

HUSKIE TRAILS

Reno High School Alumni Association Newsletter 2024 Issue 2 of 2

Editors & Contributors: Toni Poloni, Linda Doerr, Valerie Porter



Our Huskie greets all visitors in the Legacy Hall at the Museum/Center. RHS mascot has been used at class reunions and by visitors for fun photo opportunities. This wooden Huskie has been moved to various places in the building and recently received a fresh coat of paint. The shapes, fabrics, and colors of the "R" and our mascot have changed over the years. Come visit and learn more about the rich history of RHS and Reno City Schools (Reno Nevada City Schools) from 1908 (see Page 4 – this issue)

Call 775-825-2586 or check our website *before* planning your visit to make sure the center is open to the public. Schedule private parties or meetings may cause our OPEN hours to change.

Museum Hours: Saturday 10-2pm; Monday 2-5pm

rhsaa@renohighalum.com updates posted on-line at

www.renohighalum.com

ATTENTION CLASSES OF 1955 – 2015

Planning has already begun for 2025 reunions. For more information call the RHSAA office to contact your Class Representative or go to our website for other information.

Remember – The Alumni Center is open for class reunions. RHSAA provides a "WELCOME CLASS"(year) banner, use of our kitchen and some decorations. Contact Reno High School if your class is interested in touring the school. Nine classes took advantage of using the Center in 2024.

It's not too early to start planning. SHARE YOUR NEWS on RHSAA website and Facebook page.

Old and New News

Page 2: President's Message

Page 3: Interview – Joe Melcher Class of 1947

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Page 7: **RHSAA PAID PART-TIME POSITION**
Membership Application – JOIN/PAY

UPDATES: Alex – RHS Junior was the winner of the RHSAA Scavenger Hunt. Thanks to all who participated – especially students

.VOLUNTEER HOURS

January – November = 2,029

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

REMINISCING - My curiosity over the past two years as a volunteer has led to quite an adventure. Foremost has been realizing the importance our city planners placed upon education. I've had fun looking through OLD yearbooks to find my RHS legacy that spans from 1930's to 2022. And what a treat it was to get reacquainted with classmates from the '60's. Reno is still "The Biggest Little City in the World". There's something special about the reminiscing that takes place while helping visitors search for information about their relatives and friends. I met proud alumni like Dee Garrett from the class of 1953. The class of 1953 had their 71st reunion in September. That class had such a great time at their 70th reunion, they did it again! *This class sets a record for the most reunions held.* Monies left over from their latest reunion were donated to RHSAA. Talk about HUSKIE PRIDE!

If you are interested in having your RHS legacy displayed, please contact Trustee Dawn Potter. Currently, Daryl Pelizzari and his family are featured. Dawn has plans for legacy families in 2025.

TRADITION: The Alumni Center now serves as a bridge for students currently enrolled at RHS to learn about the rich history of RHS. It's become a Fall Tradition! All incoming Freshman tour the Center. And during homecoming week Juniors enrolled in history classes visit the Center to complete a research assignment prepared by teachers. For six periods Juniors spend time carefully examining our collection of memorabilia from 1872 to 2000. The questions concentrate on "What Was It Like To Be A Student in [year?]. The RHS wrestling team even participated in helping us set up for the event! Then the fun began. Phyllis Teipner Pike (Class of '63 and RHSAA VP) and I looked through the vault for newspapers, yearbooks and other memorabilia to be used as research tools. And while we took items out of the vault, Phyllis and I learned right along with the students. Students were curious and asked interesting questions that kept us on our toes. It's always a special time when students want to find their RHS relatives— legacies of four and five generations. That RHS pride filled the Legacy, Heritage and Spirit Halls with laughter, amazement and energy for homecoming. This is a BIG DEAL, and we need more volunteers for it to take place next year. Please Volunteer and learn right along with students. A few students asked if there was anyone alive from the '50's and 60's to interview! Yes, a day of laughter and learning.

This is my last year as a Trustee and President. I appreciate the faith the Board of Directors placed in me. By the time you read this we will have new officers and hopefully a few new volunteers. Come and join as volunteers or become a Trustee. We wouldn't be RHSAA without volunteers, paid memberships, sponsors and donations. Thank you.



