

Hello Northside Class of '66, former teachers and friends.

This year I can promise you there IS more GOOD news than bad!! So, lets start out with the current Eagles.

### **NORTHSIDE FOOTBALL – CITY CHAMPIONSHIP**

Northside toppled the WR Demons for the third year in a row....34 to 7 at a packed house at McConnell-Talbert Stadium, September 7, 2007. Warner Robins head coach Bryan Way said, "A better team beat us and you don't have to know a lot about football to figure that out." I told you about some NHS standout players last year....well, they were back this year. Quarterback Marques Ivory finished 13 of 20 for 265 yards. Remember me telling you about my neighbor Tijuan Green...he had 126 yards rushing and 85 receiving yards and three touchdowns. Tijuan also took three direct snaps that resulted in 52 yards and a touchdown. Nick Bass also had a good game, he received a shovel pass in the third quarter and went for 75 yards to set up another touchdown. GOOO EAGLES!!!!

### **NORTHSIDE FOOTBALL – ON TO THE DOME**

Let me say this up front, all games played at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta are televised on Georgia Public TV, as are the state championship games played at the local stadiums. Most are also broadcast over the internet.

It's now December 7, 2007, and everyone is headed up I-75 to the Georgia Dome in hopes of winning and being able to play the next week in the STATE CHAMPIONSHIP game. Up to this point, the Eagles had won every game, most of them were blow-outs, but this was the semi-finals and by the way, our STAR quarterback, Marques Ivory, had spent the better part of the last six weeks with his leg in a cast, recovering from surgery to repair a broken leg received in a game in late October. Marques thought his season was over...so did everyone else. Wait a minute....EAGLES DON'T QUIT!!!

It's NHS vs Tucker. Marques is standing on the bench on the sidelines....the second quarter is drawing to a close and NHS is behind 28 to 7. The last time NHS had trailed by more than 20 points was back in 2003. Marques entered the game in the second half...in a performance that no one inside the Dome or from Warner Robins or who watched the telecast on GPTV will ever forget, Ivory brought the Eagles back from the dead. He resurrected their season and his high school career in a brilliant 24 minute flash that will likely be remembered as one of the greatest comebacks and performances in the history of the state playoffs. He spurred the Eagles both physically and emotionally as Northside scored 24 unanswered points to beat Tucker 31-28. Sophomore place-kicker Devon Pike nailed a 22-yard field goal with 12 seconds left in the game to break a 28-28 tie. As NHS lined up for Devon Pike's field goal kick, students and fans started to chant, "96!!, 96!!", the number Chris Johnson wore when he played for NHS. This year each player wore a

white No. 96 patch on the front of their jerseys in his honor. For Northside, the goal all season has been the same: Do it for Chris!!! Touchdowns for NHS: Kevyn Cooper –2, Nick Bass 1, and Brandon Jordan 1. GOOOO EAGLES!!!

## **NORTHSIDE FOOTBALL – STATE CHAMPIONSHIP**

### **NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL WINS BACK-TO-BACK STATE CHAMPIONSHIP!!!! TWICE AS NICE!!!!**

Northside traveled to Waycross on December 14, 2007, to play Ware County for the state championship and came home with their second straight state championship....something that has not been done by any team in this area.

The Eagles entered the field by walking AROUND a banner created for them that they traditionally run through. The LARGE banner bared an image of Chris Johnson (NHS #96) and read: “Right Here. Right Now. For Chris.” As they walked to their sideline arm-in-arm, they carried a framed picture of the former defensive lineman. As time expired at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, facing a 14 – 10 deficit, the Eagles got the emotional lift they had been looking for. At the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, Northside fans created a sea of white signs bearing a blue 96 – Johnson’s number. A 4<sup>th</sup> quarter pass from Tijuan Green to Nick Bass was all the Eagles needed to keep their 2-year winning streak alive. Nick Bass wasn’t about to quit without a win!!! It didn’t mater that he took a torpedo in the back in the form of a Tucker defender at the Georgia Dome. It didn’t matter that he got his legs cut out from under him, sending him flipping to the ground on his head, neck and shoulder in the first half of the championship game against Ware County. That hit re-aggravated the injury from the Tucker game. It didn’t matter that he took a shot to the ribcage that sent him hurling through the air into a first-down marker, his body bending the marker in half rendering it unusable. It didn’t matter that he coughed up blood thanks to that shot. He could not quit!!! His classmate Chris Johnson didn’t quit, not through fighting leukemia for two years. The players said the first state championship was for all the former NHS football players, alumni, teachers and fans....this win was for CHRIS!!

