

Ribault Senior High School
Jacksonville, Florida

Class of 1967



April 2025, No. 19

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



*I can see clearly now, the [pollen] is gone
I can see all obstacles in my way
Gone are the dark clouds that had me blind
It's gonna be a bright (bright), bright (bright)
Sun-shiny day*

I Can See Clearly Now by Johnny Nash

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_rB4v75jqU

We can see clearly now, Spring is here and the pollen is gone! Hope all of you enjoyed a relaxing, cozy winter snuggling up (except you, Elisabeth North Nightingale, who I know hates winter no matter what), sitting in front of fireplaces or pits, eating warm, wholesome soups and sipping hot chocolate. For you Floridians, those days are behind you and “a season of rebirth and renewal, characterized by warmer temperatures, blooming flowers, increasing daylight hours, and the awakening of nature after winter is here.” ♦ AI Overview

GO GATORS—MARCH MADNESS

The Florida Gators are headed back this weekend to the Final Four for the first time since 2014. They will play the Auburn Tigers on **Saturday, April 5, 2025 at 6:09 p.m.**

**TWO BITS, FOUR BITS, SIX BITS, A DOLLAR,
ALL FOR THE GATORS, STAND UP AND HOLLER!**



REUNION COMMITTEE NEWS

By Vanesa Perry Bowden, Vice Chairman

A Red-Letter Day

Webster's Dictionary, one we all used in our years at Ribault High School, defines a "Red-Letter Day" as "a special, happy, and important day that you will always remember." While it may not seem significant to most of you, the day that your Reunion Committee's Bylaws were completed and approved by a majority vote of the Committee was definitely a Red-Letter Day for those who spent a considerable amount of time and effort attempting to simplify them yet still maintain the necessary structure and guidelines for the smooth operation of your Reunion Committee.

The first meeting of those appointed by Chairman Pat Knezevich to complete this task, whose members were Vanesa Perry Bowden, Alice Bartlett Mabry, Ken Sellers, Sharon Lane, Eddie Dedmon and Charlene Barrow Catlett, only served to prove that we were educated to be free thinkers at Ribault High School. In other words, we all had our own opinion about revising, or not revising, the Bylaws.

What made the final product memorable is that we ultimately were able to pool our various thoughts together to come up with a document that could be approved by the entire Committee. That day was worth commemorating with a celebration, something that is becoming more and more frequent as we find that we like to party and, more importantly, we like to party with each other (and all of you as well).

On Tuesday, March 18, a group of us met at Joseph's Pizza on Main Street, a restaurant we all frequented when we were out cruising or on a special date during our high school

years, to witness Chairman Knezevich sign the revised Bylaws and make their adoption official.

It occurs to me that we could have another Red-Letter Day if you are ever in town or thinking you might enjoy a Joseph's pizza for old-time's sake. If so, just let us know and we will be right there with you!



Celebratory lunch at Joseph's Pizza
L-R: Vanesa, Sharon, Lucy, Ray,
Jeri, Elisabeth, Ken, Charlene,
Carrie and Pat (you know their last
names by now)



Chairman Knezevich signing the
approved Reunion Committee
Bylaws.



Vanesa and Pat proudly showing
the approved Bylaws. That's
Carrie sitting beside her
husband, Pat.

What Does a Reunion Committee Do When No Events are Coming Up?

One thing I have learned since joining the Reunion Committee is that there is no such thing as a hiatus or a rest period. You are always looking forward to your next event, even if it is two plus years away. Almost every conversation references some new idea or suggestion for what would be “fun” for the Reunion.

While our next one will be our 60th in 2027 and we have plenty of time to gear up for it, **WE ARE ALREADY ACTIVELY PLANNING.** At the end of April we will have a special meeting for three teams to make presentations on their vision for a “Perfect Reunion.” After those presentations we will evaluate our suggestions and come up with a rough plan for that most special reunion.

We encourage your involvement and are always willing to hear your suggestions so please don't hesitate to contribute them. From time to time we may even send group emails to solicit specific things from you. Please know that your participation is very much welcomed and can lead to everyone having a little something that they would like when we gather together in 2027.

In addition to planning for the Reunion, we are participating in and planning some fundraising events. Our goal is to make the Reunion as nice and affordable for everyone as possible. You will later read in the newsletter about our recent bingo night where we earned over \$1,000 for doing something that ended up being more enjoyable than work.

