

# Middletown Ramblers

Hello from the Ramblers, who have been very busy! Congratulations to our 12 Plus graduates: John Benjohn, Cheryl and Buddy Franklin, Leigh and Charlie Gavinelli, Diedre Keeran, Elaine Lukacs, Cathy Trivett, Miles Winship, David Woodward, Gina and Ted Zbikowski.

In September, we danced to live music with O'Neill & Martin and calling by Howard Richman. Circle Eights and Belles & Beaux were well represented. We had a big turnout at our annual introductory dance at Thompson Park, again with Howard Richman calling. The 105 people in attendance included 40 Ramblers, 50 adult visitors, and 15 teens. The fall brought 17 new students.

At St. Mary's Fair, we put on a square dance demonstration with Ed LaPlante calling for 15 Ramblers plus three dancers from Y Squares. This very enjoyable demo had a dozen first-time dancers giving it a try.

Our Halloween Dance did not disappoint. Most Beautiful or Charming: Pat and Joe Ross; Most Alarming or Scary: Mary Trossello; Funniest: Carmen Benimeli and Walter Kopek. In November, Larry Sherwood obtained a bus for the NNJSDA Mini-Festival, making the trip very pleasant for 16 Ramblers. At our annual covered dish holiday dance, members and students enjoyed delicious homemade specialties and shared laughter to music provided by Joe Landi. Our thanks to Pat Ross and Patty Sherwood for organizing the event.

As we approach our 50th anniversary, we want to celebrate our special members. Betty Scharmann joined the club in 2001 and has held several offices, including president and class coordinator. Werner Aehlich joined in 2004 and assisted with the class for several years. They have made contributions that continue to benefit us today.

Another special member, Agnes Brunner, became a student in 1974, so 2019 marks her 45th continuous year as a Rambler. Her dance partner, Alfred Peskoe, started dancing in 1954, then stopped for a few decades due to the press of business. He joined the Ramblers in 2003. Both Agnes and Al have served in various capacities, including president.

New officers are Mary Trossello, president, and Joe Vapnar, vice president. Mary Batistick remains treasurer and Bruce and Lynne Noel secretary.

An interesting tidbit: Johnny Unitas, one of the greatest football players, received an athletic scholarship from the University of Louisville and majored in physical education. In his second year, the new president reduced athletic aid and tightened academic standards for athletes. Several players lost scholarships, but Unitas maintained his by taking on a new elective: square dancing. After quarterbacking for the Louisville Cardinals, he was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers and later signed by the Baltimore Colts. The rest is history!