



Bennett Beacon

published in conjunction with Mr. Lange's Leadership Class

Bennett High School

WINTER 2014

Vol. 16/ISSUE No. 2

Bennett High School • 2885 Main Street • Buffalo, New York 14214 • (716) 816-4250 • www.bennettalumni.com

From Our President

We are pleased to announce that Bennett High School has a new principal starting this year. He is Dr. Terry Ross. At a recent Alumni board meeting, he told us how impressed he was with the strong support the Alumni Association gives to the school.



**Irene Greene
President**

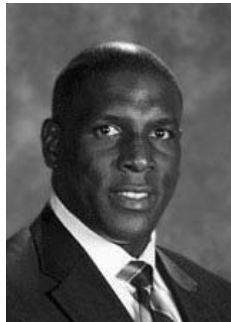
With your support this year, we are giving a total amount of over \$5,700 in mini grants to the school. These grants are requested by the teachers, viewed by the principal and granted by the Alumni Association. We are sponsoring field trips, technical education and art supplies, music equipment and monies to support projects that will enhance our students' educational experiences. Your generosity has enabled us to grant these requests and we would like to thank you for your support. Your dollars are so appreciated by the principal, the teachers, the students, and the alumni because, without you, we could not do this.

We started our new membership year in September. We are quite a bit behind last year's numbers and are imploring each of you (if you

*see President's Message
Page 5*

Principal's Message

It is with great excitement and anticipation that I join the Bennett Family. I am honored to have been chosen to lead a school with such rich history and tradition. As we continue to marshal Bennett into an era of innovation and growth, we will build on this rich tradition as we create and embark on new frontiers that will prepare our scholars for their time. It is essential that our scholars are equipped with global academic proficiencies and a world class education.



**Dr. Terry Ross
Principal**

Our teachers will use data driven decision making and data driven instruction to move our scholars to levels of proficiencies not yet realized. We will challenge ourselves, our scholars, our parents and the greater community to look beyond our current reality and envision a school community that is thriving with innovation, scholar engagement, scholars' projects and a 'scholar first' mind-set. It is our goal to prepare our scholars with the academic and social emotional competencies that they need to be college and career ready and, most of all, productive, contributing citizens to society.

I have had the opportunity to meet with the Bennett Alumni on many occasions and on many different levels. I must say that I have never encountered a high school alumni association with the organization, dedication and commitment to excellence as I have with the Bennett Alumni. I brag on the BLUE and ORANGE everywhere I go because you all deserve it. The Bennett Alumni have afforded our scholars many opportunities that I know we could not have done without your support.

Our alumni provide mentoring, tutoring, job shadowing, college scholarship support and exposure to such events as The Alumni Sports Hall of Fame Banquet, just to name a few. I have been in schools all over this country and I have yet to meet a high school association that provides this type of World-Class support to their alma mater. I want to THANK YOU for your support on behalf of our scholars. They may not know what this means to have the Bennett Alumni in our corner, however, you sure are great models for what is expected of them as they leave these sacred halls to take on the world and continue this great tradition of the Blue and Orange. I am looking forward to working with all of you as we nurture each scholar's individual talents and abilities and take Bennett to the next level. Go Tigers!!!

Bennett Beacon

Winter 2014 Vol. 16/Issue 2

2013 - 2014 Officers

BAA President

Irene McLeish Greene, '57

Vice Presidents

Carol Newman Caserta, '60
Kenya Hobbs, '91

Treasurer

Larry Levin, '57

Recording Secretary

Deby Fox-Hahn, '60

Corresponding Secretary

Roberta Allbert Dayer, '53

BHS Principal

Dr. Terry Ross

Directors

Class of 2014:

Phillip Brothman, '56
Cecilia Henderson, Faculty
Lawrence Levin, '57
Wayne Reilly, '47
Jeff Schapiro, '67
Allen Yasgur, '60

Class of 2015:

Linda Barker Moore, '68
Alan J. Bozer, '71
Carol Newman Caserta, '60
Adam Dzimian, Faculty
Kenya K. Hobbs, '91
Marsha Jadd, '58
Leonard Katz, MD, '53
Roshelle L. Lewis, '72

Class of 2016:

Roberta Allbert Dayer, '53
Jennie DePerro Brummer, Faculty
Deby Fox-Hahn, '60
Neil Lange, Faculty
Barbara Lewis Lewis, '59
Irene McLeish Greene, '57
Marilyn Wittman, Faculty
Jacqueline Hillary Jordan, '72

Mission Statement

We believe in the power of education to transform lives and society. To that end, as graduates of Bennett High School, we are committed to promoting equity and social justice through service and reaching out to students and faculty at our Alma Mater. We recognize the value of our support in assisting them in reaching their educational goals. The Bennett High School Alumni Association's contribution will be substantive and creative in order to achieve those goals.

Welcome

New Board Member!

Marilyn Wittman

Marilyn Wittman received her MBS from Rosary Hill College (Daemen) and her Masters in Education from Canisius College. She also did postgraduate work at Niagara University and UB. She began her career as a Business Teacher at Lafayette High School and then became a District Administrator for the Board of Education. She served as Principal of Bennett High School from 1984 to 2004.

