

## It is Patriotic Season

This time of year, we see more American flags than the rest of the year. The season starts with Memorial Day, then Flag Day and completes with the Fourth of July. National Cemeteries all over the country have arrays of flags and moving ceremonies. Our own Bay Pines Veterans Cemetery is decorated with small flags at each grave marker by veterans' organizations and Boy Scouts.



Typical memorials are all across America.

Many of our classmates served in the country's armed forces and we thank them for helping to make our country free.

We hope this tradition of patriotism continues in succeeding generations, and that our children and grandchildren are taught about the personal sacrifices made to preserve our country and our way of life.



## April 2022 at PJ's Restaurant

Our quarterly luncheon attracted a dwindling number of participants, but we all enjoyed the camaraderie of 1954 Classmates.

Our Continuing Reunion Chairman, Boyd Acklin, was unable to come, due to health issues (More later).

Again, there was discussion at the luncheon about having fewer reunion luncheons – perhaps only two or three a year.

We did remember to take some photos of those present this time, which are shown here.



Left to Right: Margaret Ritter Kellestine, Harriette Bey Urbahn, and Lillian Olsen Classen.



Left to Right: Dolores Carr DeWitt & Barbara Volley Bowen.



Left to Right: Nancy Cramer Litten, her son Brick.





Left to Right: Maggie and Karl Maier.



Left to Right: Margaret Ritter Kellestine, Harriette Bey Urbahn, Lillian Olsen Classen, Nancy Cramer Litten, Nancy's son Brick, and Ed Parrotte



Left to Right: Sherry Nichols Rasmussen (SPHS '55), Bob Walton

## Notes from Classmates

This clipping was sent by classmate **Roy Kaple**, who has an interest in publications from our school days. It dates from about 1947-48. The proofreader missed the spelling of Don Carr. 😞

Alas, West Central Elementary is no longer around, having been razed to make room for expanded buildings at SPHS.

### West Central Elects President

Jerry Bean has been elected president of the newly-formed Student Council organization of West Central School.

Other officers include Ronnie Rasmussen, vice president; Irene Hillengas, secretary; Bill Crawford, treasurer.

Committee chairmen are Con Carr, conduct; Marie Zimmer, program; Barbara Keesler, service and Joan Anderson, refreshment.

**Joyce Lindsay Sperry** writes, "Just read the SPHS newsletter and thank you for all the updates and your commitment to keeping us united!! My Update: "New Life at 85"! December 1st, I sold my home in Treasure Island which we built 50 years ago and where my three children were raised. Due to health reasons I moved to Colorado to be near daughter and her husband. She found a beautiful independent living apartment for me three miles from her which accepted my golden retriever, provides daily meals, numerous activities, and a friendly homey atmosphere. Health much improved. I miss my family and friends in St. Pete but know our Lord knows best and has a plan for us to prosper no matter the age!!! GOD IS GOOD.

**Bernice Bosche Abernathy** writes: "Thanks for sending the latest newsletter. I am glad I am not among the 'missing' anymore. Please correct my

phone 619-993-6237. Thanks for helping us all stay connected.

**Sandra Shoemake Buckingham** RSVP'd to the last luncheon announcement: "Sorry, we won't be able to attend the April luncheon. Bill is recuperating from Aortic Heart Valve Replacement Surgery. Maybe next time."

**Annetta Eck Gross** sent this nice note: "Thanks for your consistent SPHS newsletter about our classmates and I relate to the yearbook photos because that is what I know. And didn't we look neat, well-groomed, and clean? Those were the good old days! My husband writes a newsletter, *"Rickety Rocketeers"* for former employees of Convair/General Dynamics/later Lockheed Martin at Cape Canaveral, plus anyone else at other locations who indicates an interest. They have breakfast every other month with 2 years missing because of COVID. I see the dedication it takes to dig up history of launches and to publish a newsletter about current launches - when, what they do, etc. And he sends out death notices as they occur - getting to be more and more frequent. Our class seems to be doing well at 60% still with us. We're in Cocoa Beach and if we were closer, I would love to join in."

## Graduations



**Acklin, RAdm. Ernest B. Jr. "Boyd"** of St. Petersburg, FL, passed away peacefully at home on Friday, April 29, 2022, at the age of 86. He was born in St. Petersburg, FL. A graduate of St. Petersburg High School, Class of 1954 and a 1958 graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT. He was appointed to Flag Rank in 1987 and retired as a Rear Admiral in 1991. He relished spending time with family especially holiday and summer reunions. He also enjoyed watching football, baseball, and old westerns. He served his church and community

tirelessly. Boyd was a loving father, husband, grandfather, great-grand father, and friend to everyone. Boyd was predeceased by his wife of 63 years, Patricia Ann and is survived by his children; daughter, Valerie Acklin Cardin; daughter, Victoria Acklin Alderman; son, Christopher Winfield Acklin (Paula); son, Paul Sean Acklin (Erika); eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Services were Sunday, May 15, 2022, at 2 pm at First United Methodist Church, 212 3rd Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

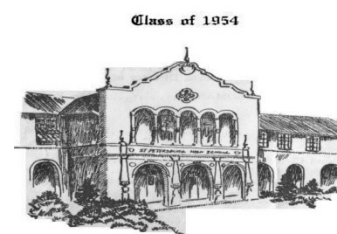
**Editor's Note:** I visited Boyd at his home just a few hours before he passed. His two sons, Chris and Paul were there. Boyd had labored breathing and was not awake. Ultimately, he succumbed to pneumonia, following a bout with COVID. Too, you can imagine Boyd was still dealing with the loss of Pat last October, in addition to his health issues.

How does losing Boyd and Pat affect our long-running SPHS reunion activities? It is a devastating loss, and we will attempt to keep going – as they would have wanted.

In the short term, we will continue to have our quarterly luncheons. However, after the October luncheon, we will probably eliminate the January and July luncheons. Lately, we have been gathering about a dozen who are interested in our luncheons.

Also, we are thinking about reducing newsletter distribution to just those with email. With the post office raising stamp costs, we currently spend about \$50 to mail out the quarterly newsletter to those classmates without Internet. The only other costs the class treasury incurs is the web site hosting fees every two years.

That brings up a related topic. At some point our class treasury will need a final beneficiary. We have had discussions and feel that any balance should be given to SPHS for scholarships. When that happens is TBD.



**Class Contacts:**

Class of 1954 web site, where you can find email, phone numbers and mail addresses about our classmates: <http://sphs1954.org/>.

Help us keep your data current!

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Lillian Olsen Classen, at [jclassen4@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:jclassen4@tampabay.rr.com) or [4085 Overture Cir Bradenton, FL 34209](mailto:4085 Overture Cir Bradenton, FL 34209) (727) 743-1462. **No donations are needed until further notice.**

**Classmate updates, news-to-share, etc.,** should be sent to Ron Rasmussen, Editor, 10212 58<sup>th</sup> Street, Pinellas Park, FL 33782-2632, (727) 544-2374 or [r.rasmussen@ieee.org](mailto:r.rasmussen@ieee.org)

**Next reunion luncheon is  
Saturday, July 9, 2022**

Location is PJ's Oyster Bar. Gathering time is **12:15 p.m.** If you plan to attend, please let Lil Olsen Classen know by **Thur., July 7.** Lil's phone is (727) 743-1462. or [jclassen4@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:jclassen4@tampabay.rr.com)



7490 Gulf Blvd,  
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706

SPHS Class of 1954  
10212 58<sup>th</sup> Street  
Pinellas Park, FL 33782-2632  
Address Service Requested