Some impressive NHS facts: Marques has never lost a game he started, finishing his high school career with a 24-0 record. The current team has lost just once with a record of 44-1. The Eagles have been to the state semifinals seven times in their history – all under Conrad Nix. The program is currently on a 30-game winning streak. Tijuan Green makes All-Middle Georgia GHSA football team. Tijuan finished his senior year with 2,035 rushing yards and 29 touchdowns on 278 carries, 3 receiving touchdowns and 1 passing, leading him to be named the All-Middle Georgia GHSA football Player of the Year. Other Eagles making the GHSA team are: Nick Bass, Marques Ivory, Jerome Bibbins, Veshan Oats, Abry Jones, Anthony Taylor, K. J. Morton, Eric Fields, Darius Ivey, Leslie Jordan, Evan Arthur, Kevyn Cooper, and Jordan Dooley. Northside was ranked number one in the state at the beginning of the 2007 season. In October 2007, Northside was ranked number

eleven in the NATION by USA Today. USA Today announced that the NHS vs Baldwin County game was their “National Game of the Week” and they were going to do a live web cast of the game.

The Northside High School Boosters Club is raising funds for the football team’s Championship rings...and are falling short. If any of you would like to contribute so these boys will have a “forevermore” memento of their unbelievable accomplishment, you may do so by making a check out to Northside High School, and mailing it to 926 Green St., Warner Robins, GA 31093. Make sure you mark your check or include a note saying the money is for the championship rings.

### **CHRIS JOHNSON LOSES BOUT WITH CANCER**

In a town that is divided by high school football, one player united all. Chris played one season for Northside, but when he was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, all three Warner Robins high schools banded together to raise money for the family and to find a bone-marrow donor. June 14, 2007, Johnson’s battle with cancer ended, he was 17 years old. All three high schools held a powder-puff game with all the proceeds going to the Johnson family. NHS and WRHS also held fundraisers, such as “Quarters for Chris”. In the 2006 season opener against Houston County, Chris led the Eagles onto the field in the second half, pushed in a wheelchair by his teammates. The next week against WRHS, he got a standing ovation at halftime from the entire stadium. Coach Conrad Nix said Chris was more than just number 96 on the roster, he was loved by the entire community. Services for Chris were held in the Ray Horne Theatre at Northside High School. A sympathy card was sent to the Johnson family from the NHS Class of ’66.

### **NORTHSIDE WINS DRAMA AWARDS...AGAIN**

It’s another back-to-back state championship for the NHS Drama Department. NHS got it’s second state title in a row at the GHSA one-act competition for it’s musical production of “Pippin”. Success has created a problem for NHS...where to put all those trophies. The school would like to display the trophies in the lobby of the Ray Horne Theatre, but so far, have not been able to find a cabinet maker to do the job for what the school can afford to pay. Right now, the trophies are on top of lockers back stage, and in other nooks and crannies. Anyone know of a good...cheap cabinet maker....or, anyone want to make a donation.

Northside brings Elvis back to life!!! Northside did “All Shook Up” as this year’s musical. Proceeds from the show will go toward installing mirrors and a dance floor in the dance studio at the school. Travis Peterson who starred in “All Shook Up”, has been selected to appear in the International Thespian Festival production of “Hairspray” slated for next summer.

## WARNER ROBINS HOME OF WORLD CHAMPIONS

The road to Glory for the Warner Robins American Little League All Stars was a plane ride to Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Unless you have been living under a rock for the last 8 months, you know that our boys from right here in Warner Robins are the 2007 Little League World Series Champions.

The long road to Williamsport started back in July when the WRALL won the District 5 title. Dalton Carriker pitched a no-hitter. It took 7 innings, but our WRALL won 3 to 0. Carriker threw a complete game, striking out 10 batters. He didn't walk any batters. The only two base runners West Macon had came on errors. (remember the name Dalton Carriker)

The WRALL rolled through the state tournament unbeaten. Then, it was on to St. Petersburg, Fla., and the Southeast Regional title. Our boys came home for a couple of days before hitting the sky for a plane ride... a first for some of the players...to what all young ball players dream of...the WORLD SERIES OF LITTLE LEAGUE.

The WRALL won the "US" title in Williamsport. Now it was on to the "World" title against the winner of the "International" title. Winning the US title didn't come easy. We had to get past Lubbock, Texas. Lubbock had a pitcher named Garrett Williams who almost broke the LLWS strike out record....you may hear this kid's name on down the road...he's awesome.

