



# Huskie Trails

The Official Newsletter of the Reno High School Alumni Association

## President's Corner

Hello fellow Huskies!

Yet another holiday season is upon us, and with that, the end of our fiscal year. We had our annual meeting on December 1 with two guests in attendance. We enjoyed some snacks and camaraderie, mourned the loss of our dear friend and long-term trustee Betty Jo Baker, and then got down to business.

Although we had a negative income for 2021, we are still in a solid financial position. We awarded four scholarships to deserving seniors in May and disbursed the funds for the four Westover scholars.

We gained several life members. Unfortunately, our overall membership is down from last year. We have fewer than 500 members at this point.

The building is in good shape. We are looking to replace the screens on the large windows early next year. We have been having some issues with our email, so if you have reached out and not received a response, please call the office. A group of counselors use our building monthly during the school year for their meetings. We also opened the building for a freshman welcome and history-related scavenger hunt. We enjoy meeting the teachers and the kids get a kick out of looking through the old yearbooks, especially if they have family members who attended RHS!

As you all know, we postponed the all-class picnic and reunion until next year. We're pretty confident that next year will be a "go". We do need class representatives however! Later in the newsletter we have identified the classes for which we have no representative information. Several reunions were held this year. Unfortunately, due to the passing of our reunion coordinator, Betty Jo, we didn't receive much feedback. We do know that Betty Jo's class of 1951 had a luncheon for their 70<sup>th</sup>, expecting it to be their last. But they had so much fun that they want to do it again next year! We are compiling a list of reunions for next year and will update the newsletter and the website as we get more information.

Following the Annual meeting we had our regular Board meeting. Annual elections were held. Your new President is Barbara Kinnison '61. JD Schnabel is retaining his position as Vice President and Bill Newman '76 is staying on as Secretary. Your new Treasurer is our newest trustee, KaCe Gilbert '82.

We hope to see you all at the All-Class Picnic in August. A registration form is included in this newsletter. Until then, I wish you all a beautiful, healthy, non-stressful Holiday season and may 2022 be your best year yet!

**Kathy Wilcox '82** RHSAA President



Betty Jo Baker



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing Betty Jo Lunt Baker, Class of 1951, on November 4, 2021. She was born Elizabeth Josephine Martin on April 4, 1933. While attending Reno High, she was active in the Honor Society, G.A.A., Huskiettes, T.N.T., Student Body Treasurer, Basketball, Volleyball and Baseball. She loved her time at Reno High and often bragged that she was a member of the last class that graduated from the old Reno High School.

Betty Jo was also proud to be the second of four generations born in Reno. She was also a member of the daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) due to both her paternal and maternal lineage.

Betty Jo was a vibrant woman and a true force of nature. While raising three daughters, she stayed busy volunteering as a Pink Lady at St. Mary's hospital and as a librarian at Mt. Rose Elementary School. She became President of the UNR Alumni Board, following in her father's footsteps. She was very active both in her Tri-Delt alumni board and the Reno High School Alumni board.

After working as the secretary at Brown Elementary School and a brief stint with the local musicians union, she was hired on at the Eldorado. She ultimately was promoted to Executive Director of Catering and Conventions – a perfect fit for her skills and charm. Betty Jo later worked for Lifetouch Photography.

She has been very active in the Reno High Alumni Association for nearly 20 years, serving as president for four years and then the Triennial All-Class Reunion Chairman. As the class of 1951 Class Representative, she planned and coordinated her class 70<sup>th</sup> reunion this summer. As stated by RHSAA President, Kathy Wilcox, "The RHSAA has lost one of the best Board members we've ever had. She will be sorely missed both as a friend and as a dedicated, tireless, proactive member of our Board and the community. She kept in touch with as many class reps as would answer her calls. She was on the RHS Scholarship Committee and executor of the Westover Scholarship. She was still in touch with many of the winners. She loved her family, friends, socializing, football and her alma maters (RHS and UNR)."