We are delighted to have her on the Alumni Board of Directors!

Welcome

New Board Member!

Jackie Jordan

Jacqueline (Hillary) Jordan, '72, retired after 35 years of service with the Buffalo Board of Education, with 27 years of employment as a special education teacher at Bennett High School. She is active in her church as a musician and choral director. She also is an actress and costumer with the Paul Robeson Community Theater.

Jackie is right back at work coordinating the Alumni Mentoring Program! Welcome to the Board of Directors!

Sports Hall of Fame Honors Eleven

by Ken Parr, '57

On Saturday, October 5, 2013, the Bennett Sports Hall of Fame honored eleven new inductees. The proceedings commenced at 4:00 p.m. in the foyer of Bennett. With congratulatory handshakes, heartfelt hugs, and smiles of delight, the honorees, family members, former classmates and friends gathered to share their special evening. Display boards featuring highlights of the inductees' past accomplishments served as a suitable icebreaker for the assembled crowd. In addition, refreshments were available at nearby tables.

After all participants had arrived, proceedings moved to the auditorium! This year's class included athletes Tom Angelo, '53, Al Berke, '58, Randy Clay, '72, Annulett Dillon, '94, Kenya Hobbs, '90, Tom McClain, '64, Valerie Propeck McClimon, '91, Frank Ralabate, '59 and Owen Tober, '69. Peter Cammarata received the Earle Y. Hannel Memorial Award and Richard Mieth was honored with the Career Achievement Award.

Don Gilbert, '60 acted as Master of Ceremonies. Bennett Sports Hall of Fame Chairman, Larry Veronica, welcomed Bennett's new Principal, Dr. Terry Ross. A special presentation gift was presented to faculty member Neil Lange for his many contributions to the Bennett community and the Hall of Fame Committee. David White's, '70 superb video, highlighting each inductee's career, provided an exciting and memorable climax to the evening's festivities.

Another first in this year's event, was the presence of several coaches and captains of current varsity athletic teams at Bennett. These current leaders were impressed by the way the inductees emphasized in their speeches how athletic training and coaching had served as an inspiration not only in sports, but also for long-term scholastic pursuits.

**Our new
Membership Year
started in September!**
Have you renewed your
Membership?

Help Bennett Tigers Read to Succeed

by Ann Marie Vandercher, Librarian

Bennett High School Library is pleased to announce the launch of its new fund-raiser, Book Boosters. The program, which features simplified on-line monetary contributions, is designed to provide the school with books that promote literacy and support the curriculum. Our goal is to raise \$5000.00 to boost our collection. The campaign runs from the present to March 31, 2014.

This program is unusual because 100 percent of proceeds go toward buying books. The fund-raising campaign is being run through Perma-Bound Books, a provider of books and teaching materials to schools and libraries worldwide. All of the money donated through Book Boosters will go toward purchasing books for the Bennett Library. Our Wish List can be found on the Bennett HS web site under Library Services: <http://www.buffaloschools.org/Bennett.cfm>

Please help us meet our goal by making a tax deductible dona-

tion on our book boosters bennett reads website. Simply go to: <http://www.perma-bound.com/bookboosters/bennettreads/> The site contains a link to allow supporters to click and enter a secure credit card processing page where you can make a contribution to Bennett's Book Boosters drive. All proceeds go directly toward the purchase of books through the Perma-Bound Website. Since Perma-Bound is a New York State contractor we receive free shipping and processing, as well as a discount. Books will arrive in our library ready to put on our shelves and ready to check out to students!!

You can help Bennett Tigers Read to Succeed!!

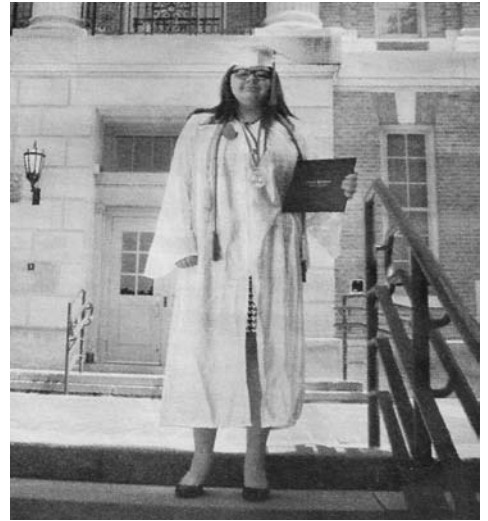
For more information, contact Ms. Ann Marie Vandercher at avandercher@buffaloschools.org or visit the Bennett Library's Book Boosters Web Page at <http://www.perma-bound.com/bookboosters/bennettreads/>

Bennett Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2013



BENNETT BEACON - Winter 2014

Class of 2013 Valedictorian Cheyenne Ketter-Franklin was featured in Artvoice



Going Green Your Newsletter Can Be Emailed!

With mailing costs skyrocketing, and the use of the internet becoming more popular, the Association is now sending the *Alumni Beacon* electronically to those WHO REQUEST IT! We will still be mailing the *Alumni Beacon* through the US Post Office to those who DO NOT specifically request an electronic copy, but we will be sending, in addition to a hard copy, an electronic version to every person whose email address is on file.

