

Historic

MILTON L. KIRKPATRICK JR. SR. HIGH SCHOOL



If you attended the Saturday, August 23rd dinner honoring Coach Beene and the MLK Basketball teams - Thank You! If you didn't make it, please know that you were missed.

This recap of the event will serve to spotlight the tremendous love and support shown by the Milton L. Kirkpatrick family. The first observation of interest is the vast class grade representation. I saw several alumni whom I had not seen in more than ten years; and a few who span more than 20 years. Check out the list – '61 Wendell Madkin, '74 Darryl Talley, '62 Gloria Tankersly, '59 Earnestine Bradford Smith, '62 Edna Bradford Roberts, '71 Janice Earle, and '54 I.M. Terrell graduate, Bill Layne – to name just a few. What a turn out!

The evening celebration began with dinner; which was provided by caterer, "Willie and Daisy too!"* The menu included chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetable medley, salad, and green beans; followed with dessert - peach cobbler. It was 'off the chain'. The option of ice tea, lemonade, and punch made the evening meal a wrap.

The program was set to honor Coach Beene and the players of the three time PVIL Championship games. These games were played in 1961, 1964, and 1967; making Mr. Beene a THREE-TIME PVIL Championship Coach. These accomplishments were mirrored by '67 Robert Sanders and '64 Morris Franklin. These two players detailed famous moments in time, replaying the victories in the minds of the (more than 100) listening audience. The visuals created by Robert were both funny and enlightening. Morris named players, scores, and even the 'game plays' for the team. And he couldn't pass the opportunity to tell us the nicknames of many of the players.

Morris finished the tribute with the reading of the deceased players. Volunteers from the audience stood as a symbol of these talented players. Lighted candles were used to represent these fallen honorees. As each team member's name was called, a white candle was handed to the stand in. There were a total of 16 candles.

'61 DECEASED CHAMPIONSHIP MEMBERS

Nate Bowman
Eddie Lane, Jr.
William Ellison
James Davis
Antonio Jackson
Don Davis
Sherry Mack Wilson

'64 DECEASED CHAMPIONSHIP MEMBERS

Larry Allen
Fred Thomas
Ronald Lofton
James Ralph Gray

'67 DECEASED CHAMPIONSHIP MEMBERS

Keith Bailey
Robert Hill
Otha Holley
Curtis Robinson

The MLK alumni and friends were delighted to hear words of love and respect from the children of Coach Beal and Coach Beene. Pamela Beene Edwards, enthusiastically shared the early experience of being the daughter of COACH BEENE. She spoke of the many times when her father returned home from a game, and answered the one question she always shouted, "Did you win?" And countless times he announced "...Yes, we won." She ended her story with the one time that she asked, "did you win?" and Coach Beene sadly announced, "No, we didn't win." Sharing in her father's sorrow (or was it anger?), she replied, "Why didn't you shoot them."

Ronnie Beal (almost a duplicate, but certainly a model of his father) spoke of the past as though it were only yesterday. He thanked the players and spoke in appreciation for the opportunity he was given to be a part of the team; following them to many games. The bond that he and the player had in those days continue to play out in their lives today.

Ronnie's tribute was delivered with the energy of a sportsman. He called names, detailed incidents, thanked the players, and simply reminded us of just how awesome the coaching staff and players were during those hay-days. In his conclusion, Ronnie presented a winning football from Coach Beal's memorabilia (I didn't get the history) to the principal of MLK, Mr. Nick Torres, to be placed in the trophy case.

The honoree, Coach Beene, introduced his wife, Ida Beene, daughter, Pamela, and a grandson, who is preparing for college. Coach Beene also recognized members of his home church (Sweethome Baptist Church) who joined in this evening of tribute. In recognition for an outstanding career and appreciation for his leadership, Coach Beene was presented a plaque by '63 Eddie Warren.

Coach Beene delivered a speech with the same authority that he exhibited in his coaching skills. Although he did not rise from his seat to deliver his message, his voice was raised, his authority was strong, and his recall outstanding.

The survivor of several life threatening health issues, Coach Beene gave thanks; first to God, the head of his life, the God of Salvation, the master of mercy and grace!! Secondly, Coach Beene spoke in appreciation to '65 Robert Simpson for his diligence in prayer and visitations during those days of sickness.

The evening was 'time well spent'. The faces of MLK alumni from at least 8 grade levels was so-o-o-o uplifting.

The leadership of Bennie as President of the MLK Alumni Association continues to validate the extent of his (mental) record keeping. We will cherish Bennie and his contribution to the MLK family. Thank you Bennie!!!!



"Many thanks to all of you who supported this important event. It exceeded expectations.

AND! A Very Special thank you to '66 Harvey Johnson for his \$50 contribution. God Bless! ~ Bennie Sherman

'66 Mary Harrison Greene has a collection of pictures from the night's event. I was able to get a few photos. So, I will share these two. I will email more in the days to follow. The complete collection is too large for one mailing.

*Willie and Daisy too!

Phyllis Roberts

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Son-in-law and Grandson of Mr. & Mrs. Beene