want to know what life was like for SMA cadets, how we lived together, what the discipline was like, how strict the environment was, and why we are so dedicated and intense about the memory of SMA.

All these events taken together tell me that the SMA legacy is alive!

I do not know if this is what was envisioned when the SMA Legacy projects were initiated some years ago. I can say that this is a positive and real time result of those projects.

During my late August visit to the campus, I was asked to report to the Mess Hall where a meeting of the entire corps was in progress. Upon my arrival, I was introduced to the corps, after being given five demerits for being late and having five demerits removed for an earlier infraction when I failed to wear my SMA or VWIL ballcap.

The introduction was significant because it carried a clear message that the **SMA Alumni Association**, and not myself as an individual, is making a difference!

When the meeting ended, I found myself surrounded by cadets who just wanted to express their appreciation for what **we**, the SMA Alumni Association, do to foster VWIL's continuity.

We have provided funding for projects and activities that otherwise would never have seen light of day. We have provided grants to a few cadets who could otherwise not have either enrolled or returned this year. We have given VWIL and the Corps of Cadets reason to believe that they **can** achieve those goals they have established.

The mentoring program established in January 2005 is beginning to grow. There are a number of cadets being mentored in various fields of endeavor by alumni experienced in those fields.

Is there too much focus on VWIL? No, not in my view. We are forging a **partnership** that ultimately will *enhance our legacy* and the memory of Staunton Military Academy.

Several leaders within the Corps of Cadets recently told me that they consider the SMA Alumni Reunion weekend to be **the most important event** of their academic year, because it provides them with an opportunity to demonstrate just how important Staunton Military Academy, our association, and the SMA legacy is to them individually and to the Corps of Cadets.

— C. David Litzenburg, SMA '58



2006 SMAAA reunion

— Continued from page 1 —

Plans for a memorial ceremony at Thornrose Cemetery have not been finalized and will be announced at a later date. Saturday afternoon will provide plenty of free time for alumni and guests to tour downtown Staunton or seek activities of their choice.

The 2006 banquet will begin with a reception at 5:30 p.m. at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel, followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. Jay Nedry, SMA '69 will again be master of ceremonies and the guests will include a contingent of VWIL cadets chosen to dine with alumni.

Following the banquet, an area will be set aside where alumni and guests can spend time together to continue to reconnect with old friends.

Honor years for the 2006 reunion will be 1931, 1936, 1941, 1946, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966, 1971 and 1976.

The reunion registration form is on page 9 of this issue. This is the "early bird" form, reflecting savings on the fees. **Please take the time now to plan your attendance**, complete the form, and mail it and your registration check to the **SMA Alumni Association, P. O. Box 958, Woodrum Station, Staunton, Virginia 24402.**

Reunion 2005 DVD available through the museum

A DVD featuring the entire indoor SMA-VWIL Review conducted in April 2005, including the presentation of the Kable Legion of Honor and the ceremony conveying the name "Howie Rifles" to the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL) drill team, is available for sale at the SMA-VWIL Museum.

The DVD, converted from video tape, was created by David Beduhn, SMA '69. Mr. Beduhn taped the ceremonies and subsequently found that the content was something that many SMA alumni might want to have.

The DVD can be ordered by contacting the SMA Office at the e-mail address or telephone number on the back page of this issue of *The Kablegram*.

The DVD will be sold for \$10.00 plus shipping cost.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Support SMAAA by paying your dues

...and help us to continue to be an active and involved association. The dues mailing went out September 20 and should have been delivered to you that week. Your dues are critical to maintaining our SMA Alumni Office, publication of *The Kablegram*, keeping the SMA-VWIL Museum up to date, and providing the many services available to alumni. We encourage you to take a few moments to fill in the card included in the mailing, write your check, and use the postage-paid envelope to send your dues — and whatever contribution you choose to make — to the SMA Alumni Association.

. . . and remember the Scholarship Fund

...which we are trying to build to a level of \$50,000 so that it will become a perpetual \$2,500 annual award to a cadet recommended by VWIL and approved by the association's Scholarship Committee. The SMA Alumni Association Leadership Scholarship has been a \$1,000 annual award for a number of years.

. . . and the SMA-VWIL Initiative

...which was established in 2004 and to date has generated more than \$55,000 in cash grants to the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL) for their discretionary use. Many of the expenditures were detailed in a Spring 2005 issue of *The Kablegram*. Donations to the SMA-VWIL Initiative are channeled through the SMA Foundation to provide our alumni with a tax deduction, and the funds are then passed on to VWIL when specific needs are identified.

You may also designate a donation to the **Howie Rifles Fund** and the **VWIL Band Fund**, both of which are administered by the SMA Foundation and monies distributed to VWIL when specific needs are approved.

Special thanks to some corporate donors

...such as Long and Foster Real Estate in Reston, Virginia, Sharon and Kenneth Rutland (Sharon is an ERA real estate agent and associate broker), Professional Computer Services of Chantilly, Virginia and several individual Northern Virginia real estate agents. These generous business people have donated computers, monitors, keyboards, scanners and printers to the SMA Foundation to be refurbished, and upgraded and subsequently donated to the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL).