Use the membership form to request having your *Beacon* sent by email!

With the cost of stamps increasing, each copy of the *Beacon* costs almost \$.80 to mail. This doesn't include publication which costs almost \$3500 each edition. You can see how quickly these costs multiply.

Your dues pay for these costs as well as helping fund many of the programs we sponsor each year. We would love to GO GREEN and send more copies electronically!

Class Notes...

The 1940s

Tom Sheehan, '47, of Monkton MD, is a retired U.S. Navy Captain. He has been visiting terminally ill military and civilian patients for 25 years as a hospice volunteer. He says that the older WWII and Korean War veterans love to share their wartime experiences with him. He would like to hear from any of his old classmates via phone (410-472-4749) or danenshamrock@comcast.net.



Shirley Bonham Galisdorfer, '48, writes that "Bennett years were some of the best years of my life." She has four lovely granddaughters and three great granddaughters. Shirley lives in Wilmington, NC.

Larry Beahan, MD, '48, writes that he and his son, Nick, went to Cuba on a people-to-people trip. He won a bottle of rum at a Guineas Pig coaxing contest. He also races his sailboat, a venerable C&C29, on the Wednesday night Buffalo Harbor Sailing Club races, and "we don't always come in last". His latest book is *Adirondack Sasquatch*.

Bernice Learman Joy, '49, and her husband, Louis, will be celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary in Arizona at a party



hosted by their children, Mark and Debbie, and their spouses.

Class Notes...

The 1950s

Charlie Garfinkel, '56, was the first person to be inducted into the Eagle Ridge Tennis Center Hall of Fame. He was head coach of the Orchard Park Center for 25 years where the tennis courts are named in honor of Charlie.

Art Serotte, '57, longtime physical education teacher and coach at International Prep at Grover, (the former Grover Cleveland) has been honored by having the gymnasium named the Art Serotte Gymnasium. While coach, Art won 12 Harvard Cup football titles and five Yale Cup basketball championships and in 2003 was inducted into the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame.

Donald S. Blanke, '57, lives in Rio Rancho, NM. He asks for reunion news.

Bruce D. Weintraub, MD, '58, had a 26 year career at the National Institutes of Health in molecular and clinical endocrine research. Since 2001 he has been President, CEO and cofounder of Trophogen, an emerging biotech company. He would like to assist Bennett in any way possible and welcomes suggestions at bruceweintraub@gmail.com.

Martin Mittleman, '58, is interested in Class Reunion Plans. He can be reached at 440-221-6446.

Class Notes...

The 1960s

Tony Pegnia, '60, and his wife Laura have been practicing their ballroom dancing skills at the Eastern Hills Mall for the last five years. Tony is a retired physical



education teacher who taught for years in the Buffalo Schools. He and Laura find dancing a wonderful

way to stay fit.

Robert Potter, '60, suggests that we "honor some of the extraordinary teachers we were privileged to have at Bennett." He mentions specifically Theresa Podmele, who "pioneered many innovations and offered her students an enriched experience in math education." His email is r.l.potter@att.net. (*ed. We could do a feature? What do you think?*)

Terence Gerace, '60, has urged CVS pharmacy, a licensed health care provider, to stop advertising, promoting, distributing and selling cigarettes. Letters, You Tube videos and 150 outdoor protests have comprised the campaign to date.

Salvatore J. Illuzzi, '64, the Superintendent of Schools for the Cinnaminson Township Board of Education, has been appointed for another three years. In 2017 he will have completed 48 years in public school education, 33 of them as Superintendent.

Glenn Kraemer, '68, has retired after 35 years in the Advertising Business. He is enjoying playing golf every day in San Antonio, TX, and spending time with his two children and three granddaughters. He "had a great time at Bennett and actually learned quite a bit that served me well throughout my life." He remembers his homeroom teacher, Carol Newman Caserta, as "a great influence".

Anthony Locane, '68, writes that “after many years in the corporate design world, I am fulfilling my lifelong dream of being a producing artist; now working fulltime at my art. I have had many successful shows of my work in Manhattan, Binghamton and now two shows at the Burchfield-Penney Art Center in Buffalo!”

Gary Earl Ross, '69, who was honored last June as an Alumni of the Year, has written a perceptive essay on the problems of Buffalo's schools which may answer some of your questions as to what is wrong. It was published in the *Buffalo News*, September 26, 2013.

Class Notes...

The 1970s

Doug (Trigger) Gaston, '71,



brought his jazz quintet to the steps of the Albright Knox Art Gallery last July. (photo courtesy of the *Buffalo News*.)

Nathan Sull, '73, who visited Bennett for his 40th reunion this year, writes that he was “very impressed how much has been accomplished by the Alumni Association.”

Alumni Brunch a Huge Success

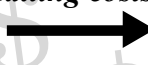
by Allen Yasgur, '60

On October 6, 2013 over sixty alumni from as far away as Los Angeles and Maryland gathered at the Westwood Country Club for our Alumni Brunch and Annual Meeting. Attendees were treated to a state-of-the-school speech by Principal Dr. Terry Ross, and encouraging remarks from Robert Bennett (no relation to Lewis), Chancellor Emeritus of the New York State Board of Regents.

