

# GYMKANA NEWSLETTER

Vol. XXXII

December 2006

## **Gymkana at 60 - Remembering the Past, Looking Forward to the Future**

After a successful 2006 Road Show season, Gymkana celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at its April 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Home Shows in the Comcast Center.

During halftime of the April 8<sup>th</sup> Home Show, Gymkana troupers, coaches, alumni and special guests participated in a ceremony honoring several of the people most responsible for Gymkana's 60 years of success.

Current Director Scott Welsh started out the ceremony by talking about past Director Dr. Joseph Murray. Dr. Murray then came to the floor and talked about his mentor, Dr. George Kramer.

Then Chuck Pinkney, one of the original members of the Troupe, talked about Dr. David A. Field, Gymkana's Founder. Flanked by other original members of the Troupe, two of Dr. Field's children, a grandchild and his widow, Muriel, and the current members and coaches of Gymkana, Chuck then officially presented a plaque that commemorates the accomplishments of Dr. Field.

This presentation and the plaque itself were a year in the making. This effort was spearheaded by Al Kuckhoff and Chuck Pinkney, as well as other alumni, who personally designed and purchased the plaque.

The inscription on the plaque reads:

## **Memorial**

**Dr. David A. Field  
1917 -- 1998**

**In remembrance of Dave Field, founder of the University of Maryland Gymkana Troupe in 1946, from we who knew him then as our mentor and coach. Showman, innovator, improviser, organizer, promoter and tireless worker, Dave led his Troupe through its first six, formative years with performances for audiences throughout the Eastern Seaboard. A winner, Dave's Gymkana gymnastic team presented the UofM with a conference championship in 1950. Dave's constant pursuit of excellence inspired all who knew him. Multi-talented, Dave was also a WW II veteran, Air Force pilot- Pacific theater, an expert gymnast, professional acrobat, scholar, author and Ph.D. Dave had a lasting influence on all those of us who knew him 'when'. On this, the 60th anniversary of Gymkana, we dedicate this plaque to Dave whose Gymkana Troupe gave us some of the best days of our lives. His legacy continues for countless others- a sense of fun, a sense of humor, strong minds and bodies to carry through life. Thank you, Dave, for all that. You are fondly remembered**

Indeed Dr. Field is very fondly remembered. Now the plaque hangs on a wall in Gymkana's gym, looking out at the legacy he started, and teaching the troupers of today and tomorrow about one of the men who made their Gymkana years possible.

**Message from Gymkana's Head Coach and Director - Mr. Scott Welsh**

Happy Holidays to all! And my thanks also to all of you who came to Home Show last year. Your attendance made the celebration of Gymkana's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary all the more special. Let me also express my thanks to Al Kuckhoff, Chuck Pinkney and all of the alumni who designed and funded the memorial plaque to Dr. David A. Field. It was definitely a wonderful addition to the celebration and a fitting tribute to the Founder of the Gymkana Troupe.

Looking at this year, as the first half of our 2006-2007 season comes to a close, I wanted to let all of you know of some great things that are happening with this years Troupe. To begin, we have well over 60 members making it yet another strong recruiting year for Gymkana and with the large number of graduating seniors last year it is very exciting to have such a strong incoming class! Our experienced troupers are doing an excellent job of showing all the new people to our program how things work both in and out of the gym. All of our members are stepping up to the challenge of making this rebuilding year one of creativity as well as a high skill level!

In the area of fundraising, I'm happy to report that the troupers had great success raising funds with a Flip-a-thon, an event sort of like a Bike-a-thon, except that the troupers received pledges from friends, relatives and others for a certain amount of money (1 cent, 2 cents, etc.) for each flip done by the troupers in a ten-minute period. The event was a great success, with a large audience in attendance. And of course it was a lot of fun.

We are constantly looking for new ways, such as the Flip-a-Thon, to raise money, but please know that your support would be invaluable. As always, any donations you give will be completely tax

deductible.

You can make checks out to:  
**University of Maryland Foundation - Gymkana.**

Please send all donations to:  
**Mr. Scott Welsh  
Head Coach / Director  
University of Maryland Gymkana Troupe  
Rm 1120D Bldg. 255 Valley Drive  
College Park, MD 20742**

Thank you.

For any of you that find yourself able to get out to UM for an evening, we would love to have you drop in for practice, starting Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. Practice times are as follows:

Monday 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.  
Thursday 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Friday Noon - 2:00 p.m.

I am pleased to say that Josh, Todd, Tiff and Rachel are all back once again this year to coach with me. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their continued support and for adjusting their personal schedules as much as possible to attend and coach during our practice times. My heartfelt thanks to all of them.

I also want to thank the College of Health and Human Performance for its continued support and dedication to our cause. The Dean, Dr. Robert Gold, and I have been in communication as to how Gymkana can continue to act as a strong outreach program for our college and University. I wish to thank the entire college, the Dean's office staff and everyone here at Maryland for standing behind our tradition.

As for our Spring Season, our schedule is full and you all can catch up with us online by viewing pictures, video clips and checking out our upcoming show schedule on [www.gymkana.umd.edu](http://www.gymkana.umd.edu).