Betty Jo is survived by her loving partner George Gadda and her daughters Margaret, Susan, and Jennifer. Due to the pandemic, services will be postponed until the Spring. In lieu of flowers, the family requested that donations be made in Betty Jo's name to the Nevada Humane Society or the Reno High School Alumni scholarship fund.

Betty Jo was a strong, generous woman known by many in the community. She will never be forgotten by those who knew and loved her over her incredible 88 years.

## AROUND THE RHS CAMPUS

1. On October 25, Reno experienced a heavy rainstorm that caused flooding and other damages, resulting in Reno High school closing for a day.
2. The girls' volleyball team won the Northern 5A league season but lost in state competition. Senior Rian Finley was named 5A Region player of the year.
3. The Reno High boy's cross-country team had the top three runners and defended their title at the Northern 5A Region championships. The winners were brothers Kyle and Eric Ortega-Gammill and Sean Andrews. The team placed first in state competition. Kyle was named Athlete of the Year, and Joe Parker was the Coach of the Year. The girl cross country team placed 4<sup>th</sup> in state. Thalia Arrate and Annalina Andresen were selected for the 5A All Region Girls Team.
4. Both boys and girls' tennis teams made it to state but lost to Faith Lutheran High School.
5. The WCSD Board of Trustees voted to change school start times. Research by the Center for Disease and Control (CDC) has shown that later start times have many benefits that are bound to improve student graduation rates, student's physical/mental health, and the overall amount of absences and driving accidents on campus. The plan was for high schools and middle schools to start at 8:30 a.m. rather than 7:30 a.m. starting next year. However, the WCSD Board reversed its decision recently and start time for all schools remain the same.
6. Of the 10 WCSD students named Merit Scholarship semifinalist, five are from Reno High. They are Brenden Bowles, Sahil Desai, Dylan Oliver, Amaia Stanley and Shefer Zemach. Congratulations!
7. The Reno High Booster Club bought Reno High additional police radios. They will purchase the most updated version of the WCSD police radios for the staff.
8. **Tom Ryan**, age 93, passed away on October 10, 2021 at his home in Staunton, Virginia. Tom taught art, and Boy's PE, coached football, and served as Athletic Director at Reno High for 30 years.

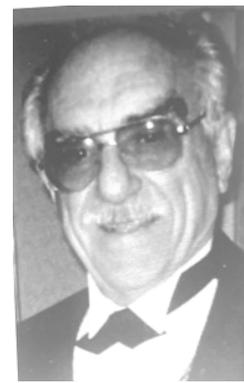
## ALUMNI NEWS

1. **James Hardesty**, class of 1966, and Nevada Supreme Court Chief Justice announced he will retire from the high court at the end of 2022. He has served as judge in Nevada's court system for nearly a quarter century. He was elected to the supreme court in 2004. His daughter, Robin Johnson, is a physical education teacher and department chairman at Reno High.
2. The class of 1971 celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on September 24-26 with dinner, silent auction, a gathering at the alumni museum, and a tour of Reno High led by Principal Kris Hackbusch. The class donated \$8,000 to the school's safety program.

**OPEN HOUSE** – The Reno High Alumni Association will be having an open house on Saturday, February 5, 2022, at the Museum from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. All are welcome! Come by to meet the Alumni Board, enjoy some food, and check out the memorabilia. See you then.



## SAM DIBITONTO



A notable Reno High graduate is Sam Dibitonto. Sam graduated in 1947 and while at Reno, participated in ROTC, football, Re-Wa-Ne yearbook, Block R, Hi-Y, and Debate. After high school, he attended UNR where he was a student senator and member of several organizations. After graduating from UNR, he served in the U.S. Army in Europe in the supply field. It was while in France he met his wife-to-be, Mina. When they returned to Reno, Sam became a lifelong businessman and bought the St Francis Hotel.

Sam was always active in local politics. After serving on numerous boards and commissions, he was elected to the Reno City Council, and soon after, he was unanimously elected Reno Mayor (1971-1974). Under his direction, the city enjoyed a decrease in the tax rate, expanded parks and recreation, organized and coordinated computer programming within the county, and left the city in the "black" with positive earnings. He was known for his honesty and direct manner.

