HAVANA NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL HISTORY

CHAPTER 19

1980 - 1981

FACULTY AND FACILITIES

On August 22, 1980, the doors of Havana High School opened for a new term. Thirty teachers returned with a new desire to tackle this year’s challenges with a fever equal to that of the final two football terms struggling in the annual Super Bowl. Wide-eyed ninth graders - some frightened beyond belief, others eager as a debutante violinist about to perform in his first recital, marched proudly and trembling into these halls for the first time. Little did we know that this ninth grade class would be the last to enter the doors of Havana High School. Upon the request and recommendation of Alumnus and school board member, Mr. Harold Henderson, the School Board of Gadsden County officially changed the name of Havana High School to Havana Northside High School.

With a few exceptions, the Gladiator family returned intact. Joining our faculty for the first time were: Ms. Donna Walker, Language Arts, Ms. Cassandra Williams, Special Education, Mr. Alfred Gant, Mathematics and Mr. Douglas Harris, Science. Mr. James Clemons became our new janitor.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The National Honor Society held its annual induction ceremony in the school’s cafetorium with Gwendolyn Smith, the chapter’s President, in charge. The society presented “Great Americans”, a tribute to some of America’s History’s most renown individuals. The speaker of the occasion was Dr. Debra L. McGill, a Professor in the School of Pharmacy at Florida A & M University and an alumnus of Havana High School. New inductees were: Mary Clemons, Buhilda McGriff and Christian Norwicki.

During the month of March, the FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) held its induction assembly with the theme “Seeking for a better Tomorrow”. New officers for this term included Vanessa Reed, President; Bronzie Salters, Secretary; LaTonya Gibson, Treasurer and Bessie Holmes, Reporter.

SCHOOL - WIDE ACTIVITIES

With the splendid inspiration and leadership of our principal Mr. John A. Williams and the planning and hard work of Mrs. Ernestine Richardson, chairperson, Mrs. Molly Cutillo, Mrs. Mary Hutley, Mrs. Peggy Kidd, Mrs. Norma Campbell, Mr. Ira Galvin, Mr. Johnny Lockett, Mr., Randolph Bush, Mr. Vernell Ross and Mr. Samuel Broadnax, Havana Northside High School held its initial Homecoming festivities. The Planning Committee scheduled an entire week (October 6-10) of activities relating to “Homecoming 1981”. The theme was, “Gladiators 1981 --- and the Beat Goes on!”. Some of the activities included:

October 6 - Spirit Day - Students wore badges depicting school spirit.

October 7 - “Lick ‘em Day” - Students licked lollipops symbolizing the “lickin”

Miller County High our Homecoming opponent.

October 8 - Inspirational Assembly - Former students of Havana and Northside High were guests. They were:

Mrs. Verlie Lawson Grady Mr. Ronnie Fert Richardson

Mr. Alfred Lawson Mrs. Cora Anderson

Mr. Harold Henderson Mrs. Emma Grice Owen

Mrs. Lillie D. Stokes

October 9 - Pep Rally and Barn Fire

October 10 - Homecoming Parade and Game

Joan Brown was selected by the Student Body as Homecoming Queen with Gwendolyn Smith first attendant, LaSonya Gibson, second attendant, Gayle Washington, third attendant and Dale Spencer, Fourth attendant.

December brought the Annual Christmas Parade in downtown Havana. In addition to the units from surrounding areas, various participants from our school played a vital role in making the parade a success.

“The Merry, Merry month of May” would once again bring with it, flowers and our annual May Day festivities. Mrs. Earnestine Richardson put together a day of fun and games as well as a crowning ceremony fit for royalty. All classes participated in one of the most gala of all May Days in the history of this event.

As usual, Mr. Edward Inge’s, Ms Mildred Franklin’s and Mr. Ira Galvin’s classes were right up there as front runners. This year however, they were closely contested by Mrs. Catherine James’s class, 9-1. The final results however, were close. Mr. Inge and 11-3 were the victors. Phyllis Scott and Chris Garrett were crowned May Queen and King for 1981. Mrs. James’ 9-1 was second, followed closely by Mr. Galvin’s 9-2 in third place and Ms. Mildred Franklins 9-3 finished fourth.