Following a delicious meal, Deby Fox-Hahn, Nominating Committee Chair, presented Marilyn Wittman, former Principal, and Jacqueline Hillary Jordan, '72 for election to the Association's Board of Directors. These outstanding individuals will add a great deal of creativity and strength to the Association's many programs and functions.

The meeting concluded with the induction of this year's Alumni Honor Roll. The following graduates were honored for their contributions to education: Riva Schiller Berleant, '52, Linda Shaffer Lentin, '52, and Theresa Harris-Tigg, '75. Honorees in the field of law included Phillip Dabney, '87, and Sue Shaffer Gardner, '48. John Adinolfi, '77 and John Bienko, '88 received recognition for their contributions to the world of business. Robert Kloner, MD, '67 and Edward Prochownik, MD, '68, were acknowledged for their outstanding contributions to their fields of medicine and Margaret Emerling Kern, '56, a still practicing dental hygienist, received praise for her innovative approach to licensing dentists and hygienists. Elaine Kolbe Mattar, '56 and Laurel Harrison Cammarata, '44 (deceased), were our community and volunteer service honorees and Gary Wolfe, '68, received kudos for his achievements as an artist and artisan. Finally, Owen Schultz, '92, was honored for his distinguished military career. Several honorees provided moving and humorous reminiscences of their days at Bennett and the teachings which have shaped their lives.

This year's annual festivities concluded with the singing of the Alma Mater, led by Rachel Bish, '13.

Mailing costs are
 GOING UP!
 Your Alumni Dues are
 important!

President's Message

continued from Page 1

aren't already a member) to consider becoming a member of OUR Association. Together we make a huge difference in our students' lives. We can provide so many rich experiences to the current Bennett family. You can read in each edition how much WE impact our beloved Bennett High School!

You may have noticed that our Membership Dues Form has changed. We have noticed that with the increase in larger donations, our day-to-day memberships have decreased. We are hoping that all of our members will make a basic contribution and, then, if desired, will make a donation to the Bennett Alumni Fund at the Community Association. This will allow us to continue with the *Bennett Beacon* and other activities we support.

Our mentoring programs continue to grow. In this edition you can find information about our programs. We are asking any alumni who are interested in mentoring to call the school (716-816-4250 - ask for Mr. Lange) and join us. It only takes one hour a week. The experience is so rewarding.

As always, thanks for everything that you have done, that you do and that you will continue to do for Bennett. Our alma mater is indeed the tie that binds all of us together.

Why Might Your Mailing Label Say: **or occupant?**

Postal regulations require us to use this on our labels to avoid paying First Class postage. We hope you understand!