To date, we have installed a computer in the VWIL Supply Room (where cadets had previously handled all records on paper) and in the conference room on the second floor of the VWIL offices. The basic tower for this computer was donated by G. Richard Staunch, SMA '61. This unit was upgraded to accommodate multimedia presentations for visitors.

A third computer and related accessories was rebuilt and delivered to SMA Alumni Association Treasurer Thomas A. Davis, SMA '62 so that our financial records and reports could be significantly upgraded.

In addition, various pieces of office furniture have been acquired by donation and passed along for use in the VWIL offices and conference areas. More such contributions are needed — computer tables, conference tables and chairs, office desks and chairs, and anything else that might be useful. Alumni Association at smaalumni@msn.com.

Nominations are due by November 1 . . .

...for Memorial Wall plaques to be installed during the reunion April 7, 2006. All nominations must be submitted in writing to the SMA Alumni Office, P. O. Box 958, Woodrum Station, Staunton, Virginia 24402-0958. The nomination must include a detailed recommendation as to why the individual is being nominated.

An Adobe PDF nomination form is available. Anyone interested may contact *The Kablegram* at kablegram@sma-alumni.org and a form will be e-mailed to them immediately.

Nominations will be researched and considered by the SMA-VWIL Museum Committee. The committee's decision will then be submitted to the SMA Alumni Association Board of Directors for final approval.

Robert M. Bennett, SMA '45 recognized for years in broadcasting

Robert M. "Bob" Bennett, SMA '45, was recognized September 15, 2005 at the "Celebration of Giants" award luncheon in New York City.

The Library of American Broadcasting presented its prestigious award to Mr. Bennett and fourteen other "giants" from the world of radio and television, including CBS anchorman Dan Rather and, posthumously, Johnny Carson.

Mr. Bennett attended SMA from 1941 to 1945. He resided in Altoona, Pennsylvania until 1947, and recently contributed \$270,000 to the city's Railroaders' Memorial Museum's quarter-roundhouse project that will house a restored Pennsylvania Railroad K-4 locomotive.

Bennett made the donation in honor of his grandfather, Harry Bennett, who was a master mechanic at the railroad's manufacturing plant in Altoona early in the 20th century.

Mr. Bennett ranks among the nation's most accomplished broadcasters over a 50-year career that was capped by election in 1994 to the Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame.

At the pinnacle of his career, he guided the largest broadcast station group as president of Metromedia, Inc., which included six television stations, 13 AM/FM radio stations in ten major metropolitan areas, the Harlem Globetrotters, the Ice Capades and Metromedia Producers.

He championed and supervised the launch of such shows as "Fame", "Three's Company", "Small Wonder" and "Star Search".

Mr. Bennett began his career in 1952 as a salesman for KTTV-TV in Los Angeles, California, moving up to director of sales from 1958 to 1966. He served as vice president of WTTG-TV in Washington, D.C. and then from 1969 to 1971 with WNEW-TV in New York.

In the early 1980's Mr. Bennett was founding president of the New England Chapter of the National Academy Television Arts and Sciences.

He currently serves as Chairman of the Board of Bennett Productions, a post-production company in Los Angeles, which he and his son founded 25 years ago.

LOOKING BACK

After 61 years, two graduates meet again

Dr. Charles Berman, SMA '44, "C" Company commander, who was attending a convention at the Dolphin Walt Disney Hotel in Orlando, Florida, shared a reunion dinner with Frank Fernandez, SMA '44, "D" Company commander.

The two former classmates poured over yearbooks and discussed "old times" Both attended SMA from their Junior School years through graduation.



Dr. Berman was honored by an organization he founded years ago which now has a of over 5,000 international dentists. Mr. Fernandez, an attorney, is a graduate of Stetson University Law School (1952) and has been practicing law in Orlando.

Mr. Fernandez noted that Charles Collins, SMA '44 also practices law in Orlando, and Dr. Berman's sister was a 1944 Mary Baldwin College graduate.

Book review by John Smyntek of the Detroit Free Press

Ex-mobster, ex-FBI man pen vivid novel about Mafia

This is one of the more interesting books about the underworld to hit the bookstores. Instead of being crafted by a professional writer (Mario Puzo, Lorenzo Carcaterra, Peter Maas to mention three), this offering — a novel — comes from two gents who qualify as insiders.

Bill Bonanno is the son of Joe "Joe Bananas" Bonanno, longtime New York Mafia don. Joe Pistone is a former FBI agent who infiltrated the mob under the personality of Donnie Brasco.

It's more than fair to assume that collaborator David Fisher did most of the literary heavy lifting, but he should get plenty of credit for the innards of this work. Bonanno and Brasco alternate their versions of the same happenstance, providing a look from both sides.

Bonanno's version is romanticized, portraying the Mafia as an almost benevolent force in the traditional Italian community. It's pretty much stuck in the past, and only the most naive reader would swallow most of it.

Pistone's telling seems more realistic, documenting the boredom and frustration of trying to thwart the evil the Mafia has managed to weave into everyday life.