In the future we will be doing more bingo nights, a fall carnival, and may even be able to sell ads for a written program we will be assembling. If you have your own business or have a special relationship with a business owner, you might be able to help with that venture. We did something similar for our 40th reunion and it was profitable.

Do you have a great idea for a fundraiser? Please let us know. Any and all ideas will be considered. We had a very profitable 50/50 raffle at our 75th Birthday Party and the man behind that raffle, none other than Ray Godbee, has already said that we need to raise enough funds so we can enjoy prime rib for dinner. Sounds like a good plan to me!

The next scheduled meeting of the Reunion Committee will be held at the Highlands Regional Library on Dunn Avenue on **Saturday, April 26, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** New members are always welcomed.

B-I-N-G-O ‘67 Style

By Sharon Lane

Do you remember the song we sang back in the day?

There was a farmer, had a dog and Bingo was his name—O.

B-I-N-G-O!

B-I-N-G-O!

B-I-N-G-O!

and Bingo was his name—O!

Well your Reunion Committee went farming for some bucks at a bingo night sponsored by The Knights Of Columbus at Pat Knezevich's church, Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church.

Beverly (Coyner) Hadley and John Hadley volunteered in the kitchen helping to prepare food.

Cathy Copps Hillis helped out in the kitchen and also helped with securing trash bags to tables and cleaning up at the end of the evening.

Vanesa Perry Bowden was the runner taking the bingo pot to each of the winners. Vanesa got a great compliment from the bingo caller stating that she was the fastest and most pleasant of other past runners and that she should continue doing this job.

Pat, aside from his other duties, walked the room selling 50/50 tickets. The 50/50 jackpot was \$660 thus \$330 for the winner.

Sharon Lane worked at the front table assisting with the sale of bingo packets and specializing in the very skilled job of tearing the 50/50 tickets apart.

Jeri Brooker Friend, Bobby Friend and Charlene Barrow Catlett helped tape trash bags to each table in preparation for the night.

In total there were about 120 folks in attendance most of whom seemed to be accomplished bingo warriors. Included in that number was Mrs. Marsha Brackett Miller (Class of '67 sponsor and social studies teacher) and Mrs. Eloise Spatafora Beyerle (science teacher and cheerleading sponsor) who came to support our cause. It was soooo good to see them and we certainly appreciate all their support through the many years.

Our group of '67ers learned quickly how to groan with the best of them when we didn't win the pot for that game. We laughed a lot, perhaps disrupting the kinda serious atmosphere of the seasoned players. You should have seen how exuberant we were when first Cathy pulled in a \$50 pot and shortly thereafter Jeri won the big jackpot of the night that was a whopping \$250. We yelled and jumped up and down (as well as our 75-year-old bodies can jump these days) making quite a spectacle of ourselves! As Jeri said, "our tables had the 'mostest' fun!" Y'all would have been so very proud of how we '67ers led the way in just pure enjoyment.

So how did we come to volunteer at this event? The Knights run a Bingo event once a month. They invite groups to volunteer time in exchange for splitting the profits. Many thanks to Pat who set us up to participate in the March bingo night at his church. The money we received will go to help offset the cost of our 60th Reunion scheduled for 2 1/2 years down the road. We anticipate being able to do this all over again at another of these bingo nights and with that in mind, we hope you will plan to come next time to join in a bunch of fun and aid in continuing our slightly outrageous '67 behavior. Please keep a regular check on our class Facebook page and our website where we will advertise well ahead of time so you can mark your calendar.

It is worth noting that this is just one of the activities the Reunion Committee will be doing as we move toward the celebration of 60 years since our graduation. We hope that you will plan to participate in each and every event to assist in our fundraising efforts. In the past our fundraising dollars have paid for items like the rental of a facility/room for the reunion activities, for the dance floor, for deposits, for desserts, for the DJ, and for a variety of other upfront costs. We have been able to reduce individual costs by a considerable amount and are focusing on doing just that this time. With your help we will be able to reach our goal.

All in all the evening netted **\$1025** for the class but the laughter and fellowship far exceeded any financial reward (well almost). You just gotta plan to come and have fun with us next time. Hope to see you soon!



Cathy thrilled at her \$50 winnings.



Pat getting some coffee to help him make it through the night.



Mrs. Brackett Miller and Jeri enjoying seeing each other again.



Mary Ann having a good time.