2014 Community Foundation Donors*

\$500+ - Diamond Club Donors

Julie Horn, Faculty

Wayne R. Reilly, '47

Class of 1963

\$200 - \$499 - Platinum Club Donors

Kenneth L. Barley, '50

John Bienko, '88

James Douglas Crawford, '46

Robert S. Fink, Ph.D., '65

Scott W. Gehl, '70

Thomas J. Guttuso, MD, '53

Marjorie G. Hoffman, '62

Dr. Russell F. Houseman, '45

Salvatore J. Illuzzi, Ph.D., '64

Richard A. Killinger Jr., '64

Peter J. Lang, Ph. D., '47

Gloria Lawrence Baxter, '43

Harold Leader, '57

Danis J. Norman Gehl, '70

Anne Osborn Krueger, '50

Robert C. Rettke, '60

Alan Snitzer, '70

Frederick J. Wallace, '50

Paul F. Werler, '42

Barbara Young Coles, '57

\$101 - \$199 - Gold Club Donors

Roberta Allbert Dayer, '53

Marleen Bengel Varner, '49

Geraldine Bewley Hobika, '52

Richard F. Carver, M.D., '55

Beverly Davis Blue, '61

Cynthia Dayer Erb, '80

Jennie DePerro Brummer, Faculty

Thomas J. Dixon, '64

Jacqueline Engel Irwin, '59

Jeffrey M. Freedman, '68

Elaine Stein Neuman, '56

Morris Himmel, '47

Dr. Keith Howard, '58

Carmen J. Iannaccone, '57

Marsha Jean Kaiser Shendell, '62

Linda Konrad Byers, '60

Sally Laurie Murphy, '51

Marjorie Leff Scheff, '53

Leonard Ludwig, '55

Gerald F. Lupejkis, '50

Corinne Elliott Marillo Carter, '53

Bruce A. McNallie, '56

Gerald C. Meyers, '46

W. Graham Millar, '51

George W. Munschauer, '49

Margaret Naish Brass-Heidger, '60

Dr. William E. O'Connor, '56

Bernice Ortenberg Manello, '47

Jean Parrott O'Connor, '56

Nancy Paull McKeever, '57

Carolyn Price Singletary PhD, '66

Sylvia Rosen Dimet, '47

Robert A. Russell, '63

Shelly Satuloff Hirshberg, '67

Molly Scully Cloutier, '40

Sandra Selig Applebaum, '54

Mary Speck Reimer, '54

Tamiko Thompson Stumpe, '73

Donna Weber Wattman, '59

Bernard E. Wills, '48

\$100 - Century Club Donors

Richard J. Adams, '58

Jack C. Anthony, '48

Marilyn Bass Buxbaum, '54

Richard M. Bender, '46

Alan J. Bozer, '71

Dr. Melvin M. Brothman, '50

Phillip Brothman, '56

Rosalie Brothman Rosenband, '55

Dr. Joseph Chazan, '52

Priscilla Craw, '62

Hugh J. Devine, '55

John M. Garrity, Atty., '48

Marilyn George Meyers, '74

Judith Lynn Green Brothman, '59

Jacqueline Hargrave Braswell, '55

Suzanne Herman Himmel, '49

Pamela J. Hough Alvarez, '68

Ana M. Hurd, Faculty

Ruth King Balchunas, '40

Peter S. Kristall, '57

Neil J. Lange, Faculty

Lawrence H. Levin, '57

Hon. Sam Maislin, '64

Joyce McMahan Scherer, '51

Robert B. Mooney, '48

Donna Moslow Lawler, '60

Carol Newman Caserta, '60

Nancy Rice Hunt, '45

Elaine Schruttt Brothman, '53

Herbert Siegel, '54

Myron M. Siegel, Atty., '47

Rhoda Stein Greenwald, '59

Theodore Sullivan, '50

Jean Travis Boccuti, '57

Edward J. Willett, Jr., '56

Judith Zent Deck, '59

Bennett Alumni College Advisors

by Dr. Len Katz, '53

The Bennett Alumni College Advisors entered their second year with strong support from principal, Dr. Terry Ross. There are currently 15 advisors matched with senior students.

The goal of this program is to assist with the ongoing efforts to improve Bennett's graduation and college entrance rates. The advisors serve as an adult presence in the lives of promising students. Bennett is fortunate to have a wide array of supporting services. Our committed guidance counselors work with all students. The UB College Success Center in Room 205 helps seniors with the grueling application process. Our contact person is Suzanne Starr -716-352-4213. The director of the program is professor Nate Daun-Barnett of UB. The Buffalo Promise Neighborhood is represented on site by Daun Nicholas. Say Yes is also a great service to our students.

Two new advisors have come on board and have offered new services. Susan Gardner has already taken her student and others into the court system of Buffalo and led college visits.

Dr. Ross will call upon alumni to join him in small group meetings with students to discuss college.

If you would like to volunteer as a College Advisor, we would be delighted to have you. Just contact one of the Board members below and you will receive a form from Suzanne Starr to help match your interests with students.

Contacts:

Len Katz -

lenkatz186@aol.com

Carol Caserta -

holaciao@mymailstation.com

Allen Yasgur -

yasgur181@roadrunner.com

Thanks to all of our members for their continued support!

**As of January 21, 2014. We apologize for any omissions or errors.*

Bennett Then; Bennett Now! Same or Different?

by Marilyn Wittman, Past Principal

Education isn't what it used to be. Kids are failing in record numbers. Teachers are ineffective at best. The dropout rate is skyrocketing. Parents are part of the problem. Schools are places of bullying and conflict. American students can't compete. This is how most of the media portrays our schools.

Take a closer look. It isn't our students, parents or teachers who are failing the system; it is the system that is failing them. Federal, state and local school boards have pushed the panic button and have instituted inflexible tests and evaluations in a quick fix effort to correct perceived inadequacies. Accountability is distracting us from real education. Real education is building caring relationships with students and inspiring, not mandating, them to do their best.

The students in classes at Bennett High School today are not very different from those who have come before. Like all teenagers, past and present, they want to feel like they belong. The social network may be electronic, but the result is the same. Bennett High School students are creating lifelong memories as they interact with their teachers and their classmates. These are formative years that will shape their futures - just as they shaped ours.

The work of the Bennett Alumni Association is more important than ever. The active members and the supporters of the Association extend nothing but positive concern and encouragement. The scholarships, mini-grants, mentoring, teacher appreciation, fundraising and other programs are possible because of the good will of past Tigers. The feeling that comes with every effort of the Association is what makes all the difference. It lets those working hard know that there are others who care only because once someone cared about them in the halls and classrooms of Bennett High School.

The clothes, the hair, the music, the culture and the *props* may all look very different today, but the *coming of age* process is very much the same. Applause to the Bennett High School Alumni Association whose mission it is to see beyond the differences and connect with the students in what is the same human experience we all have lived through.

Mentoring Matters

by Jacqueline Hillary Jordan, '72

Hi, I am Jacqueline Jordan, newly elected to the Bennett High Alumni Board of Directors. I am truly elated to have the board's backing in my appointment as chairperson for the mentoring program.

Mentoring is vitally important to all of us. When we make a connection with our young people, we impact their future. We have a small, but dedicated group of alumni who are meeting this need. The need is great. We need to impact more students!

The plan is to enlist the support of Bennett High Alumni from all graduating classes. We need the young and the old collectively. This is a special plea to the graduating classes of the 70s, 80s, 90s, and 00s. This is our time to make a difference. The earlier classes have served us, and continue to serve our Alumni Association well. Let us roll up our sleeves and join in the fight to maintain the integrity of our building.