JOE MELCHER – CLASS OF 1947

Thanks to my classmate, Art Ziegler, I had the opportunity to meet and interview JOE MELCHER. The following includes some of Joe's memories while he attended the RHS located between 4th & 5th Streets:

Joe attended Mount Rose, Billingshurst and RHS. He attended RHS from 1944-1947. He lived on Arroyo Street and rode a bike to school every day. His friend, Irving Crawford, rode on the handlebars of his bike. Joe also rode his bike home during lunch hour as there wasn't a school cafeteria. He vividly described initiation both during Freshman and Sophomore years. Seniors would corral Freshman and smear their clothes with lipstick. This was a real problem for Joe as he only owned 2 shirts and 2 pairs of pants. Sophomore hazing also took place using water hand pumps. Finally, as he put it, he traded his bike for a Model A – 35 Ford coup! He has fond memories of neighbors and friends – Forman, Hug, Winkel, Savage. He said the teacher that contributed the most to his character was David Finch. He described Mr. Finch as a gentleman, a Marine and his English teacher. He also has fond memories of Mr. Ernst and Mr. Pedrolì. He admitted to reading Hunting and Fishing and Gun magazines in the library and in study hall. Without locker rooms, there were no showers which meant some classes “smelled bad”! And if a guy didn't have money for tennis shoes, socks were worn. He worked after school as a delivery boy for Joseph Magnin. He was a member of Demolay, remembers great beer busts and smoking pipes at noon in cars where the smoke was so thick, visibility was zero! He also recalled other fun times of “Mugger Busting” and Spotlights” at Virginia Lake. McClatchy in Sacramento was a sister school in 1947.

Joe served in the Air Force from 1948-49 and then the Reserves for 6 years. He worked for Standard Oil Company delivering to stations in Lovelock and Tahoe and later went into sales. Park Wedding Chapel became a family business from 1956 until 2006. He was the Washoe County Recorder for 20 years. He leaves a legacy of RHS graduates. One of Joe's son's, Kevin Melcher, graduated from RHS in 1974 - 1947, then 1974!

Joe – If I have misrepresented any of your memories, please call me. Thank you for sharing your memories and contributing to Huskie Trails. It was a privilege to spend time with you. And, thank you, Art.
Toni Poloni

DO YOU KNOW about RHS CORNERSTONES? A word from the vault:

Reno High School Cornerstones and information taken off papers found in the cornerstone that was laid on November 25, 1911 for new high school are in the museum.

Grand Master, Frank Norcross, gave a dissertation on education in the area at the 1911 cornerstone ceremony.

The following items were placed in the cornerstone on 1911:

Proceedings & Code of the Grand Lodge of Nevada, information on bond issue, list of pupils and teachers, a 32-page pamphlet about the schools, a 4 page pamphlet concerning Orvis Ring and McKinney Park schools, information on \$100,000 bond and \$250,000 bond issue, copy of various report cards, copy of the ballot and result of the election, names & salaries of teachers and monthly payroll from 1911

Items transferred from the October 4, 1879 cornerstone were:

A list of the pupils, paper money of 25 cents, 1979 silver dollar, 1811 50¢ piece, 1866 5¢ piece, 1871 silver half dime, 1870 copper¢, a silver florin, a bill of J.J. Quinn for the

From the Reno City School – BD Billingham, Superintendent and WA Ferguson, High School Principal 11/25/1911

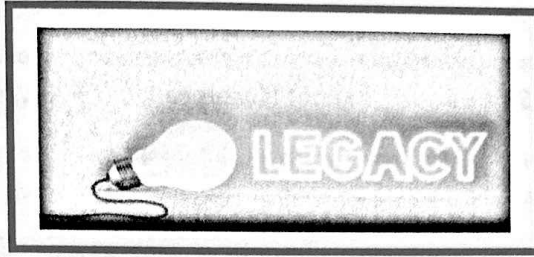
To the citizens of Reno in the distant future –

"It is an interesting fact that the bond issue of \$250,000 which provided for the new high school building, Mount Rose School and Mary S. Doten was voted on October 1, 1910, the day that legalized gambling terminated by statute in the State of Nevada.

Are you interested in reading the rest of this document? We have it stored in the RHSAA vault along with the ORIGINAL cornerstone document. Just one of the treasures in our museum!. Call for an appointment if you wish to read the 1911 documents. We'll provide the gloves for special handling.

And speaking of the vault – WE ARE IN NEED OF A MUSEUM ARCHIVIST. WE HAVE ALL THE PROCEDURES IN PLACE FOR OUR ARCHIVING SYSTEM THANKS TO OUR PREVIOUS ARCHIVIST, SHARON BOUCHER. DESPERATELY NEED A VOLUNTEER WHO WILL HANDLE OUR MEMORABILIA WITH RESPECT AND WHO KNOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING A MUSEUM ARCHIVAL SYSTEM. Archivist will coordinate with Dawn Potter who manages the care of currently displayed memorabilia, Revolving Displays obtaining memorabilia.