It's now WRALL (the US champs) against Japan (the international champs) for the WORLD SERIES TITLE. Keaton Allen started on the mound for WR...Keaton had not pitched in over a month....OK, we're nervous. Keaton gave up two runs, but that didn't seem to bother him. He came up to bat and hit a two-run double...the TV camera zoomed in on Keaton as he stood on second base and measured with his thumb and index finger just how close it was to a homerun...MAYBE 2 inches. The game was tied as Keaton left the game to be replaced by Kendall Scott in the third inning. The game remained tied through regulation (6 innings). The 7<sup>th</sup> inning was exhausting. TV announcers talked about the number of walk-off home runs during the previous week as the bottom of the 8<sup>th</sup> inning started up. Less than two minutes later...on a 2-1 pitch: "Deep drive to right field. DEEP right....It's over!!!! It's over!!! Georgia wins it on a Dalton Carriker walk-off home run!!!" Dalton goes around the bases with his arms up in the air as if he is flying...I imagine he was...and his entire team, coaching staff, family and friends....I know all of us sitting in our homes watching the game were flying high. But it does not end there. The heart warming acts that followed the win have sparked messages from all over the world. These WONDERFUL young men stopped their celebrating and went on the field to where the players from Japan were laying on the ground crying. They picked these sobbing players up off the ground and embraced them with long hugs. This was a ride of dazzling

proportion for which we say from the bottom of our hearts... THANKS for taking us along!!! If you didn't get to see the final game, you need to find someone with a copy you can view or contact ESPN; because I guarantee you, you can't watch it without having a big lump in your throat and tears in your eyes. Our Governor, Sonny Perdue, was in attendance up at Williamsport; they even showed his Little League team picture on TV. Sonny had a bet going with the Governor of Texas... the losing team's Governor would fly the winning team's state flag over their State Capital Building for a day. I bet the Georgia flag looked real good in place of the lone star!!!

Dalton was invited to be on the Late Show with David Letterman the following Monday. He was so cool on the show...no sign of nerves...just coolness. Dalton was named Male Athlete of the Year by the Touchdown Club of Columbus (Ohio). He accepted the award at the prestigious ceremony in Ohio. The 2007 Female Athlete of the Year also went to a Georgian, Courtney Kupets, who is on the UGA gymnastics team. Others honored at the banquet were: Illinois head football coach Ron Zook, Kansas head football coach Mark Mangino, Ohio State running back Chris "Beanie" Wells, and Texas Tech quarterback Graham Harrell.

These boys have had the royal treatment since returning home...trip to D.C. to meet the President, trips to Atlanta to meet with the Governor, watch the Braves, and watch the Falcons. They were also invited down to visit with Jimmy Hattaway and the people at the Kennedy Space Center for a special tour of the center and to watch the launch of the space shuttle. There have been MANY autograph sessions around middle Georgia and then there was the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Little League "Old Timer's Tournament". Yes, the World Champs played a game against some of the Old Timer's. There was about 13 teams of "old folks", 3 of which I got together myself. I had players from California, New Mexico, Alabama, and surrounding states...not to mention from all over Georgia. It was a day no one in attendance will EVER forget...temperature 36, winds 40 to 50 MPH, wind chill 10, and it snowed most all morning. Everyone had a good time...well most everyone...we were glad they had an ambulance there at the park on standby...they only had to be used a couple of times. I cannot tell you all how happy my father was to see his former players...it made his YEAR! Guess what, we're gonna do it again next year.....pray for good weather next year.

Our 9-10 year old Little Leaguers won the U.S. Championship. This is the top level for their age group. Maybe there is another WORLD TITLE in the future for the WRALL. FINGERS CROSSED!!!

Because of all the expense of getting these two teams to the championships, (air travel, hotels for several weeks, food, food, and more food for several weeks) the WRALL is about \$250,000 short on their budget to do the things that are necessary for this year. There have also been around 200 more kids sign up for Little League this year than in

previous years, making it necessary to put in several new fields. If any of you would like to make a TAX DEDUCTABLE donation to the WRALL, you may do so by making a check payable to: WRALL and mailing it to me at my address at the bottom of this letter. No donation is too small and no donation is EVER too large. Either Uncle Sam can get your money or the WRALL. I am working with the Little League on this fund raising project. They also need local businesses to buy advertising signs to be put up on the inside of the field fences....\$500 first year, \$400 each year there after. Let me hear from you.

### **THIS AND THAT**

The first two listings were left out...unintentionally...last year...sorry Buddy and Terry. Buddy Miles and wife Judy "Peterman" Miles went on their dream vacation in August 2006....a cruise to ALASKA!!! I guess my "invite" got lost in the mail...again.