As a Rotarian, Sam initiated a project for hearing-impaired children, first in Argentina, then in all South America. Additionally, he served as an extraordinary minister and fiscal advisor for St. Thomas Aquinas Cathedral for more than 50 years.

Sam had a passion for classic cars and was once a race car driver. He played an important role in establishing the National Automobile Museum and Hot August Nights.

Sam passed away on September 23, 2021 at the age of 92. He is survived by his wife, Mina, and daughters Denise, Diane, Debbie, and Michelle.

### CLASS REUNIONS FOR 2022

With the passing of our beloved board member and reunion coordinator, Betty Jo Baker, her replacement is Joe Walsh (775)-355-0722. If any classes are planning a reunion this year, please notify Joe or send us an email [rhsaa@renohighalum.com](mailto:rhsaa@renohighalum.com) or phone (775) 825-2586. We will help coordinate your reunions. Remember the all-class reunion is scheduled for August 28, 2022 on the RHS campus. Having your reunions in conjunction with this event makes it extra special. The reunions we know about include:

1953 – 69th year – September 17 – Diane Thornhill – (775) 626-0664

1972 – 50th year -August 26-28 - Liane McCombs – [lianemccombs@gmail.com](mailto:lianemccombs@gmail.com)

1982 – 40th Year - September 9-10 - Rachael Ferrari - (775) 560-4010 - [rachael@innerwestady.com](mailto:rachael@innerwestady.com)

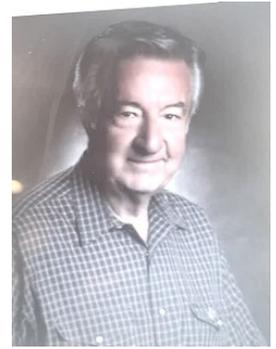
We need Class Reps for the classes of 1947-49, 51, 54, 91, 97, 08 and 2011 to the present.

## The Funny Page

- \*Before my surgery, the anesthesiologist offered to knock me out with gas or a boat paddle....It was an ether/oar situation.
- \*I have a pencil that used to be owned by William Shakespeare. But he chewed it a lot. Now I can't tell if it is 2B or not 2B.
- \*Astronomers got tired of watching the sun go around the earth for 24 hours, so they decided to call it a day.
- \*I want to grow my own food but can't find bacon seeds.
- \*This is my step ladder; I never knew my real ladder.
- \*My wife said I never listen to her, or something like that.
- \*I checked into the hokey pokey clinic, and I turned myself around. And that's what it's all about.
- \*Is there ever a day that mattresses are not on sale?
- \*Will glass coffins be popular? Remains to be seen.
- \*If you boil a funny bone, it becomes a laughingstock. That's humerus.
- \*Nurse came in and said, "Doc, there's a man in the waiting room who thinks he's invisible. What should I tell him?" The doctor said, "Tell him I can't see him today."
- \*My new stair lift is just driving me up the wall.
- \*I remember when yoga was called Twister.
- \*I have a pen that writes underwater. It can write other words too.
- \*Never seen anyone jogging and smiling, so that's all I need to know about that.
- \*You want to see social distancing? Loan someone some money
- \*So it turns out being an adult is mostly just googling how to do stuff.
- \*I love working out! Today I did abs...olutely nothing.
- \*If you are buying smart water for \$4 a bottle... it's not working.
- \*I told my suitcases that there will be no vacations this year. Now I'm dealing with emotional baggage.
- \*The worst part about parallel parking is the witnesses.
- \*Shout out to ATM fees for making me buy my own money.
- \*My body is a temple – ancient and crumbling and probably cursed
- \*Retired – under new management – see spouse for details.
- \*The best part about the good old days was that I wasn't good and I wasn't old.
- \*Two things to make your day better: Don't get on the bathroom scales and don't listen to the news.
- \*We might be old but we had great hair, listened to cool music, and drove the best cars.
- \*In the 1980s A&W tried to compete with the McDonald's quarter pounder by selling a 1/3 pound burgers at a lower cost. The product failed because most customers thought the 1/4 pound was bigger.
- \*I am mad at the teachers who told us, "If you don't do well in school, you're going to be the garbage man," and never told us the garbage man made more money than them.