I am honored and excited to serve this organization in this capacity. Special thanks to Marilyn Wittman and Jeffrey Shapiro for agreeing to work with me on this committee.

Knowing full well the effects mentoring will have on the lives of our youth, it is with great pleasure that I ask you to join us by mentoring a student or two this academic year. Your contribution is desired and would be greatly appreciated. Remember, mentors matters. You can leave a message for me at the school - 716-816-4250!



SEND US YOUR REQUEST TO HAVE THE ALUMNI BEACON SENT EXCLUSIVELY TO YOUR EMAIL!

Alumni Update

We'd love to be able to report about you and your life since Bennett! Tell us what you've accomplished: honors, recognitions? Got

some great memories? Send them along to tell all our Alumni about your Bennett High School!

Check for address change! **Please print! • Please print!**

Name _____ Class of _____

Maiden Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____ E-mail _____

• Bennett Alumni Beacon • 2885 Main Street • Buffalo, New York 14214 •

What are Alumni Mini Grants?

Each September, teachers and staff are encouraged to submit proposals to the principal and the Alumni Association for various projects they would like to carry out during the school year. These proposals are meant to enrich classroom instruction or provide opportunities that students would not normally be afforded during the regular school year.

Each Mini Grant can be up to \$500. The response from the faculty is tremendous, but, unfortunately, we are unable to fund every request. This school year, almost \$6000 was awarded.

Projects range from class sets of books to field trips to special science materials to club funds for art, music and others.

Your DUES are vital to these projects!!! Following (and on other pages in this publication) are some reports from students and faculty.

Mini Grants were awarded to the following projects:

- Business Field Trips
- Recycling Field Trips
- CTE Classroom Supplies
- English Novels
- Cross Curriculum Art Project
- Spanish Concert & Lunch
- After School Art Club
- Eye of the Tiger Awards
- Music Equipment
- T Shirt Incentives for Phys. Ed.

We will report teacher descriptions and photos of your Alumni Dues at work in the Summer Beacon !



High School Sweethearts Forever and Ever

a new feature in the Bennett Alumni Beacon



by Sue Marble Sykes, '55

The evening of December 15, 1953, Alpha-Omega (or A-O) girls Hi-Y, of which I was a member, were enjoying a joint Christmas party with the boys of North Delaware Hi-Y. There were games, refreshments and music, setting a very friendly social scene.

As I sat chatting with one of my friends, I noticed a tall, attractive guy across the room making his way through the crowded room, sneakily hiding little wrapped Christmas candies behind furniture, drapes and any other objects that might serve as hiding spots for the planned *Treasure Hunt* to be held later. I asked my girlfriend if she knew who that was.

"Oh sure," she replied. "That's Don Sykes. He's the Vice President of North Delaware Hi-Y." This meant, of course, that he was a senior compared to my lowly, sophomore rank.

As the evening progressed, I kept an eye on him as he moved around the room until finally announcing the start of the *Treasure Hunt* game.

Because I had seen him hiding candies earlier, I decided to sit-out the game. When he also took a seat on the sidelines, I bravely approached him and said something very bold-like, "I'll bet you know where all the candies are hidden." How's that for a pickup line? Oh, the nerve of youth!

We had a friendly chat and even danced when the couples starting pairing off to the lure of the music. But what really *sealed the deal* was at the end of the evening, when as I was waiting for my Dad to arrive to take me home, Don sat down and began playing the piano for me. I was completely smitten.

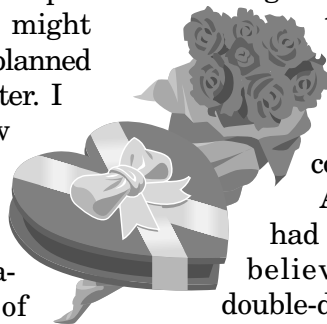
A month later, we had our first date, and believe it or not, we double-dated with my parents, because Don wasn't yet old enough to drive at night. We attended a Bennett High-sponsored Buffalo *Pops Concert* on January 15, 1954. That date is easily recalled because two years ago while

downsizing my home I came across Don's battered scrapbook from his Bennett High days and discovered he had saved the ticket stubs from our first date. Whoever said men aren't sentimental?

After what seemed an eternity, Don graduated from college, fulfilled his military obligation and found a good job in New York City. We were finally married on May 28, 1960 at Assumption Church in Buffalo. Many of our old friends from Bennett were in attendance. And one of the girls who had also been at that long ago Christmas party, Sandy (Markham) Skaine, was one of my bridesmaids.

Some might say that our love story ended on August 10, 2004, when Don passed away. But, he left me with two beautiful children, a daughter and son, who have blessed us with five beloved grandchildren. Several of them now play their Papa's baby grand piano that was bequeathed to them at his passing. And I still hear Don playing for me, through them.

(ed. Send us your Bennett love story! We'd love to continue the series!)



class reunions

Class of 1964

by John Emerling, '64

50th Class Reunion - September 19th - 21st

The Class of 1964 has finalized plans for their 50th Anniversary Reunion. Still looking for missing classmates, the organizers welcome your help. The contact information appears below.