Gymkana Vaulting was very well received at Maryland Madness, the celebration for the kickoff of the Maryland Basketball season. Furthermore the team showed a great deal of promise at our Mock Show on December 8<sup>th</sup>. We hope you will follow our season as much as possible and come out and join us for Home Show.

Home Show this year is scheduled for April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2007 at 7:00 p.m. All of us here hope many of you can come back to see Gymkana's growth and to share some of your own experiences with our current troupers. You can once again feel free to check our website for more detailed info about tickets and such for Home Show as April draws closer.

On a personal note, I am engaged to be married. Many of you met Kate at last year's Home Show as she jumped right in to help out on the light board and helped to coordinate all of the behind the scenes stuff to make last years 60<sup>th</sup> go off without a hitch. She is an amazing woman and I am very lucky to have met someone so dedicated to helping Gymkana as well as putting up with me. Kate was a Maryland Cheerleader, a Baltimore Ravens cheerleader, and a mighty fine tumbler and stunter I might add. With her experience, she has definitely given me some new ideas to help put a new spin on some of the acts. This year has been full of so many blessings for me. We will be married on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and are both very excited to share this information with all of you.

I hope this holiday season finds all of you healthy, happy and surrounded by family and friends. Please don't be a stranger. I'd love to see many more of your faces in the gym. Thanks for your years of support! Happy Holidays once again and see you at Home Show!

### **Message from Gymkana's President - Ben Prescott**

Dear Alumnus,

I am happy to report that we have had an excellent first half of our 2006-2007 season. I would like to start off by thanking everyone who supported us through our Flip-a-Thon this semester! I am very pleased to say that despite many early uncertainties, our Flip-a-Thon turned out to be a very successful fundraiser. As I am sure you already know, Gymkana could not be where it is today without the support of our alumni, families, and friends.

With the success of our Flip-a-Thon, recruitment campaign, and three vaulting performances already behind us, I feel very good about our upcoming show season. Our thrilling performance during this year's televised Maryland Madness was thought by many of the cheering fans in Comcast Center to be one of our best in years. Also following our recent performance at a Washington Wizards game, a young woman approached a group of us to state that she enjoyed our performance even more than the basketball game.

With a talented group of both new and returning members, I look forward to us coming together and having another undoubtedly exciting show season!

Best Wishes and Happy Holidays!

### **Best Act and Best Troupers 2005-2006**

Congratulations to all of the members of the **Ladders Act** for winning the Best Act Award.

Congratulations also to **Ben Prescott** and **Angie Zavaglia** for being voted by their fellow troupers as the 2005 Best Male and Female Troupers.

### **Congratulations**

Belated congratulations to alumnus **Barbara (Bobbie) Farrier (maiden name - Baumann)** and her husband, Jim, on the celebration of their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. (Actually now it is closer to 51 years.) Barbara was on the Troupe from 1951 to 1953, but reports that she still works out at a gym. Way to go, Barbara!

Going from a marriage that has endured, to one that just started - Belated congratulations to alumnus Marcia Gutierrez and her husband, Bret, on their marriage on August 20th, 2005. The couple now lives in the San Francisco Bay area, so Marcia requests that if any of her fellow alumni are out there to drop her a line. Her contact info will be on the Alumni Page of Gymkana's website: [www.gymkana.umd.edu](http://www.gymkana.umd.edu)

And finally we are happy to report the engagement of alumnus **Shannon Teates** to Matthew Giusto, a graduate of Lehigh University ('03). Shannon was on the Troupe from 1997 to 2001. The wedding date is set for September 1, 2007.

### **Regrets**

It is with sadness that we report the passing of **Bill Foland**, one of the founding members of the Gymkana Troupe. A veteran of World War II, Bill passed away shortly after his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Our condolences to his family, friends and fellow original troupers. He will be missed.

### **Alumni News**

As always, if you have any news you would like to share with your fellow alumni, please email it to:

**[tsupple@erols.com](mailto:tsupple@erols.com)**

The next newsletter is scheduled to come out in February or March 2007.

### **Website Address Change**

Please note that Gymkana's website has changed to [www.gymkana.umd.edu](http://www.gymkana.umd.edu). It's there that you can find the latest information about the Troupe, including the 2007 Show Schedule, pictures from past shows and Alumni information.

### **2007 Gymkana Saturday Gymnastics Classes**

If you know of any boys or girls ages 8 to 16 who are interested in learning gymnastics, Gymkana's Saturday Classes may be perfect for them. The 8-week program begins January 27<sup>th</sup> and goes through March 31<sup>st</sup>. Further information and a registration form are attached.

And remember that Gymkana will once again have a Summer Camp in 2007. More details will be in the next newsletter as well as on Gymkana's website.

### **Gymkana at a School Near You?**

While our schedule is full for this coming road-show season, we are always looking for new places to put on Gymkana performances in future years. If you know of a school in your area that might be interested in having the Troupe perform there, and bring the message of drug-alcohol-and-tobacco-free living, please contact Scott Welsh at 301-405-2566.