Terry Torrance and wife Peggy took Peggy's mother to Florence to celebrate her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in November 2006. They stayed a week in an apartment in downtown Florence and saw more art and "stuff" than Terry ever wants to see again. Terry said it seemed that the backside of Michaelangelo's "David" was the main attraction for the women. He did say they have great pizza and pasta over there. They had a good time, but was ready to come home.

Blaine Fielder's wife, Donna, retired from RAFB May 25, 2007, after 30 years of service. CONGRATULATIONS!!! Now Donna can be a full-time GRANDma to little Kamryn....born on Blaine and Donna's anniversary back in 2006.

Joanne "Parker" Rushing's son, Sean Hutchison, was chosen as one of the swimming coaches for the World Games in Australia. He has also been a National Swimming Coach for several years now.

After 17 years of being single, Donnie Scott married his faithful business partner and friend, Ann Grant, on November 24, 2007. Donnie says now she is his partner in every way. CONGRATULATIONS Donnie and Ann. (Donnie, she's a keeper)

Pete Lamendola sends a great big "Thank You" to everyone who came by the hospital and visited with him during his stay, sent cards and notes, called to check on him, and had him in their prayers. Pete still has some health issues, so please continue to keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

Judy "Bullock" White's GRANDson will be stationed at Osan AFB, South Korea, beginning in April for a one year tour.

Gail "Guy" Davis retired from RAFB last month after 30 years of service. Have fun and enjoy retirement, you deserve it!!!

Sandy "Hassmann" Truesdale and her son Will, took a 3 week cruise down the Rhine River and visited all the Christmas Markets along the way (Antwerp, Belgium to Basel, Switzerland). The highlight of the cruise was a trip to the Black Forest which had a brand new coating of snow. She said the Christmas Markets were really fun. Each town has a specialty so they do vary from town to town. The cathedral in Cologne was beautiful and you see very little of the bomb damage to the city. (I want Sandy to adopt me!!)

Ernie Hodge had a great birthday this past August and brought his prized birthday present to the "Old Timer's Game" March 8, 2008. His daughter, Melissa, made him a scrapbook that included old pictures of him playing sports and newspaper articles about him and his classmates, along with some more recent pictures of him and former classmates and former teachers. She put captions beside most of the pictures. The work she put into this BIG project shows the love she has for her daddy. As I looked through this book, it was like we were 17 years old once again. Ernie and Mary Pat, you are lucky parents!!! Melissa, you are one lucky daughter!!!

### **DEATH OF CLASSMATES**

Patsy "Millican" Lockaby passed away June 16, 2007. Because of severe rheumatoid arthritis, Patsy had lived the past few years at Summerhill Assisted Living in Perry, GA. Patsy is survived by her daughter, Shannon Westberg, two grandchildren, Chance Shafor and Lauren Westberg, her brother David Y. Millican and his wife Ginger and their three boys. David's son, the Rev. Brett Millican, officiated the service. The NHS Class of '66 sent a LARGE, beautiful fern to the services and a really nice sympathy card to David and his family.

Annette "Baker" Lashley, born April 11, 1947, in Wiesbaden, Germany, passed away September 28, 2007, from complications related to breast cancer. Annette was a homemaker and a volunteer with Abilities Discovered. Survivors include her husband, John Wayne Lashley, and son, Robert E. Lashley, both of Centerville. Our class sent a BEAUTIFUL fern to the services and a nice sympathy card to John and Robert.

Diane "Long" Rhodes, born April 21, 1948, in Toledo, Ohio, passed away August 21, 2007, after a courageous five year battle with inflammatory breast cancer. Diane was a 1966 graduate of Warner Robins High School. Diane is survived by her two children, Bradley, 21, and Allyson, 17, and brothers Mike Long, Tim Long, and Pete Long.

(I wanted to include Diane in this newsletter because I received so many e-mails and phone calls from you all over the last five years inquiring about Diane and her condition)

### **GRANDBABIES**

Buddy and Judy “Peterman” Miles now have a GRANDson. Caden Vann Smith made his appearance December 2, 2007. His fighting weight was listed as 9 lb. 5 oz. Proud parents are Keith and Stephanie “Gardner” Smith. Caden was also welcomed by his two big sisters. I saw pictures of this big boy and he is a doll...can you say that about a boy??? GRANDma Judy had a smile from ear to ear!!!