Friday evening will be an informal gathering for cocktails, Hors d'oeuvres/menu items, conversation and FUN! The gathering will start at 5:30pm at the Adams Mark Hotel, 120 Church Street in Buffalo. (All are welcome-if you only attend Friday Night the cost is just \$20 per person in advance or \$25 at the door).

On **Saturday afternoon** at 1pm we will have a guided tour of Bennett. You'll be amazed at the changes and renovations, restorations and reconstructions! Not to be redundant, but it's beautiful.

Saturday evening is the "BIG FUN EVENT!" at the Ramada Inn Amherst. It's hard to believe that 50 years have passed. What a blast it will be to reconnect with old friends! There is free parking, Hors d'oeuvres, Dinner, a Professional DJ playing music of the 60s and more. Dance if you like. There will be a cash bar. Bring your guest or come alone because, believe me, this is history in the making and we remember YOU! There will be lots of surprises; too many to mention here!

All of the above including our Friday Warm-Up at the Adam's Mark is only \$95 per person. Guests staying at the Ramada (716-636-7500) get the Bennett Special rate @ \$89 per night and free airport shuttle.

Our weekend will conclude at the Alumni Brunch and Annual Meeting on **Sunday at noon**. We will be joining with members of our Alumni Association at the Westwood Country Club and mingle with classmates from many other classes, teachers and friends of Bennett while enjoying a delicious all you can eat buffet, with juices, coffee and tea. (The cost is \$25 and can be reserved through the Alumni Association.)

For more information, to update missing classmates or to make reservations, contact:

Sharron Witkin Frommann
mommafro457@gmail.com
716-634-3495

or

John Emerling
JEmerling@emerfood.com
585-356-5166

*Bennett
reunion
notes*



Class of 1965

50th Class Reunion Set for August 28 and 29, 2015

The Class of 1965 is already at work planning their reunion weekend. The committee is looking for all members of their class and believe YOU hold the key. If you have names and addresses, please forward your information to 1965bennett@gmail.com.

If you live in the Buffalo area and would like to be involved, please contact Carole Weingarten at weincsw@verizon.net or at 716-688-6432.

*... a regular
feature of the
Alumni Beacon
to keep you up-
to-date on Class
Reunions*

Are you planning a reunion?

If so, we want to know about it!

Everyone is interested in knowing details of your reunions. Many alumni call us for information and, too often, we cannot help them. So, please drop us a line about what you're planning. You can send information to our website or use the form below to keep us posted!

Bennett High School Reunion Information Sheet

Class _____ Chairperson _____

Date of Reunion _____ Phone number _____

Location and details _____

Please attach any additional information to this form!

• Bennett Alumni Beacon • 2885 Main Street • Buffalo, New York 14214 •

Michael Goldman, '56

Joanne Niebling Speidel, '55

Kenneth S. Torrontor, '63, Dec. 25, 2007

Ruth Vossler, '38, 2011

Robert Hale, '42, Feb. 27, 2012

James McClure, '46, Nov. 2012

David A. Schiller, '60, 2013

Leon S. Economou, '53, March 6, 2013

Rev. Robert Leonard Powers, '47, age 84, April 23, 2013

Nicholas J. Cusimano, '43, May 3, 2013

Paul J. Kovacs, '47, age 84, June 3, 2013

Robert (Bob) Breen, '57, June 19, 2013

Richard Byron, '42, age 89, July 8, 2013

Dorothy Nagy Holmes, '49, age 81, July 14, 2013

Myron M. Hunt, age 87, July 30, 2013

•In Memoriam•

(Reported since *Summer 2013 Bennett Beacon*)

Lillian Genner Sinclair, '51, Aug. 7, 2013

Richard M. Land, age 73, Aug. 8, 2013

Carl N. Wenger, '46, age 84, Aug. 14, 2013

Clare Grellick, age 89, Aug. 29, 2013

Sandra Green Kish, '60, Aug. 31, 2013

Cynthia Jacobson Braun, '54, age 76, Aug. 31, 2013

Martha Hunt Peck, '44, age 87, Sept. 6, 2013

Russell M. Pecoraro, '70, Sept. 17, 2013

Sheila Stranahan Gibbons, age 80, Sept. 21, 2013

Stuart W. Maisel, M.D., '59, Oct. 7, 2013

Robert F. Cordova, '65, age 66, Oct. 8, 2013

Le Vern L. Durham, age 44, Oct. 19, 2013

Robert L. Lewis, Jr., '72, age 59, Nov. 10, 2013

Barbara Dallman Boehlke, '57, Nov. 23, 2013

Randy Clay, '72, Nov. 27, 2013

Russell J. Nisengard, DDS, PhD, '60, age 70, Dec. 5, 2013

Allan H. Kaminsky, 49, age 82, Dec. 5, 2013

FACULTY

Anita Solodkin (English Teacher) age 66, July 13, 2009

Samuel (Sam) J. Falzone, (Music teacher) age 79, Sept. 22, 2013

Virginia W. Ziebarth, (English teacher) Sept. 24, 2013

Harold Sunshine, (English teacher) age 78, Oct. 29, 2013

Gerald D. Berkman, (Physical Education teacher) age 78, Jan. 9, 2014

• Your additions or corrections are needed. Forward to the Bennett Beacon staff.

