

Kirby HS Reunion Honors Class of 1975

by [Michael G. Maness](#) ~ www.PreciousHeart.net
[Tyler County Booster](#) (5-8-25), 1A & 7A.



Class of 1975

Kirby High School graduates and staff gathered once more to honor the class of 1975.

As nearly 300 filled the WISD Elementary School cafeteria, one could hear Fats Domino singing, “I found my thrill on Blueberry Hill,” on this Saturday afternoon, May 3.

Tastefully decorated, lanterns hosted a sign for their respective class decade.

The theme, “Memories Light the Way Back to KHS,” reflected well that endearing line from Domino, “Though we’re apart, you’re part of me still. For you were my thrill on Blueberry Hill.”

Scattered throughout the host of tables were memorabilia like their yearbook, “The Echo,” and framed photos, photo albums, and scrapbooks.

Each reunion hosts the class from 50 years ago, seated on the front row, this year with an overflow to the second row. This may have been a record attendance from the class of ’75.

Soon speak about their year, Preston Broom said, “We were the first rebels.”

Leeza Blanchette spoke lovingly, noting their motto, “We’re Great! We’re Alive! We’re the Seniors of ’75!” She would lead the open prayer.

“Great Balls of Fire” billowed from DJ booth run by Gina Greaff.

After about two hours of nostalgic reflection and catching up with old friends, coordinator Sharon Brown tried to start the program at 12, her soft voice not carrying very far.

So, stepping up, Ky Griffin, master of ceremonies, aided her with a kindly, “Shut up,” smiling and directing attention to their modest leader, Brown, who is also the principal of the Tyler County Christian School, formerly St. Paul’s Episcopal School, that she has led for over 40 years.

The school spirit was energetic with these seniors, as The Archies were heard singing, “Sugar, sugar, you are my candy girl.”



Lunch was served by the all-volunteer corps under Linda Johnson of the Woodville Chapter of the Texas School Food Services Association whose delectable lunch satiated with stuffed pork loin with garlic mashed potatoes, pretty eye pie sweet potatoes, seasoned limas, and cucumber and tomato salad. The tens of thousands in funds raised by these volunteers go to scholarships for Woodville students.

In two corners were banana split stations, and it seemed that everyone got a taste, topped with strawberries, two kinds of chocolate, sprinkled crushed nuts and whipped cream.

Teresa Prescot Childress, class of '75, noted that their class was "filled with such good and kind" people.

Brenda Cloyd, class of '75, said, "We were all crazy," and reflecting how she loved history.

Neil Diamond could be heard singing, "Hands, touchin' hands, reachin' out, touching me, touchin' you. Sweet Caroline, Good times never seemed so good!"

Class of '75 spokesman Preston Broom beamed as he took the podium to reflect on their year.

First, he mourned those who had passed on, "Gone, but not forgotten."

The football field and onery antics—the rebel—yet without any real criminality, Broom hoped the KHS staff survived and thanked them for their patience. He hoped their class didn't cost them too much money "trying to educate us" and "make us good citizens." Broom reflected how the stories flowed. "I was accused of having an attitude last night," on their smaller gathering the previous night. "You developed memories with all as you walked the halls." Broom praised their successes, doctors, lawyers, even helicopter pilots, "any type of profession you wanted to discuss."

"Attending Kirby HS," Broom fondly said looking all directly into the eyes, "You had no doubt about you being ready to pursue a career or further your education."

"Streaking was a hot activity." Lots of laughs and not a little embarrassment.

Dances were popular, and for the Christmas party, Broom and a certain pastor's son decided to get one from a local's property, which was quite sneaky.

They had an open campus, so they could go into town for lunch.

However, Broom noted, "Mr. Odom was at the ballpark with his paddle in hand. So, you weren't late for lunch more than once or twice."

"We toilet papered people's houses."

One time they stole a paddle and wrote a ransom note to the teacher.

Retired Coach Norman Turner, a regular honored guest, met wife Myrtle Joyce while they were students in Chester High School, and they never looked back. Turner came to KHS in 1965 and taught and coached until 1981, when he accepted the role of transportation director, from which he retired in 1997.



Turner reflected that he treated all his students as he did his own kids. To his pleasant surprise, he said, “I never dreamed” of the affection fostered way back then would carry on for so very long, even decades after they retired.

Today, the hugs and handshakes, even at Walmart, and the gratitude shared over the decades and in this very reunion is a heartfelt treasure that Turner, Coach Lionel Reese, Coach Sergio Ramos, and other teachers relished in their senior years, like. And Ramos never could stay retired, and still helps coach tennis, a local legend, recent city judge, and state tennis hall of fame inductee.

The senior most table again hosted Maxie Young, class of '49, now 94 years old, with Sherman and Dorothy Powell, both from the class of '50, and Gay Carl, class of '51, escorted by her strapping son.

This reunion stands tall as a memorial to the goodness of semi-rural American values.

In closing, Ky Griffin led all in their cheerleader song, and then closed as they sang their class song, “Hail Kirby High School, hats off to you. Ever you’ll find us loyal and true.”