The crowning and field events were exciting as well as rewarding. A tremendous amount of fun was witnessed by all.

The month of May is also the time for the annual senior outings. The Seniors attended “Grad Nite” at Disney World in Orlando, Florida where they entertained by a number of famous musical personalities as well as a grand night of various rides, games and just plain fun. The seniors also held their annual picnic at Silver Lake and a party at the L and J Lounge.

On May 21st our annual Student Government Day and Awards Day were held. This year was the first time that both activities were held on the same day. During the A.M. Timothy Butler, Student Principal, and Vincent Hinson, Assistant Student Principal, held the difficult task of “running” the school. Other seniors replaced the faculty and staff in order to understand the daily workings as to how our school is run. Later in the day, students gathered in the school’s gymnasium for the Awards Day Program. Awards for a variety of accomplishments were given to deserving individuals for outstanding efforts and achievements during the 1980 - 81 school year.

One special award citing the spectators of Havana Northside High as the most courteous in the Big Bend, was presented to our school by the Big Bend Officials’ Association.

DEPARTMENTS

Music

In keeping with our school’s philosophy, that a student should be molded into a well-rounded individual, the 1980 - 81 school year was filled with both educational and social activities. On November 21, 1980, the Havana Northside Marching Band attended and participated in the Florida Bandmaster’s Association Marching Band Festival at Leon High School in Tallahassee, Florida and received an excellent rating.

On February 12, 1981, the band and chorus presented a concert at Greensboro High School. On May 16th, the Music Department held its First Annual Music Ball. Dr. Julian White, Associate Professor of Woodwinds, Advisor of Instrumental Music and Associate Director of Bands at FAMU, was guest speaker.

Sharon Galvin, who was serenaded by Rev. George Madry, and Maurice Williams reigned as Queen and King respectively and several students received music awards. Roosevelt Morris received the Band Director’s award and Leadership awards. Eric Strange was honored with the Choral Director’s award. Michael Colston was most versatile. Marva Williams was the most valuable freshman and Deborah Henderson, Sharon Galvin, Angela McGriff and Michael Colston all received service awards.

On May 14th 1981, Roosevelt Morris became the first instrumental music student from Havana Northside High School to pass an audition for membership in Florida A & M University’s Marching 100.

JROTC

Highlighted by a “Honor Unit’ rating on the Annual Formal Inspection (AFI) held on February 23, 1981 and participation in three Rifle and Drill Meets and three parades, the JROTC Department had a very successful year.

Following the retirement of SFC Donald R. Chapman, a new instructor SFC Dencel R. Smith was hired during the year to fill that vacancy.

Enrollment for the unit dropped approximately twelve percent over the past year. This drop is consistent with the decrease in enrollment for the entire school. Nevertheless, the department was able to maintain the one hundred plus cadets necessary to meet the Army’s enrollment requirements.

Enthusiasm for the program is still high among the majority of the cadets, and there is considerable interest from the students who are not in the program. A significant number of cadets benefit directly from their JROTC experience through participation in the military reserves as well as active units. These recognized benefits should result in continued interest in the JROTC program from Havana Northside High School.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The beginning of the 1980-81 school year saw the Social Studies Department membership remaining intact with only one exception, Mrs. Carrie Carr’s part-time Social Studies status ended when she became a full-time member of the Language Arts Department.

This year the department made use of some of our available community resources by requesting and receiving the services of the office of the Supervisor of Elections for Gadsden County. All students eighteen years old and older were given the opportunity to register to vote. This opportunity was granted to those students here at the school.

The department also sponsored a “mini” lecture on Juvenile Law with the Honorable Judge Richard L. Hood, County Judge of Gadsden County.

Near the end of the school term, two interns joined the department. Ms. Myra Gant from FAMU was assigned to Mr. Michael Sever, and Mr. Steve Scott from FSU was placed under supervision of Mr. Bennie Koenig.