Call Alice LeDesma, President 2025 for this exciting volunteer opportunity!



RHS LEGACY FAMILIES

Gonfiantini - Rovetti

GONFIANTINI -Christopher Chase '2017; Chris 1975; Glen 1974; Nello III 1972; Julia D. 1946; Nello Jr 1944

Nello Gonfiantini Jr 1944 – MARRIED Mary JoAnn. Rovetti 1948 (both teachers in Reno schools)

ROVETTI – Stephanie Jean 2010; Blanche Anite 1927; Emily Rose 2006; Harry D. 1946; Jack David 2017; Jamie 1980; Jillian 2018; Jan 1978; Marion 1937; Mary JoAnn Rovetti Gonfiantini 1948; Melvin Gene 1944; Morgan 2008; Steve 1979; Tosca L 1948; Traci A 1985

Information provided by Chris Gonfiantini – Thank you



Daryl Pelizzari's 90th birthday celebration with Board of Directors and Volunteers. Daryl has been a Trustee, Officer and Historian for 22 years. Talk about the LEGACY of volunteerism! Thank you, Daryl.

Legacy family letter found in RHSAA vault: A letter from Nancy Pagni – not dated; accessioned 272-02

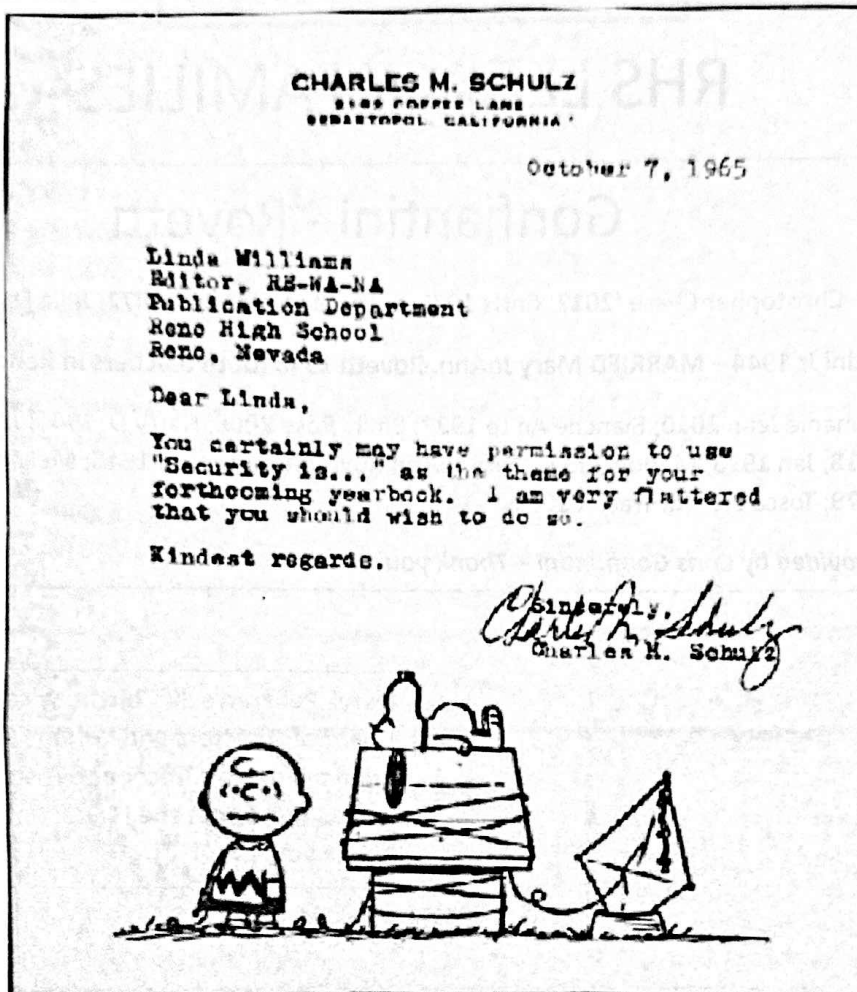
"Dear Marilyn, Enclosed is the graduation program for the RHS Class of 1896. I have tried to figure out why Mother had it and I can only conclude the graduate could have been a friend o my grandmother or her family from Doyle. Anyway, Mother had it. It means a lot to our family as our grandson, Will Barnard, was proud to be a fourth generation to attend RHS. He even included that information when he applied to Reno High. The family line is a follows–

Will's great-grandfather, Edward Lee Thomas – class of 1929; Will's grandfather, Albert F. Pagni – Class of 1952; Will's father, Brad Barnard- Class of 1984; Will Barnard *hopefully* Class of 2017. We are pleased to donate this to Legacy Hall.