But it is Fisher who keeps things moving and keeps the reader turning the page in this tale about the old clubs of Little Italy and the attempts of modern law enforcement to thwart it. The back-and-forth volley on the same sordid world is fresh and entertaining.

It's more than fair to assume that Fisher wove composites of all the situations Bonanno and Pistone encountered in real life.

And as interesting as those happenstances were, fiction usually is juicier than any real life confessionals. That's pretty much what happens here, and it's worth the time of those who have made all those other chroniclers of fiction rich and famous.

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Editor's note: This book review was published in February 2005. Joe Pistone, an SMA alumnus, wrote an earlier book titled Donnie Brasco, a copy of which was donated to the SMA-VWIL Museum by Mark Orr, SMA '73. An effort is underway to acquire a copy of the new book, signed by the author, for donation to the museum. This may prove difficult since Pistone is in the U.S. Department of Justice Witness Protection Program, and his whereabouts are a tightly controlled secret.

Memorial Service held in October; burial at Arling National Cemetery

Sarah Small, VWIL '02, killed in line of duty accident in Egypt

United States Air Force First Lieutenant Sarah Small '02, a public affairs officer, was killed in the line of duty September 19 in Egypt. She is the first alumnus of the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL) and Mary Baldwin College (MBC) to be killed in the line of duty while serving in the military.

Lt. Small was stationed at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia, and she had been in the Middle East for about two weeks supporting Exercise Bright Star, a training exercise. She was traveling in the northern part of the country with two other servicemen and an Egyptian driver. Lt. Small was ejected from the vehicle when it swerved off the road, reports indicate.

Brig. Gen. N. Michael Bissell, VWIL commandant of cadets, talked with Small's parents shortly after they received the news from military officials.



"She was a master at listening to people and saying the right thing to make them feel better," Bissell said.

Sarah Small was an active student at MBC. She served for four years on the Student Government Association and worked as the VWIL S-2 publicity officer. She earned a BA in political science and minors in communication and in leadership studies.

As a writer at Langley Air Force Base, articles by Lt. Small were featured in many military publications and online news sources, including *Air Combat Command News Service* and *The Communicator*, published by the Air Force Personnel Center.

Her parents, William and Gloria Small of Herndon, Virginia, are likewise active with Mary Baldwin College. They both served on the MBC Parents Council while she was a student, and

Mr. Small was the president of the Parents Council. He continues to serve Mary Baldwin College through the Advisory Board of Visitors.

In a message to the college community, President Pamela Fox said, "Many on campus remember Sarah with great respect and fondness. This is a tremendous loss for our community. We are considering how best we can commemorate Sarah's contributions to MBC and her service to our country."

Lt. Small will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery at 9:00 a.m. December 2, 2005. Her family has requested that memorial contributions be sent to the college in their daughter's name.

Lt. Small earned numerous medals and service ribbons in her active duty with the U.S. Air Force. She was also chosen Company Grade Officer (CGO) for the quarter for January through March 2005 for the Air Combat Command and for the Air and Space Expeditionary Force Center (AEFC). She was recognized as being in the top five percent of her Defense Information School Public Affairs Officer Course class.

Schemehorn named assistant to VWIL Commandant

Chief Yeoman Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist Rick Schemehorn (Ret.) has joined the staff at the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL) to serve as an assistant to VWIL Commandant Brig. Gen. Michael Bissell.



His assignment will include being the training officer responsible for the development, scheduling and implementation of Corps of Cadets training, being an advisor to cadet class committees and acting as a tactical officer for cadre units during drill and ceremony.

In addition, he will teach classes in protocol, military courtesies and traditions as well as conducting seminars and classes in leadership.

Chief Schemehorn will further be responsible for management and operation of the VWIL office, supervision of cadet workers and communication with Virginia Military Institute (VMI) ROTC offices.

He will maintain cadet files, mailings to students and parents and will supervise the scheduling of transportation of cadets to VMI for classes that are held there.

Chief Schemehorn will also manage the preparation and publication of various VWIL handbooks and manuals, and will maintain disciplinary records.

His 24-year career was marked by numerous prestigious and challenging assignments. He retired in 2004 after being the Medical Officer and Command Chief of the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps. He was based at Virginia Military Institute at the time.

Chief Schemehorn and his wife, the former Wanda L. Mueller, reside in Vesuvius, Virginia with their three daughters, Leah Devon, Amber Nadine and Elyssa Grace.

SMA-VWIL PERSPECTIVES: THEN AND NOW

Dr. W. Duke Myers, MD, FSCP, FASN, SMA '60

"I guess focus is what I learned to appreciate at SMA. Then Lieutenant Wease taught us how to identify the major point and supporting evidence. He also showed us how to take notes. Lieutenant Case was in the room next to mine and recruited me to work on *The Kablegram* where I learned the importance of organization and deadlines. The military training introduced me to lesson plans and how to speak and get my message over to groups. After failing chemistry and trigonometry, I learned how to recover at SMA as evidenced by being on the dean's list in college with sufficient hours in chemistry and advanced math to be awarded a degree in chemistry!"