ATHLETICS

The 1980 - 81 athletics at Havana Northside was not world shattering, however much was accomplished. Under the directorship of Coach Vernell Ross, Athletic Director, and the unrelenting efforts of Mrs. Ernestine Richardson, certain disaster was turned into a degree of success. Having posted an unimpressive won-lost record of 2-0 in our first two interscholastic sports competitions (Volleyball 2-8 and Football 0-10), our girls’ basketball team turned on the backburners and coasted to a season of 27-2 and a number three (3) ranking in the AA State Competition. Led by Rosa Hudgins, the Lady Gladiators lost only once in regular season play to Shanks High School but later avenged that defeat. The only other lost was in the first round of the State Tournament at Winter Park, FL. our Lady Gladiators fell to Avon Park. Rosa Hudgins and Dale Spencer made All-District; Rosa Hudgins made All-State and Gwendolyn Smith and Dale Spencer were honorably mentioned.

The Havana Northside High girls’ track team had another good year. Of the twelve meets in which we participated, we were victorious in seven. Our girls placed second in the district and conference meets. We had ten girls to qualify for the state meet in Winter Park, where our Mile Relay team composed of (Sonja McGriff, Shelia Bunion, Dale Spencer and LaLisa Davis) finished fifth.

Two of our track team members made the All-Big Bend Team: Angela McGriff - 100 yard dash and Wanda Moore - Long Jump. Both were offered scholarships to attend FAMU.

Our very young weightlifting team was 1-2 for the year and is a potential contender for district honors next season.

Several of our athletes were awarded and accepted scholarships to a number of schools around the county.

Rosa Hudgins FAMU Basketball

Dale Spencer Lane Basketball

Linda Thomas Lane Basketball

Anthony Hinson Dillard Basketball

Wesley McGriff Prairie View Football

Anthony Simmons Prairie View Football

During the month of February “Pride Week”, an annual event at Havana Northside was put into motion by the Athletic Department boy’s basketball team. During this week students were urged to take special interest in being Punctual, showing Respect, showing

Initiative, being Decked (well-dressed) and being Entertained. The week was culminated with a performance by the James A. Shanks Modern Dance Club.

Our boy’s track team was 1981 Gulf Coast Athletic Conference Track and Field Champions. We qualified 9 members to compete in the state meet at Winter Park, Florida. Gerhart Lewis, Lorenzo McGill, Kelvin Derico, Anthony Grant, Kelvin Andrews, Alonzo Harvin, Anthony Hinson, Kelvin Lawson, and Melvin Daniels attended the state meet.

CONTEST

In February, the 1980 - 81 Spelling Bee Competition, was held with a large number of students participating. After a long, hard fought battle, these winners emerged:

First Place Genefer McNair

Second Place Tammy McGriff

Third Place Wanda Washington

Fourth Place Kelvin Andrews

Fifth Place Virginia Clemons

On February 12, 1981, at Shanks High School, ten contestants would vie for the District Spelling Championship. Five schools were represented - Carter Parramore Jr. High School, Chattahoochee High School, Greensboro High School, Havana Northside High School and James A. Shanks High School. Once again the hard work along with Gladiator pride and spirit, would take us to the top.

First Place Genefer McNair

Second Place Tammy McGriff

The month of March brought with it not only the strong winds, but the school’s Declamation contest for 1981. Serving as a “Warm-Up” for the County Competition, several students performed extremely well in a variety of categories.

Junior Division

First Place Pamela Clark Prepared Humorous

Second Place Geneen Simmons Prepared Humorous

First Place Donald Garrett Prepared Serious

Second Place Manuella Nowicki Prepared Serious

Third Place Keshia Prepared Serious

Senior Division

First Place Buhilda McGriff Prepared Serious

Second Place Jenefer Davis Prepared Serious

Third Place Dale Spencer Prepared Serious

First Place Vanessa Anderson Original Serious

First Place Christian Nowicki Prepared Humorous

Second Place Ricky Brown Prepared Humorous

In April, the Gadsden County Declamation Contest was held at the James A. Shanks High School Cafetorium. Once again the Havana Northside High School was in there giving its all. In a closely contested match, Vanessa Anderson placed third in the Original Serious Category and Buhilda McGriff placed third in the Prepared Serious Category. However, all was not lost. Christain Nowicki won first place in the Humorous Prepared Category.