Zo “Jones” Blanchard is now a proud GRANDma. Zachary Sagan Blanchard was born January 6, 2008, at 5:02 A.M. (I hope he gets his clock fixed soon) His fighting weight was 7lb. 3 oz. and he was 20 inches long. Again, I’ve seen the pictures and he is pretty, too. (I don’t think you can say that either about a boy...strike two for me). GRANDma Zo was also smiling from ear to ear. (We can’t even BUY a boy in our family...it’s all girls, but we love them anyway and wouldn’t take a million dollars for them..pc)

Alan and Patsy Padgett have a new GRANDson born May 16, 2007. Jason and Jennifer Heisterkamp are the proud new parents of Darren Anthony. This is their 6<sup>th</sup> grandchild.

Bill and Dianne “Carpenter” Nesmith have another GRANDchild. Their daughter, Laurie, and her husband Stephen Jones, both nurses in Statesboro, GA., have adopted their 2<sup>nd</sup> special needs child from China. His name is Zackary and he just turned 3. He joins Anna who is now 5 and Caleb who is 9 (Caleb is the biological child). Both Zackary and Anna have had corrective surgery for Spina Bifida and are doing GREAT! You can feel the love in Dianne’s voice when she talks about these three GRANDkids.

Pete and Ruth Nicholls received their first GRANDchild on July 6, 2007. Kaleb Ryhse Jones was born to their daughter Veronica and her husband Adam Jones of Macon. Kaleb weighed in at 8lbs 12oz and 21.5 inches long. Their second GRANDson was born March 29, 2008, to their son Anthony and his wife Krista, of Byron. Kaleb Hayden Nicholls was 7lb 4oz and was 20 inches. All are doing well.

### **UPDATE ON BLAINE FIELDER**

Blaine had his second stem cell transplant September 17, 2007. His hospital stay was rougher this time; he contracted a bacterial infection called “C-Diff” in his digestive tract. He doesn’t remember any of the next week and a half. The doctor put a “Pic line” in his right arm and it resulted in another blood clot. That was the 3<sup>rd</sup> clot with one being a pulmonary embolism. He says he has recovered a lot faster this time than the first round six years ago. The end result from this stem cell transplant were not as good as the first in

that the plasma cells (bad cells) came down from 20% to 5%. Bottom line is when this one wears off, maybe 3 to 4 years, there are no more stem cell transplants. He says he will have to go on some type of medicine to help control the cancer. His doctor says his kidney function has returned to normal. Every little bit helps!!! Blaine said to pass along to everyone his heart felt thanks for all their thoughts and prayers. He said it is GREAT to have a group of classmates that think of each other like NHS does....not only the Class of '66, but classes before and after '66. He says he is doing a lot better, but can still use a prayer every now and then. We love you Blaine...continue to feel better...you are always in our prayers....Donna, too.

## **NEWSLETTER**

A class roster was not in this newsletter because of limited space, but if you would like one, just let me know and I will be happy to get you one in the mail. PLEASE send in your information for the next newsletter as things happen...retirements, anniversaries, weddings, new GRANDbabies, special events, deaths, etc. Without your information, there would not be a newsletter.

If you would like to donate to the newsletter, flower fund, sympathy card fund, or postage fund, you may do so by sending a check to Phyllis Byars Corley, 200 Chuck Circle, Warner Robins, GA 31093-2616...write "newsletter" in the memo section of your check.

This newsletter was made possible by the following classmates: Drew Hale, Gail "Pierce" Ellis, Fostine "Coleman" Barnes, Jim Salvador, Ricky Harvey, Judy "Burgess" Perry, Blaine Fielder, Penny "Abel" Hale, Dianne "Carpenter" Nesmith, Judy "Snell" Williams, Ernie Hodge, Ginny "Coburn" McEarchern, Earl Brantley, Wayne McKinnon, Jennie "Duke" Patrick, Donnie Scott, Elaine "Humphrey" Monn, Charlie Attaway, Pete Lamendola, Jimmy Vititoe, Phyllis "Byars" Corley, and Gwen "Tucker" Giles.

I need current e-mail addresses on everyone...please drop me a quick note and say "Hi" so I can update my address book. Also, this newsletter will be posted on our web site, thanks to Pete Nicholls. <http://nhsclassof1966.netpages.us> User name: nhsclassof1966 Password: Eagles You can check it out and post pictures...I'll try to get some pictures posted from the "Old Timer's Game".

If I have left anything out of this year's newsletter, I'm sorry, it was not intentional...but, please let me know and I will make sure it is in the next one. Also, sorry for the ramblings, typos and run-on sentences...it's been a long two days. Keep in touch. Until later, always be safe, healthy and happy!!!

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