"I learned to listen and identify those who seemed to have a better understanding of issues and how to weigh such input. I also learned to be patient with those who did not seem to be grasping issues and sometimes found they might have had a better answer. I learned there were consequences for mistakes which I literally had to march off as a member of beat squad! Yet it was an honor to be selected for Howie Rifles which pretty much did the same thing! They also told me it was an honor to be assigned to West Barracks; yet it was the most far away and we still had to go outside in rain or snow to get to the bathroom!"

"The study time set aside each evening with faculty checking I learned to appreciate. The one time I was assigned to study hall proved to be more distracting than beneficial and I managed to stay away thereafter. As a slow learner I found the educational process used at SMA was just what I needed to identify the real issues on which to focus."

There seemed no better way to begin a profile of W. Duke Myers, SMA '60, than in his own words of reflection. "Duke" as he was known to everyone on the hill, was the centennial First Captain in 1960, and went on to command the corps of 2,000 at the University of Kentucky and graduated with a U.S. Army commission.

Dr. Myers attended the University of Louisville Medical School, spending his summers at Fort Knox and the Ireland Army Hospital. There he met and married Gayle Jordan. He was subsequently stationed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center from 1968 to 1974 where he completed his residency and specialization in Nephrology.

In 1974 he was transferred to Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas where he reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel before resigning his commission in 1978 to enter private practice with a Nephrology group in Lubbock, Texas (where he continues to practice today) and to teach at the Texas Tech University medical school.

Since graduating from SMA, Dr. Myers' accomplishments have been numerous. Among them was being elected a Fellow of the American College of Physicians in 1977, being

named the Outstanding Clinical Teacher at the Texas Tech University medical school, being Chief of Staff at St. Mary's Hospital in Lubbock, Texas, and becoming one of the first inductees into the Fellowship of Nephrologists in 2004.

His personal recognitions began at SMA, where he was Battle Group Commander with the rank of Colonel, a member of the Honor Court, president of the Cotillion Club Committee, Editor-in-Chief of *The Kablegram*, commander of the Howie Rifles, and a member of the Quill and Scroll.

Looking back on his years at SMA, Dr. Myers says:

"Other events were formative while [I was] at SMA. One of the 'old boys' who lived on the other side of me seemed frequently drunk and was eventually found to have a case of hard liquor hidden under his floorboards. I guess one could say I was "between cases" even then!"

"Another cadet that same year hung himself. It was then

I recognized the significance of unaddressed stress. My last year one of the first year cadets developed respiratory distress after doing pushups as a punishment as I recall for which I was summoned and directed he be taken to the hospital. I remember feeling quite helpless. I suspect these events sparked my interest in medicine. How ironic! I go to a military school and learn how to kill only to devote my life to maintaining health."

"As a slow learner I had to spend most of my time studying not leaving much spare time to find interesting stories", he notes. adding that "however, my hard work has paid off as I generate this from my beach home watching some of the grandkids play in the gulf with

their parents!"

The *Kablegram* encouraged Dr. Myers to come back to Staunton for the annual reunions. He replied:

"I anticipate I will not be able to make any of the reunions until after I retire which hopefully will be around 2012. My family has been blessed with long lives and with my luck I may live to be 100! I have warned my daughters of such anticipated long life and suggested they might want to put some money aside to support me if I should run out."

He adds: "I advised I would like a French maid who is a good cook, plus a driver who will be able to address my computer glitches."

"However," he says, "I have recently been informed they will provide me with macaroni and cheese and tell me it is gourmet and the grandchildren will provide transportation."

"See why I have to work so long?", he concluded.

Dr. Myers' daughter, Debbie Myers Haddix, says that "Staunton holds a special place in my dad's heart", adding that "he firmly believes that his time spent at Staunton, where he received structure, discipline and personalized attention from the instructors, helped make him the successful doctor that he is today."



SMA-VWIL PERSPECTIVES: THEN AND NOW

Captain (USAF) Kristy M. Wheeler, VWIL '01

Editor's note: When it was suggested that Kristy Wheeler would be a good candidate for the "Then and Now" profile feature, The Kablegram was faced with the challenge of creating an article about someone we had never met. A series of conversations and e-mails produced a first person profile far more extensive and detailed than anything we could have written. What follows is that personal profile as written by Kristy Wheeler, followed by comments provided by Brig. Gen. Michael Bissell, Commandant at the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership. It should be noted that Ms. Wheeler was the 2001 recipient of the Hunter Henry Scholarship Honoring SMA, presented to her that year by then-president of the SMA Alumni Association Thomas E.B. Phillips.

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"It's hard to believe four years have past since I last marched as a proud cadet in the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership (VWIL) Corps of Cadets. As former cadet commander of the Marine Corps JROTC program at Hermitage High School in Richmond, Virginia, I knew that after graduating high school I wanted to become an officer in the United States military. "

"Although I was one of the first females accepted to attend the Virginia Military Institute in 1997, my heart led me to Mary Baldwin College to be a part of the VWIL Corps of Cadets. I decided to become a cadet [in the VWIL Corps] because it would allow me to challenge myself while developing my leadership skills in a safe and healthy learning environment."

