



## Past Alumni Association President Death takes Ron Mahanes, '53

Ronnie Armstrong Mahanes, 59, President of the Augusta Military Academy Alumni Association from 1984 through 1986, passed away after a long illness on 4 July 1995 in Sunset, SC.

After AMA, Ron attended the American University and was the previous owner of The Flower Mart and University-Mahanes Florist in Charlottesville, the city where he was born.

While in Charlottesville, Ron was elected president of the Exchange Club. He was a member of the Orange Chapter of Harley Owners Group, and had been active on the Democratic State Committee in his home state, Virginia.

Alumni Association President **Gary Nicholson, '70**, called Ron, "*one of the truest friends Augusta*

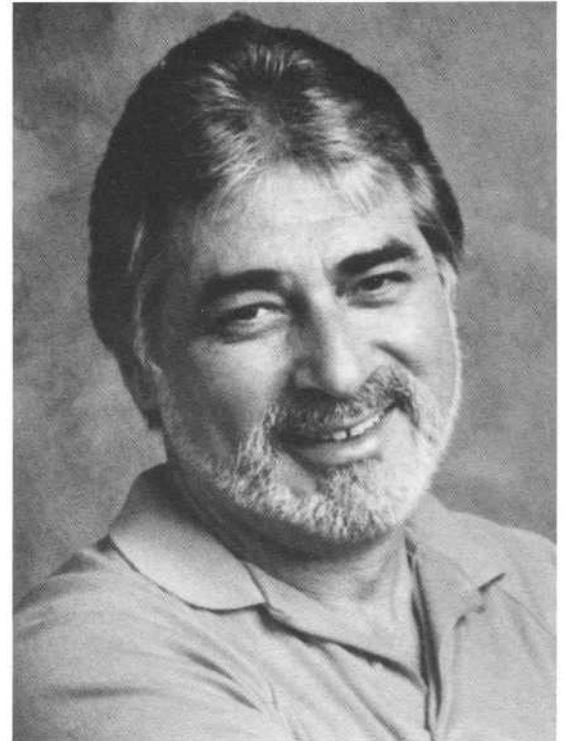
*ever had. We were saddened to hear that he had lost his battle to the illness he had fought with such strength and courage.*" Ron attended the 1995 Reunion in May, though he was too ill to participate in all the functions.

**Goodloe Saunders, '57**, who bought the flower businesses from Ronnie, said that "*Ron lived and breathed AMA. It was his avocation. He was always 'talking up' the school and telling everyone what a wonderful place AMA was, and all it meant to him and his family.*"

He is survived by his wife, Dora "Doe" Harmon Mahanes; his mother, Virginia Lang Mahanes; his children, Ronnie A. Mahanes, II of Charlottesville, Gary Wayland Mahanes of Charleston, SC, Melanie Lang Mahanes-Scates of Richmond, and Spencer Armstrong Mahanes of Charlottesville; and two step-daughters, Theresa A. Theodose and Lynn T. Theodose of Boulder, CO.

He also is survived by one brother, **Dr. James R. Mahanes, '56**, of Easley, SC.

Doe is living at 1119 Cleo Chapman Highway, Sunset, SC 29685. Memorials may be made to Hospice of the Piedmont, 1290 Seminole Trail, Charlottesville, VA 22901, or to the AMA Legacy Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 101, Fort Defiance, VA 24437-0101. (See page 5)



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of World War II - 9

**Augusta Military Academy  
Alumni Association, Inc.**



September 1995

Dear Fellow Alumnus:

We were all saddened to hear that our dear friend **Ron Mahanes, '53**, had lost his battle to the illness he had fought with such courage and strength. Our sincere condolences go out to Doe, and to all of his family and friends. Every Augusta alumnus owes Ron an unamended debt. His every waking thought was for his school, its traditions, and the hoped for reopening.

Ron was a strong supporter of a new program for alumni to honor their school - the AMA Legacy Scholarship Fund. His wish was fulfilled, and now each year the child or grandchild of an AMA alumnus receives a \$1000 scholarship to attend college, or some other postsecondary study course.

