

# The Southern Junior High/Middle School Alumni Association

## January Newsletter

2022

**HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:** Donna Bird; Claire Cleaver; Harry Eisenbise (President); Thomas Gajewski, Sr.; Linda Greth; Ted Jamula (Treasurer); Lynn DeAcosta (Secretary); Dorothy Johnson-Aughtry; Gwen Malecki; Rick Mountz; Dr. James Nicholas; Charlie Randazzo; Mark Reichardt; and Mary Ann Zerkowski (Vice President).

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT:** This Association's mission shall be to recognize the lifetime achievements of distinguished alumni, reward the academic achievements of Reading High School seniors who attended Southern, and provide opportunities for alumni to reunite in celebration of their years at Southern.

**HALL OF FAME RESULTS IN 2021:** The following alumni were elected to our Hall of Fame in 2021: Ken Lebron, Doris Persky Leisawitz, and Gabrielle Albert Principe, Ph.D. They were introduced to our members at the Biennial Reunion on October 16, 2021, and will be formally inducted into the Hall of Fame during a ceremony this year at Southern on Friday, May 27<sup>th</sup>. **We congratulate the inductees for their lifetime achievements and for providing inspiration to the current students at Southern Middle School.**

**REUNION REVELRY IN 2021:** We were able to have our Biennial Reunion last year at the DoubleTree Hotel on Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, and despite a lower-than-expected turnout, a fun time was had by all who attended! The festivities included a 'Favorite Memories of Southern' activity; a slideshow of Southern memorabilia and East Reading landmarks; musical entertainment provided by our own Charlie Randazzo; and presentation of our Hall of Fame Inductees, who spoke proudly of their years at Southern. The DoubleTree Hotel provided excellent food and service, and we look forward to returning there for our next reunion.

**FAVORITE MEMORIES SURVEY:** Thanks to everyone at the Biennial Reunion who shared their favorite memories, and even though they attended Southern from 1947 to 2001, it seems many of the "favorites" did not change much during that time. Here is a summary of the results,

**1<sup>st</sup> place:** "REC," where you could dance to music from a FREE jukebox, playing top 40 hits after lunch.

**2<sup>nd</sup> place:** Orchestra performances, where talented musicians and directors made wonderful memories.

**3<sup>rd</sup> place (tie):** Football games, with not only players, but cheerleaders and fans as well; and dances in the café, comprised of dancers, watchers, and those that loved a scenic view of Reading from the 4<sup>th</sup> floor windows.

There were also many teachers listed and, of course, Mr. Oberholtzer's booming voice and Mr. Schmehl's rants! A more inclusive list is available on our website at [www.southernalumni.association.com](http://www.southernalumni.association.com). If you don't have access to a computer at home, any Public Library would be pleased to help you access our website for free. **Thanks again you for your participation in the survey!**

**BREAKFAST UPDATE:** Due to its popularity, we are planning to have a breakfast for our alumni every Spring, and thanks to the efforts of Jim Nicolas and Tom Gajewski, we have scheduled our next breakfast for Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, at Wegman's Restaurant on Route 61. We're looking forward to another fun time, so **please be sure to complete the enclosed yellow form and note that reservations are due by April 1<sup>st</sup>!**

**Continued Reverse Side**

**ADOPT A BLOCK AT SOUTHERN:** As we mentioned in previous newsletters, Southern Principal Andrew Kidd and his staff have been delivering food packages to local families, along with valuable information about community resources. Their “**Adopt-A-Block**” program was featured in the Reading Eagle, and we urge you to support their efforts. Please contact Southern at 610-371-5803 for additional information about how you can become a contributor or a volunteer!

**CONTRIBUTION UPDATE:** Your contributions help to sustain the ongoing efforts of our Association, and once again, our members responded with exceptional generosity. The names of our contributors in 2021 are listed on the attachment to this newsletter, **and we are sincerely thankful for their contributions and memorial gifts!**

**MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:** Our membership numbers have dropped-off significantly in recent years, which does not bode well for the Association. One of our priorities at this time is to attract new members, and you can help by encouraging a family member or friend to sign-up on the enclosed green application. **We extend a warm welcome to our newest members in 2021, who are listed on the attachment to this newsletter!**

**IN MEMORIUM:** We also extend our sincere condolences to the families and friends of those members who have passed away since (or prior to) our last mailing. Their names are listed on the attachment as well, **and may they forever rest in peace!**

**YOUR DUES STATUS:** Our dues records for you, \_\_\_\_\_, are shown below. Note that our policy of removing members who have not paid dues for more than three (3) consecutive years has been reinstated, so please consider making any back payments if that applies to you.

- Your dues have been paid through the following year: \_\_\_\_\_.
- Amount of dues you owe at this time: \$ \_\_\_\_\_.
- Total amount of dues you have paid so far: \$ \_\_\_\_\_.
- Please consider becoming a Life Member by reaching the \$100 plateau!

**PAYMENT INFORMATION:** Please send your dues and/or contribution to the address below no later than Friday, March 18, 2022. **Note:** Checks must be made payable to the "Southern JH/MS Alumni Association".

**Southern JH/MS Alumni Association  
P.O. Box 12662  
Reading, PA 19612-2662**

**FINAL THOUGHTS:**

- If the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony at Southern on May 27th is live, our members will be invited to attend. Please check our website for information about the ceremony, and contact Harry Eisenbise at eisenb@bellatlantic.net or at 610-775-3758 to reserve a seat in advance.
- We need your help with recruiting new candidates for the Hall of Fame, so **please consider making a nomination on the enclosed blue form**, and contact Mary Ann Zerkowski at [mazredwing@aol.com](mailto:mazredwing@aol.com) if you have any questions.
- Please be sure to check our website at [southernalumniassociation.com](http://southernalumniassociation.com) for updates, and to contact us with your questions or suggestions at [southernalumniassoc@gmail.com](mailto:southernalumniassoc@gmail.com).

***THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!***