Are you a DUES PAYING MEMBER? Check your address label to find out!

2013 - 2014 Dues Statement

Name _____ Maiden Name _____ Class of _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
 Phone Number _____ E-mail Address _____

Please Check One:

Regular Dues - (checks payable to Bennett Alumni Association)

Basic Dues • \$20 \$25 \$50 Other _____

After you've paid your MEMBERSHIP DUES...

please consider an *additional Tax Deductible Contribution* -

(checks payable to Bennett Alumni Community Foundation)

Century Club: \$100 Gold Club: \$101 - \$199 Platinum Club: \$200 - \$499 Diamond Club: \$500+

Please mail to: **Bennett High Membership**
2885 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14214

I am requesting that future copies of the *Bennett Beacon* are sent only to my email address.

Alumni Honor Roll 2014 Nomination Form

please use this form to make your nomination

Check Category:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Accounting | <input type="checkbox"/> •Food Careers | <input type="checkbox"/> •Music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> •Government | <input type="checkbox"/> •Nursing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Artisans & Crafters | <input type="checkbox"/> •Health Professions | <input type="checkbox"/> •Pharmacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> •Higher Education | <input type="checkbox"/> •Politics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Business | <input type="checkbox"/> •Historic Preservation | <input type="checkbox"/> •Principals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Clergy | <input type="checkbox"/> •Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> •Superintendents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Coaching | <input type="checkbox"/> •Law | <input type="checkbox"/> •Science/Aerospace |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Community Service | <input type="checkbox"/> •Library | <input type="checkbox"/> •Social Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Dentistry | <input type="checkbox"/> •Management/
Consulting | <input type="checkbox"/> •Sports Professionals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Education | <input type="checkbox"/> •Media | <input type="checkbox"/> •Teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> •Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> •Travel/Hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> •First Responders | <input type="checkbox"/> •Military | <input type="checkbox"/> •Volunteerism |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> •Writing |

Nominee _____ Class of _____
(include maiden name)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Briefly describe the accomplishments of this graduate in the field of endeavor.

Name and address of person submitting nomination:

Name _____ Class of _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please feel free to duplicate this form and send in as many nominations as necessary. We would like to be able to recognize all those Bennett Alumni who have done so much for our community. Please submit your nominations before August 30, 2014!

*Return this form to: Bennett High School Alumni Honor Roll
2885 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14214*

Remembering Gerald D. Berkman

by Larry Veronica, Retired Teacher

The Bennett community mourns the January 9, 2014 death of longtime teacher and coach Gerald D. Berkman. Jerry, age 78, died of cancer in Tampa, Florida after a long battle with the dreaded disease. Jerry had a 30 year teaching career in the Buffalo Public Schools starting at P.S. #33. He was then assigned to Bennett in 1964 from where he retired in 1990. During his tenure at BHS, Berkman taught Health and Physical Education and coached Football as Assistant and Head Coach, Track, Baseball, Basketball (girls and boys), Cross Country, Bowling and Swimming.

Among his many coaching successes, Jerry was most successful in baseball where his teams captured the Cornell Cup in five different seasons. Jerry was enshrined in the Bennett Sports Hall of Fame in 2006, as well as the Harvard Cup Hall of Fame a few years later.

Jerry had a remarkable career as an athlete. He was first team All High quarterback and record holder in football out of Burgard in 1952. He then signed a professional baseball contract with the Philadelphia Phillies and rose to the level of Double A ball, playing for the Durham Bulls. After two years he returned home to attend the University of Buffalo.

Jerry will always be remembered for his tough, no nonsense style, and mostly for the high moral, ethics and dedication he brought to the job everyday. His colleagues will also recall the great sense of humor he brought to work every day.

ATTENTION

All Alumni Honor Roll Inductees

● **SAVE THE DATE** ●

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2014

12:00 NOON

The Bennett Alumni Association is sponsoring a

Grand Reunion Gala

as a part of

Our Annual Meeting and Brunch

More info to follow this summer

Alumni Walkway

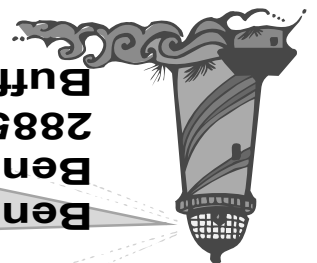
by Neil Lange, Faculty

Last summer we proposed that alumni capture fond memories in an Alumni Walkway. Our vision was an area where we could dedicate pavers in memory, in honor or in tribute to those special Bennett people who have made our lives special. We also envisioned this project as a way to raise funds for the current students. After the initial costs of the walkway, all the monies would go into the Alumni Community Foundation to further all of the wonderful programs that we sponsor.

Our initial campaign has generate enough funds to start the project in the Spring. Sponsored pavers will take care of the remainder of the project and subsequent monies would go to the Alumni Foundation. More details will follow in the *Summer Beacon!*

Time Sensitive Publication
February 10, 2014

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