"I graduated with a Business Management bachelor's degree and a minor in Leadership. It's now four years later, and I've accomplished more than I ever imagined. My success results directly from my VWIL experiences and the mentorship I've received along the way."

"After commissioning in the U.S. Air Force (USAF), I was assigned to Royal Air Force in Mildenhall, England for two years where I served as a communications officer. Not too long after being a communications officer, I was selected to become a Special Agent in the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) focusing on felony level criminal activity and counterintelligence within the USAF. "

"After completing five months of intense law enforcement training in Georgia, I was stationed at Yokota Air Base, Japan for two years. Throughout my four years overseas, I was fortunate enough to visit over 15 different countries including climbing the Great Wall of China and climbing Mt. Fuji in Japan."

"My many traveling experiences overseas taught me how lucky I am to be an American and encouraged me to appreciate every second of every day. Currently, I am stationed at Charleston AFB, South Carolina, entrusted to take command very early in my career of the only investigative de-

tachment on-base as a young female Captain."

"As a cadet in the VWIL Corps, I thought my four years would never end! Every day was a challenge whether it was trying to run faster in order to pass the physical training (PT) test, getting all the details right for significant events, or trying to pass required academic courses."

"VWIL demanded only the best from me and forced me to reach my potential. Luckily, VWIL had an extraordinary staff that genuinely had the best interest in mind for all of the cadets. The driving force of the Corps was Brig. Gen. N. Michael Bissell, U.S. Army (Virginia), who spent endless hours guiding, teaching, and disciplining cadets to mold them into successful future leaders."

"What I miss about VWIL is the feeling of pride when marching in a parade, feeling synergy from working as a team, and the feeling of camaraderie among my peers. VWIL offered many confidence building opportunities that I took advantage of including: rock climbing, skiing, white water rafting, repelling, and road marching with rifles."

"All of these opportunities helped me get to where I am today with confidence, persistence, and dedication. Although VWIL was an all female environment, my VWIL experience prepared me to work confidently and successfully in a predominately male environment."

"When I marched on the Color Guard as a cadet, we were proud to start the tradition of

carrying the Staunton Military Academy (SMA) flag. It was inspirational to know that before the VWIL Corps was created, the land that we proudly marched had already been marched on by SMA cadets."

"I foresee a bright future for the VWIL program. Every time I visit the Corps, I'm impressed with what the Corps has become and I know that with the correct support, VWIL will continue to grow. Unfortunately, it takes a lot of money to keep the VWIL program alive, and the monetary support received from the SMA Alumni Association is greatly appreciated. I can't imagine what my life would be like if I had not had the opportunity to attend the VWIL Corps of Cadets."

— • —

"Kristy Wheeler, VWIL '01 clearly left her mark at VWIL as the First Captain of the Corps of Cadets," Brig. Gen. Michael Bissell, VWIL Commandant, recalls.

"She had a very unique and extremely effective style of leadership that made her stand out among other student leaders. First, she truly cared about people and made sure that they were aware of it. She was always thinking about the impact on her cadets when ever a decision was made — it was always her first reaction."

"I can not remember a time that she failed to thank or recognize someone who went beyond the call and or per-

— Continued to page 8 —



THEN AND NOW

Kristy M. Wheeler, VWIL '01

— Continued from page 7 —

formed in an outstanding manner. Secondly, she had the strength, confidence and maturity to stand up and correct or report someone who failed to follow procedures or set the wrong example regardless of who they were. She did not let peer pressure or friendships stop her from doing what is right. This is a trait that I have seldom seen in a young man or woman in a Corps leadership environment.”

Brig. Gen. Bissell added: “She was a model leader in everything she did. I was truly proud to say that I was her Commandant and that she was the leader of the VWIL Corps of Cadets.”

APPRECIATION

Some of the pictures taken during the 2005 reunion and featured in the last issue of *The Kablegram* were the work of **Peter Jones, SMA '65**. Despite dealing with a serious illness and unable to enjoy some of the reunion amenities, Mr. Jones dedicated himself to taking pictures throughout the April 2005 weekend.

“This was his first time back and he had tears in his eyes when he came to the museum,” SMA Alumni Secretary Arlene Nicely reported recently when *The Kablegram* asked her to identify the creator of several photographs.

“He told us [Arlene and Brocky Nicely] that the reunion was one of the best times of his life,” Mrs. Nicely said.

Mr. Jones attended SMA with Brocky Nicely, SMA '65, the SMA-VWIL Museum curator and a member of the SMA Alumni Association Board of Directors.

While we expressed our appreciation to some of the alumni who provided photographs from the reunion, we failed to especially thank Mr. Jones for his attendance and his willingness to record the people and events. **Thank you, Peter!**

RECOGNITION

Alfred Burka, SMA '45, was the recipient in 2004 of the Department of the Army “Commander’s Award for Public Service” for “exceptional contributions to the mission success of the Georgetown University Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program from May 2003 to May 2004.”

The citation continued: “Judge Burka’s commitment and support to the ROTC program reflects great credit upon himself and the Georgetown University community.”