Sincerely Nancy Pagni

RHS Yearbooks (FYI not always called the ReWaNe)

RHS Yearbooks contain amazing art work and information about the City of Reno from the late 1800's to 2024. This letter from Charles M. Schulz to Linda Williams in 1965 is just one example:



RHS Request – Forward from Trustee Valerie Lujan Porter – RHS teacher - Class of 1989

Hi Mrs. Porter,

We are looking to start an after-school tutoring program on Mondays from 2:35 p.m. to 3:35 p.m. at the school library. We are wondering if there are retired Reno High School Alumni Association members who would be interested in serving one hour per week. If interested, we are considering providing tutors with a suitable stipend. We are primarily looking for English and Math tutors to start with.

Would this be an endeavor RHSAA members would be interested in doing?

Kindly,

Judith Ferrer, Family Graduation Advocate

Reno High School

Judith.Ferrer@washoeschools.net (775) 327-0789

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIPS* OPEN TO ALUMNI, FACULTY AND EMPLOYEES OF RHS

Applicant Name LAST _____ M.I. _____ FIRST _____

Last name listed with your graduating class: _____

Attended RHS: Dates – From: _____ To: _____ RHS: Teachers & Staff – From: _____ To: _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

We never share your information without permission.

We are a membership dues-based association.

We also welcome gifts from the community at large to support our museum and our scholarship program.

Please check the box to all that apply:

MEMBERSHIP* DUES:

- ☐ \$30.00 1 year individual membership
- ☐ \$80.00 3 year individual membership
- ☐ \$130.00 5 year individual membership
- ☐ \$400.00 Lifetime Individual Membership

SPONSORS & GIFTS:

- ☐ Bronze \$1,000 or more
- ☐ Silver \$5,000 or more
- ☐ Gold \$10,000 or more
- ☐ Platinum \$20,000 or more

Donations to RHSAA Scholarship Fund: ☐ \$100 ☐ 250.00 ☐ \$500.00 OTHER GIFTS: unrestricted _____

Donations dedicated in memory, in honor or in lieu of flowers, contact: (775-825-2586) or rhsaa@renohighalum.com

Would you like to be involved as a VOLUNTEER? If yes, how would you like to help? _____

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT IN 2025 TO MEET OUR GOALS.

THANK YOU

Make check payable to:

RHSAA Membership

Mail to P.O Box 5807, Reno, NV 89513

Federal Tax ID 88-0348443

501c(3) tax exempt organization

Office use only

- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Treasurer
- ☐ Life member
- ☐ Thank you
- ☐ File

Help wanted – RHSAA OFFICE MANAGER

9 hours per week – Tues, Wed, Thurs \$15.00/hr

Duties: phone, emails; maintain class representatives & reunions lists; maintain calendars for docents and meetings; assist with scheduling special events, mailings; memberships; thank you notes.

Must have experience in Word, Excel and Outlook

Questions or to apply:

Call 775-825-2586 for more information or send resume to: Alice LaDesma, President RHSAA

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



Return Service Requested

Huskie Trails – a publication of
Reno High School Alumni Association.

P.O. Box 5807, Reno NV 89513

Telephone: (775) 825-2586

Museum hours: Monday 2-5pm Saturday 10-2pm

Website: www.renohighalum.com

Email: rhsaa@renohighalum.com

TRUSTEES & OFFICERS*-2025

Donna Abbott	1970
Stephanie Lerude	1982
Alice LeDesma* Pres	1982
Howard Moy	1969
Jean Parraguirre*VP	1982
KayAnn Pilling-* Sec	1982
Valerie Porter	1989
Dawn Potter	1982
Kathy Raven*Treas	1982

VOLUNTEERS:

Linda Patrucco Doerr – Membership

Peggy Hannah – Office Assist & Docent

John Hannah – Website Manager

Lorraine Petersen – Docent

Phyllis Teipner Pike – Docent; janitorial

Toni Poloni – Docent; janitorial