## NORM L. DIANDA



Another RHS alumni notable is Norm Dianda. Norm is a 1957 graduate, and while in school, participated in ROTC for three years. Growing up on a ranch, Norm learned how to ride horses, rope, fix fence, and hunt. He was also introduced to woodworking, which started a lifelong passion for fine woodworking. He started Q&D Construction Company with his friend and partner, Lawrence Quadrio in 1964.

A statement released by the Dianda family reads, “No construction project was too big for his vision and no community cause was too small for his support. His love of hard work, his deep and loyal friendships, the quality of work he poured his heart into, and the community causes he cared for so deeply made Northern Nevada a better place for generations to come.

To list all of Norm’s accomplishment, accolades or community involvement would require a book. He received multiple Contractor of the Year Awards and was the recipient of the Heart Association Heart of Gold Award and the American Lung Association Honor Award in 1997. Norm was also the Ditch Master for the Last Chance Ditch for over 50 years; his love and service for his community, whether large or small, knew no boundaries.

Two of his most loved projects were the current Bishop Manogue High School, built by Q&D, and Ace Charter High School. He was a board member of both schools and co-founded BASH (Building A Scholastic Heritage) which remains one of the largest tuition fundraising events for Bishop Manogue student.

Closer to home, the Q&D Construction Company built the Reno High Link Piazza Alumni Center and Museum during 1999. The center officially opened on January 1, 2000. Norm was a lifetime member of the RHSAA and a Platinum (over \$20,000 donor to the Alumni Association).

Norm died at the age of 82 on November 1, 2021. He was preceded in death by his wife, Laura Caramella Dianda and is survived by his sons, Mike and Chris.





# 9th Triennial All Alumni Reunion

**For all alumni, teachers, administrators and staff**

**Tents for shade provided**

**Bring your phones/cameras**

**Reminisce with old friends remembering the good old days**

**At Reno High School**

**School Tours**

**395 Booth Street**

**Visit the RHS Museum**

**Sunday, August 28, 2022**

**11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.**

**Food served from 12:00 p.m. until 1:30 p.m.**

**PINOCCHIO'S CATERED LUNCH BUFFET – PASTA,  
CHICKEN, MEATBALLS, SALAD, AND WATER/SODA  
INCLUDED.**

**Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on school property.  
The \$25 pre-registration closes on August 11, 2020.  
Day of registration is \$30 at the door. Walk-ups are welcome.**

**Make checks payable to: Reno High School Alumni Association**

**Send to: P.O Box 5807, Reno, NV 89513**

**To pay by PAYPAL, go to our website @ [www.renohighalum.com](http://www.renohighalum.com),**

**For more information, call the Alumni office @ (775) 825-2586 or**

**Email [rhsaa@renohighalum.com](mailto:rhsaa@renohighalum.com)**

-----Please cut off and send in lower section for reservations. Keep upper portion for your information-----

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class of \_\_\_\_\_ Tel (\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ Alumni \_\_\_\_\_ Guests \_\_\_\_\_ Payment @ \$25 Per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If guests are RHS grads, please list their name and class: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Washoe County School District  
**RHS Alumni Association**  
P.O. Box 30425  
Reno, NV 89520



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PRESIDENT.....	Kathy Wilcox	1982
VICE PRESIDENT....	J. D. Schnabel Retired Staff	
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR..	Valerie Porter	1989
SECRETARY.....	Bill Newman	1976
TREASURER.....	Barbara Kinnison	1961
TRUSTEES:	Judy Bacon . . . . .	1961
	Dale Lazzarone.....	1966
	Howard Moy . . . . .	1969
	Daryl Pelizzari. . .	1952
	Joe Walsh . . . . .	1968
	Toni Walsh . . . . .	1967
	KaCe Gilbert . . . .	1982