SMA alumni are encouraged to make The Kablegram aware of awards, certificates and other forms of recognition received. These items will be published as space in future issues permits.

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

Fond, but sad, remembrances of friends

“I just read with great sadness about the passing of Jim Bell, SMA '65. Jim was a great friend.

Jim was a Day Student at SMA. As I recall his father was a physician in Staunton. Jim was in my squad before I was busted the first time and so we began our friendship then. His smile and quick wit will remain with me always. We had a lot of fun and did a lot of laughing in those days. I guess he helped me maintain my sanity back then.

He and his family were very kind to me during my time at SMA. I cannot tell you how great it was to have a place to go for a home cooked meal, and to talk with guys my own age who could wear real clothes — ‘civies’ I think we called them back then.

Jim and I lost contact after we graduated.. I remember attending a “Sherrells” concert at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Virginia and after that we lost touch. As I remember Mike Bragg, SMA '64 was part of that chaos, too.

Jim found me a few years ago via e-mail.. He sent me an e-mail with the note “It has to be you there cannot be more than one”. When I received it I immediately called him in Richmond, Virginia and we spent quite a while catching up and laughing.

We were planning to get together some time real soon — perhaps at the SMA reunion, and it wasn't long after that that he was diagnosed with cancer. We talked a few times after that and then began to miss each other I guess because of his treatments.

I know that he fought this disease and even went out to speak to support groups attempting to encourage others. But that's the way he was. I have lost a great life long friend.

In addition I read where Bill McDonald, SMA '64 mentioned Kenny Shewbrigde passing back in 1964. Kenny, Charlie “Chad” Efinger, a guy nicknamed “Cotton” (I cannot for the life of me remember his name), Lee DeVault, SMA '64 and I had a rock/folk group back then. We had an audition at a night spot in Washington, D.C. called the “Devenshire Bar and Grill” to play for the summer after we graduated.

We got the news that Kenny had been killed outside of the place shortly after we graduated (the week after, as I remember). The story (as I recall — it's been 40 years ago) was that he had danced with a girl who had a date with a Marine. A fight occurred outside and Kenny fell and hit his head and was killed.

So instead of playing that summer we, Chad Efinger, and I, attended Kenny's funeral in Maryland. It could not have been sadder.

Sorry to be reporting on such sad news but some of the guys may want to know.

Hope to see you all next spring .. The reunion is on my schedule for next year.”

— George F Dunigan

Director of Government Relations, OU-COM/OOA
(614) 299-2107

Editor's note: Thank you for helping us all remember some of those who are no longer with us.

LETTERS

July 2005 by e-mail:

"It was a pleasure meeting you last weekend and I appreciate all the work you did to make the reunion such a successful event. My family and I felt very honored to be included and I'm sure my father would be pleased with the transfer of the Howie Rifles to the VWIL drill team. I'm sorry Tom couldn't attend as it would have been gratifying to him as well as to the team to have had the bearer of the Howie name there.

I am sorry that we were not at the barbecue. I'm sure it was a success and a fun evening. With the young children and John's physical limitations, it just seemed better to retire early! We appreciate the invitation, however and I am sending a check to the SMA Alumni Association as I mentioned and hope it will cover the costs of our reservations or help wherever the alumni would like to apply it.

Thank you so much for all you did to make the weekend such a special occasion for us."

— Sally Howie McDivitt
Daughter of
Major Thomas D. Howie

Editor's note: The Kablegram has acquired a backlog of e-mails to be published. The next issue, probably in December, will devote several pages to these e-mails.

CORRECTION

The February 2005 issue of *The Kablegram* listed Joseph Koch as having graduated in 1973, when in fact he graduated in 1953 and subsequently from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1957. Our apologies are extended to Mr. Koch.

E-mails to *The Kablegram* should go to
kablegram@sma-alumni.org
or to
cdlsma58@juno.com.

SMA 2006 REUNION PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

PLEASE PRINT!

LAST NAME: _____
 FIRST NAME: _____ M.I.: _____
 SMA GRADUATION YEAR: _____
 ADDRESS (1): _____
 ADDRESS (2): _____
 CITY: _____
 STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
 TEL: (_____) _____
 E-MAIL: _____

ALUMNI GUEST REGISTER

SPOUSE NAME: _____
 GUEST NAME: _____
 GUEST NAME: _____
 CHILD NAME: _____
 CHILD NAME: _____

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FEE COMPUTATION

Deadline for Early Bird Registration is December 31, 2005. Pre-registration, at higher rates, will continue from January 1 through mid-March 2006.