What better tribute to Ron than a contribution to the Legacy Scholarship Fund in his name! I am humbled and privileged to be the first person to make a donation to the new Honors and Memorials program described on page 5. My donation, and hopefully yours, will help assure that AMA's heritage is preserved, and that deserving offspring of Augusta men get an education.

If Ron can see us now, I know that he is smiling. I believe this is exactly what he would want in tribute to all he did for our beloved AMA, as its former Alumni Association President, and as a Alumni Association Board member for many years. I hope you'll join me in this tribute to a very good friend.

*K. Gary Nicholson, '70*

President, AMA Alumni Association, Inc.



Newsletter of the AMA Alumni Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 101, Fort Defiance, VA 24437-0101

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The *Bayonet* welcomes information and articles for or about AMA alumni. Share the news of promotions, awards, retirement, births, marriages, deaths, etc. Please print or type your submission.

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## **AMA Wilderness Academy plans moving ahead**

Colonel Eugene Nervo, operator of the Wilderness Academy in Craig County, VA, has told *The Bayonet* that he has gotten "the major part of the financing necessary to purchase the AMA buildings and grounds."

By unanimous vote, the Augusta County Board of Zoning Appeals has approved a special use permit which would enable Nervo to open a school for "at risk" boys at AMA as early as September 20. Initially, Nervo would use only the gymnasium and Davis Hall (J Barracks).

### **Bankruptcy Court**

The Federal Bankruptcy Court, which has control of the property since the Culbertson family defaulted on a Crestar Bank

loan, has given Nervo until early September to come up with all the necessary funding. Nervo says that "we have overcome one hurdle, but we still have a way to go before we'll have full funding of the purchase."

### **Neighbors sue**

A group of 20 Fort Defiance residents, most of them relatively new to the area, have gone to court to block the sale to Nervo, saying they are concerned about their "safety and well-being." Colonel Nervo, a retired Marine Corps officer, previously had met with local residents, trying to alleviate their concerns. Several of the 20 names on the petition have been questioned by Nervo who indicated that they were added to the petition without the permission of the people named. No date has been set for a court hearing on the petition.

# Class Notes \ Class Notes \ Class Notes

1930

**Rear Admiral Joseph Yon** was in the VMI Class of '34, then received his medical degree at the University of Virginia. He joined the Navy Medical Corps in 1938 and retired in 1972. Son Joe majored in medicine and Don majored in law, both at UVa.

**Ed Hildebrand** lives in Staunton. His dear wife, Susan, passed away 7 May 1995. Our thoughts are with you, Ed.

1936

**Colonel Sam Jordan, USAF, Retired**, has sold the family farm in Smithfield, VA that has been in the family for 150 years. Sam is living in Colorado Springs, and attended the 71st Recon Group reunion in his hometown.

1937

**Bill Gray**, the Alumni Association Chaplain, and Betty Taylor were married 12 August at the Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Alexandria, VA. Congratulations to Bill and Betty!

**Rudy Crisman**, football star at AMA and Alabama (where he played in the Rose Bowl) celebrated his 80th birthday on 21 August. Rudy is recovering from triple bypass surgery.

1938

**Captain Larry Kurtz, USN, Retired**, has been busy checking up on his two children and nine grandkids. He took time off to take his RV to Big Bend National Park in Texas. He is now

working with the Emergency Management teams in his hometown, Punta Gorda, FL, setting up an airborne television program to survey post-storm damage during the hurricane season.

1939

**Mickey Gordon** and Libby retraced Mickey's steps in World War II. First, a nostalgic visit to Okinawa where Mick fought with the First Marine Division; then, a trip to China where the Gordons visited with **Alvaro Escallon, '41**, Columbia's Ambassador to China.



**Mickey Gordon, '39**, a Marine on Guadalcanal in 1944, top; and, bottom, trading a Washington, DC police patch for a Shanghai patch, July, 1995.

**George Leatherman** and Nellie have lived the last 54 years on the family farm in Old Fields, WV. Son George graduated from West Point in 1973. Son Albert went to West Point for a year, then transferred to West Virginia where he received a degree in civil engineering.