Charlene, Jeri, Bobby and Cathy behaving (at the moment)



Jeri showing off her \$250 winnings to hubby, Bobby.

FEATURED TEACHERS

Mrs. Marsha Brackett Miller

After seven years at Ribault, I transferred to Ed White, where I retired in 2003. While at White, I sponsored Student Council and some classes. Also coached diving. However no class I ever sponsored was as Great as the Class of 67 at Ribault!!!

Retirement Years:

Spend time with family, especially my son, his wife and two grown grandsons (23 & 21). Play duplicate bridge two or three times a week and go to tournaments. I have achieved Silver and Ruby Life Master*.

Love to go to Gator sports events, especially football as a season ticket holder. Go Gators!

I travel a lot and go to casinos (Biloxi and Vegas) .

I have had a fantastic life and have enjoyed my retirement as I did my teaching years (38). And, of course, some of my best memories were when I sponsored the Class of 67 and also at the reunions! You all are awesome!!!

*Editor's Note: In the American Contract Bridge League, a Silver Life Master requires a Life Master with 1,000+ masterpoints, while a Ruby Life Master needs 1,750+ masterpoints.



Mrs. Brackett Miller at her beloved Ben Hill Stadium.

Mrs. Eloise Spatafora Beyerle

1964—1971 Taught at Ribault Sr. High School.

1969 Married.

1971—1975 Had three children and did not teach.

1978—2005 Returned to teaching at Sacred Heart Catholic School as 7th and 8th grade Math and Science teacher; retired from Sacred Heart.

2020 Widowed.

In all those early years we traveled extensively. My husband was also a teacher and we used summers to travel the United States (have been to all 50 states). When we became empty nesters, we expanded our travels to Europe, Australia, Caribbean, Canada, Mexico and Northern European. Some of these places we visited more than once. I still continue to travel, sometimes with my children or with friends and I recently visited Greece with a church group.

I spend some of my free time volunteering. I volunteer at my church and for the last 20 years I have volunteered to work with AARP Tax-Aide doing tax returns.

For fun I enjoy playing cards and Mahjong and belong to a Wii bowling league in the community I live in. At one time I was a mediocre golfer.

I have been to several class reunions, most recent was the Class of '68 and I always enjoy seeing how well former students are doing.

My years teaching at Ribault were very dear to me and I loved every day that I was there. So many wonderful students and co-workers. Facebook has enabled me to keep those memories alive. As a side note, Mrs. Bracket Miller has been a part of my life since we first met in 1964.



ELOISE SPATAFORA
BS Fla State Univ.



RIBAULT ALUMNI DINNERS CONTINUE AT A NEW TIME



Next Bono's alumni dinner night is this coming **Thursday, April 3**. Due to daylight saving time, dinner is now at **5 p.m.** Bono's address is 4907 Beach Boulevard. Please let Vanesa know if you would like to attend so she can make sure enough space is reserved. vpbowden33@gmail.com

PRAYER REQUESTS

For **Beverly Weeks O'Steen** and her family. Beverly lost her "sweet" husband on February 19, 2025. Beverly said it was quite a shock because he had been doing so well health wise.

<https://www.joepburnsfuneralhomes.com/obituary/irving-osteen>

missbeverlyandpapa@windstream.net

For **Brenda Budd Russell** and her family. Brenda's husband of 56 years, Larry, passed away on March 25, 2025. Larry grew a full white beard and played Santa at various malls all over the county for many years. He was also an avid hunter traveling on an African Safari, bear hunting in Vancouver Island, moose hunting in Newfoundland, fishing in Alaska, and various other places in the United States.

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/middleburg-fl/larry-russell-12307682-russell24167@bellsouth.net>

For the family of our classmate **George "Billy" Davenport**. Sharon Lane was Billy's cousin and she said Billy passed away unexpectedly on March 30. No further details are available at this time. More information will be posted on our Facebook page and website when known.

gwdavenport@att.net

PLEASE LET US HEAR FROM YOU

There is no way we can know about every illness or death or when your email address changes unless you let us know. We promise if you will let us know, we will do our part to keep you well informed.

If you are not already on our "Ribault High School '67' FB Friends" page, please join us. This is our most direct form of communication and we have over 100 classmates on our page. We have rules that keep our page fun and safe. In order to join our page, you have to have a connection to our class.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/336958183371434/>

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HAPPY APRIL FOOLS DAY