___ ADULTS (Friday-Saturday) x \$85.00/person \$ _____
 ___ ADULTS (Friday only) x \$50.00/person \$ _____
 ___ ADULTS (Saturday only) x \$60.00/person \$ _____
 ___ TEENAGER (Friday-Saturday) x \$50.00/person \$ _____
 ___ TEENAGER (Friday only) x \$25.00/person \$ _____
 ___ TEENAGER (Saturday only) x \$35.00/person \$ _____
 ___ 12 AND UNDER (Friday-Saturday) x \$25.00/person \$ _____
 ___ 12 AND UNDER (Friday only) x \$10.00/person \$ _____
 ___ 12 AND UNDER (Saturday only) x \$15.00/person \$ _____
 TOTAL: \$ _____

Please make your check payable to **SMA Alumni Association** and mail this form and your check to **SMA Alumni Association, P. O. Box 958, Woodrum Station, Staunton, Virginia 24402-0958.**

PASS IN REVIEW

Dr. Alexis O. Fernández, SMA '49, physician and philanthropist

Alexis O. Fernández-Vives, SMA '49 of San Juan, Puerto Rico died July 16, 2003 following a three-year illness.

Following graduation from SMA, Mr. Fernandez attended Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in 1953. He continued on to the School of Medicine and became a doctor in 1957.

Dr. Fernández served in the military with the U.S. Public Health Service as Senior Assistant Surgeon from 1958 to 1960. In 1961 he moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to resume his education and in 1964, he graduated from Temple University with a Master of Science in Otorhin-ology, Laryngology and Bronchoesoph-agology.

Dr. Fernández relocated back to San Juan, help several teaching positions, published numerous papers and monographs, and lectured throughout the world.

He served as Chief of Otorinolarngology at the Ryder Memorial Hospital for several years and later co-founded the Puerto Rico Society of Otorinolarngology and Bronchoesophagology. Dr. Fernández was named 1981 Physician of the Year by the Governor's Committee for the Employment of the Handicapped.

One of his many involvements was with the San Gabriel School for the Deaf in San Juan where he became Medical Director in 1964. He held that position for 39 years until his death and was instrumental in organizing the school's Board of Directors, of which he was a member. The ear, nose and throat clinic at the school was named after him.

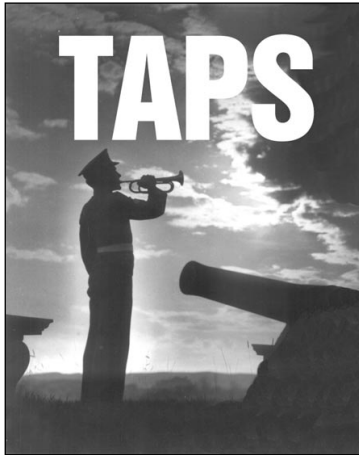
A year after his passing, the Senate of Puerto Rico honored Dr. Fernández with the Philanthropist of the Year award for "a lifetime of work in favor of the handicapped", particularly the deaf.

He and his wife Lari-Luz Vives were married for 44 years. He is survived by his wife, their four children, five grandchildren and his brother, F. José Fernández, SMA '45.

Dr. Fernández had many hobbies. He was a numismatist, photographer, avid reader and prolific writer on the subjects that interested him. Being an accomplished musician from an early age, he composed many songs and jingles, some of which were commercially recorded.

According to Dr. Fernández son, "Alexis will be remembered as a loving son, sibling, husband, father and grandfather, as well as a true friend, a caring doctor and in short, as an exceptional human being in all aspects of life."

"He often reminisced on his years at Staunton Military Academy with fondness and pride," his son recalls, "...and always credited his success in life to certain values developed at Staunton Military Academy at an early age — especially discipline, honor, integrity and leadership."



DONALD E. WARD, SMA '45

Donald E. Ward, SMA '45, of Columbus, Ohio, died June 14, 2005 at the age of 78.

FRANKLIN DENYSE, SMA '61

Franklin Reid DeNyse, SMA '61, died March 18, 2005 at the age of 62 at his residence in Fairfield, Ohio. Mr. DeNyse was a graduate of Rider College and received a Master's degree from Central Michigan University.

He served 25 years in the U.S. Air Force, 10 years on active duty and 15 years with the reserves, earning the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Mr. DeNyse was most recently employed with the General Electric Corporation as a Government Property Manager.

He is survived his wife Susan, sons Gavin and Clinton, stepsons Christopher W. Spahr and Nicholas A. Spahr, and one grandson.

JAMES J. HAINER, SMA '44

James J. Hainer, SMA '44, of New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, died November 4, 2002. According to his family, Mr. Heiner taught school all his life, retiring in 1989. No further information was provided.

WILLIAM R. MCLEOD, SMA '67

William R. McLeod, SMA '67, of Summerville, South Carolina, is reported by his family as deceased. No further information was available.

JOHN O. WARFIELD, SMA '48

John O. Warfield, SMA '48 of St. Petersburg, Florida died August 11, 2003. No further details were available.

TIMOTHY R. HANNA, SMA '70

Timothy R. Hanna, 54, SMA '70 of Lansing, Kansas, died Tuesday, June 7, 2005, at his home surrounded by his family. He was born December 3, 1950 in Norfolk, Virginia, the son of Mark and Evelyn Savage Hanna.

"Tim had a wonderful sense of humor, especially his ability to use puns to make people laugh, a family spokesperson recalls, adding that "he lived to teach the Word of God and to praise his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Mr. Hanna graduated from SMA in 1970 and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from Virginia Commonwealth University. He received a Professional Degree in Architecture from Hampton University where he graduated Summa Cum Laude. He attended the Baptist Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana for a time.