As a rule, June in addition to its new brides, is also the month for graduations. Havana Northside follows the rules. Under the advisorship of Mrs. Lillie R. Stokes, Mrs. Carrie Carr, Ms. Donna Walker and Mr. Wilbert Washington ecstatic seniors donned graduation attire and marched proudly to the podium to receive their well-deserved and hard - earned diplomas.

With banners expressing the class theme “We’re Reached an End Yet Begun a New” and the class motto, “One Ending and Another Beginning”, Mr. Robert Bryant, Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools for Gadsden County, awarded diplomas to the following students:

SENIOR ROSTER

1980 - 1981

1. Anderson, Vanessa L. 26. Gibson, LaSonya M.

2. Anderson, Polito 27. Gibson, LaTonya M.

3. Andrews, Chynell 28. Gilbert, Jacqueline

4. Andrews, Kelvin L. 29. Girley, Casey

5. Blakely, Wendell K. 30. Graham, Janelle M.

6. Brown, Joan S. 31. Grant, Lorenzo

7. Brown, Linda J. 32. Hannah, Lynette

8. Bush, Conestine 33. Harvin, Alonzo

9. Butler, Bruce 34. Hatcher, Lori

10. Butler, Timothy 35. Henderson, Deborah

11. Ceasor, Catherine 36. Herring, Nickalus

12. Chambers, Earl 37. Herring, Terrance

13. Charles, Tejuana 38. Hinston, Anthony T.

14. Collins, Ned 39. Hinson, Vincent

15. Colston, Marilyn 40. Holmes, Bessie

16. Colston, Michael A. 41. Holton, Karen D.

17. Curry, Veronica 42. Hudgins, Rosa

18. Daniels, Melvin 43. Hunt, Eugene E.

19. Dehsazier, Belinda J. 44. Huntley, Jimmy L.

20. Derico, Vernon 45. Jackson, Roderic B.

21. Dillard, Shirley A. 46. Jenkins, Riley

22. Ellison, Linda D. 47. Jones, Albert

23. Evans, Jacqueline D. 48. Jones, James

24. Fuller, Audrey 49. Johnson, Patricia

25. Gadson, Carolyn 50. Johnson, Tyrone

51. Kelly, Brenda 74. Reed, Vanessa

52. Kinslow, Lewis R. 75. Richardson, Trina

53. Knight, Charlie 76. Roberts, Carolyn

54. Lampkins, Cynthia D. 77. Rogers, Thersia

55. Lawson, Alexander 78. Simmons, Anthony

56. Lawson, Kevin L. 79. Smith, Dexter

57. Lee, Stephanie 80. Smith, Gwendolyn

58. Logan, Callie G. 81. Spencer, Dale

59. Lovett, Glenn L. 82. Staley, Barry

60. Lovett, Gwendolyn L. 83. Staley, Roger

61. McBride, Curtis D. 84. Strange, Eric L.

62. McGriff, Angela 85. Swain, Diane

63. McGriff, Floyd 86. Thomas, Linda

64. McGriff, Tammy 87. Waiters, Jennell

65. McGriff, Wesley 88. Walker, Flozell

66. McNair, Ondrie 89. Washington, Floyd, Jr.

67. Miller, Julius 90. Washington, Gail

68. Moore, Wanda 91. Washington, Ruby

69. Morris, Rooselvelt 92. Washington, Wanda

70. Myles, Patricia 93. Wilcoxson, Cheryl

71. Perry, Hendrick 94. Williams, Marsha

72. Perry, Shelia K. 95. Youmas, Willie

73. Quinsey, Shirley 96. Zanders, Darryl 97. Chester (Evans) Lula

The story that you have just heard is as true as its sources. There have been no name changes because the characters are innocent. Any similarities to past school histories are not coincidental, but were intended.

As the 1980 - 81 school term ends, so ends another chapter in the somewhat brief history of a proud institution. The name has been altered, but the true Gladiator tradition continues. Now we are about to begin a new and it is our hope that the accomplishment of new goals will increase and our shortcomings will decrease but our pride and devotion will last forever.

The end