**V.P. Leavel** writes that he is "glad to be back in Virginia". He has just relocated to Staunton.

1943

**Earl Cabaniss** would do just about anything to get his hands on a 1941 *Recall*. He says if someone can "make a copy, I will be glad to pay for the copying." Earl and Faye visited California's Bay area in mid-July and had dinner with **Bob Bradford, '50**, and Nancy.

**Judge B. A. "Monk" Davis** is looking for **Willard A. Craft** who attended AMA with him. Does anyone know what has happened to him? After AMA, Monk went in the Air Corps as an aerial gunner; came home and went to W&L; finished Law School in '51, and has been a Circuit Court Judge in Rocky Mount, VA since 1973. He was Chairman of the Council on Criminal Justice in 1978, appointed by the late Governor John Dalton.

**John Younger** has written from East Point, GA, looking for two guys who were at AMA with him - one named **Frickie** from Little Rock and a **Smith** from Fayetteville, NC. Can you help John find his two classmates?



**1944**

**John Hockman** writes from West Point, VA that his son-in-law is Chief of Staff and Head Coach of the P.G. football program at Hargrave Military Academy. John says Hargrave's games with Fork Union remind him of the traditional AMA-SMA rivalry.

**1945**

**Donald W. Browne** has retired from Pittsburgh Plate Glass after 30 years. He and Carolyn celebrated 46 years of marriage in March. Their daughter teaches school in Maryville, TN and his son, a West Pointer, is a lieutenant colonel and battalion commander at Fort Stewart.

**1946**

**Colonel Jimmy Pigg, USA, Retired**, left the Army in 1982 and retired "for the last time" in 1993 as manager of a resort condo. Jimmy is doing volunteer work for his church and at Elgin Air Force Base. He often visits his son in Atlanta, his daughter and granddaughter in Goldsboro, NC, and he goes on Caribbean cruises whenever possible.

**Dr. Paul Moerschell** writes us from Virginia Beach that he is practicing dentistry in Chesapeake. He recently bought a 24-foot boat and is spending much of his time on the water. Paul is a tournament bridge player and loves woodworking.

**1947**

**John Herring** has returned home to Richmond from a tour

of France and Italy with 21 students from James Madison University.

**Bobbie Bowie** lives on St. Simons Island, GA.

**1948**

**Richard McLaughlin** has made arrangements to get a mother and her two children out of war-torn Sarajevo. Working with his Rotary Club in Babylon, NY and the UN, Richard will host the family at his home.



**Richard McLaughlin, '48, at his circa 1800 house in Babylon, NY.**

**Bill Rand** plans a trip to Washington, DC to visit the Korean War Memorial. Bill served in the Army from 1952 to 1954 during that war.

**Hal Walters** and Nancy will attend the US Naval Academy's 150th Anniversary in October. He finished at Annapolis in '53 and served on a destroyer during the Korean War. Hal is still teaching golfing fundamentals in the local Palm Beach, FL school system.

**Bill Harris** and Frances attended the 100th Anniversary of his old Public School 6 in New York City in May. They are in their busiest time of the year at the *Heart of My Heart* Bed and Breakfast in Round Top, TX.

**1949**

**Louie Philhower** has lived in Macon, GA since 1957. He owned a brokerage company specializing in industrial revenue bonds. He and Mary have three children and three grandchildren. He went to Ireland in April for a week with 35 other J.C. Bradford brokers. Hopes some alumni will get off I-75 to come and visit him.

**Buddy Cole** retired from the National Casket Company in 1985 after 21 years. He and Connie have been married 42 years. They have two children - Susan Cole Friend and Bill Cole, Jr., and three grandkids. Buddy said he is proud of the White Page he got his senior year, but it was because "I just didn't get caught!"

**Thorne McLoney** lives in Cynthiana, KY. After attending Duke and Trinity College, he received his degree by certified mail in the day room of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery on Smoke Bomb Hill at Fort Bragg!

**1950**

**Jim Starnes** founded and was CEO of FYI Online, a computerized database, a joint venture between MCI and Equifax.

(continued on page 6)