Mr. Hanna was a Christian elementary school teacher and later was employed as a Facilities Architect for the U.S. Army for the last 16 years, first at Ft. Monroe, Virginia, and later at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where he was the Historic Architect/Properties Coordinator.

He was a champion banjo player in his youth and played in various Bluegrass gospel groups along with his son Josh. They participated in local shows and church programs. He loved flying and was a pilot and flight instructor, an avid woodworker and landscaper.

He was a member of the Victory Assembly of God in Bonner Springs, Kansas. He is survived by his wife Becky, a daughter Lori Hanna, a son Joshua Hanna, and a sister Dorothy Bonney. He was preceded in death by his parents and one brother, Mark Hanna, Jr., in 1998.



Baseball Caps

The Cadet Store, located in the SMA•VWIL Museum in the former SMA Supply Room is stocked with a variety of memorabilia. Some of the items available are pictured here. To order items, use the convenient form on this page. The form should be mailed, with your check enclosed, to the address shown below. You can also contact the store by e-mail as shown below, or call (703) 885-1309 for information, leave a message, and your call will be returned.



Golf Shirts



Sweat Shirts

T-Shirts



Belt Buckles and Shoulder Patches

(Gold belt buckle not currently available)

Mail to:

SMA-VWIL Museum

P. O. Box 958 Woodrum Station

Staunton, Virginia 24402-0958

or FAX this order form to (540) 885-1366

or e-mail your order to

SMAOffice@sma-alumni.org

Cadet Store Order Form

| QUAN. | ITEM | EACH | TOTAL |
|-------|--|---------|----------|
| _____ | Baseball Cap | \$10.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Navy blue with gold "Staunton Military Academy" | | |
| _____ | Baseball Cap | \$10.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Blue with green bill with "SMA-VWIL Museum" in gold lettering with crossed rifles. | | |
| _____ | SMA-VWIL Video | \$50.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | T-Shirt with shield | \$15.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Sizes M to XXL | | |
| _____ | Sweatshirt (blue with gold hat shield) | | |
| _____ | M to XXL | \$25.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | XXXL | \$30.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Golf Shirts (M to XXL) | \$30.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Grey sweatshirt ("Staunton Military Academy" with crossed rifles) | | |
| _____ | Medium to XXL | \$25.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Extra large (XXXL) | \$30.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Blue with maze color and sleeve trim with "Staunton Military Academy" in gold lettering now in stock. Optional lettering of "SMA/VWIL Museum" is not a stock item. Filled upon request. | | |
| _____ | Old Boys buckle (silver) | \$20.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Officer's buckle (gold) | \$20.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Leather Belt | \$15.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Sizes 28, 32 available | | |
| _____ | Leather garrison belt (50") | \$25.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Car Window Decal | \$ 3.50 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | "SMA Alumni" | | |
| _____ | Postcards | \$ 2.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | SMA Shoulder Patches | \$ 2.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Coffee Mugs | \$ 5.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Rank Insignia | \$ 1.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | S/Sgt. and PFC available | | |
| _____ | Blue Book (reprint) | \$10.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Artist Sketch | \$ 5.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | (Asphalt with South and North Barracks, Mess Hall) | | |
| _____ | Artist Sketch | \$ 5.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Two available (check your choices): [1] a 17" x 7 1/4" sketch of ___ South Barracks ___ Administration Building ___ Mess Hall ___ Kable Hall ___ North Barracks or [2] a 14" x 9" sketch of the ___ Asphalt ___ Memorial Hall ___ Kable Hall ___ North Barracks. | | |
| _____ | License Plate Holders | \$10.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Black metal with "Staunton Military Academy" in white lettering. | | |
| _____ | License Plate Sign | \$10.00 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | White metal with "SMA ALUMNI" in blue lettering with the gold hat shield in the center. | | |
| _____ | Shipping charges must be added: | | |
| _____ | \$ 0.00 to \$30.00 | \$ 5.95 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$31.00 to \$70.00 | \$ 6.75 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$71.00 and above | \$ 7.95 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Total: | | \$ _____ |

Please print!

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ZIP: _____ Telephone: (_____) _____

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Staunton Military Academy Alumni Association, Incorporated

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SMA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC. MEMBERSHIP DUES

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

- Dues (\$50.00) will be credited for fiscal year September 1, 2005 - August 31, 2006).
- Dues are not tax deductible. Please make checks payable to: SMA Alumni Association.
- Funds are used to maintain the office, publish newsletters, and help support the annual Reunion.

SMA FOUNDATION, INC. ANNUAL FUND

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

- Contributions are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to SMA Foundation, Inc./Annual Fund
- Donations are used for the SMA museum and scholarships, and related expenses.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: Home: _____ E-mail: _____



Complete this form, include your check(s) and mail to SMAAA. Your support and involvement are critical to the continued success of the association and the activities and programs that have been developed and implemented in the memory of Staunton Military Academy, the Corps of Cadets and staff.



SMA Alumni Association

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