

I truly enjoyed my time at Southwestern High School; we had wonderful teachers who cared about us and our being successful in life. I graduated in the Class of 1966 and was the Class Valedictorian. That was one of my happiest memories, in addition to being in the senior play and playing Ruth in "A Reason in the Sun." My saddest memory is standing on the second floor of the school as classes changed on November 22, 1963, and hearing about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Teachers didn't care if they hurt our feelings or our rear ends when we got into trouble--parents cared too and teachers told our parents if we were bad (and then they whipped us too!) or good in class. Our Volusia County School Superintendent was John H. Smiley and Jeanne M. Goddard was the Chair of the School Board. There were 63 members of my graduating class. Some have died, some relocated, and some returned to the area but all became successful in their life journeys. When I gave my Class speech as Valedictorian, I told the class that we too have to choose our paths/roads in life, and the best road is the one "less traveled by" as in Robert Frost Poem, which I quoted. I also told them as they go through life to remember, "to thine own self be true (from Shakespeare's Hamlet)." In our high school like many others--we loved, we laughed, we cried, but we also lived and learned the best of what the teachers, books, each other and life could teach us. God bless our teachers, Principal, other staff and parents-who loved us enough to discipline us and show us the right way to live. Gwendolyn Joyce Frazier, now Gwen Azama-Edwards (who went on the Daytona Beach Community College, Stetson University (BA and MA Degrees); became a Job Service Interviewer/Counselor/Counseling Supervisor/Office Manager/Regional Manager of a nine county Region for the Department of Labor and Employment Security for the State of Florida; then City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager for the City of Daytona Beach/City Commissioner for Zone 4 in Daytona Beach/ Mayoral Candidate for Daytona Beach and Author, President/CEO of A-E Enterprises, Inc. and a Radio Talk Show Host. All of this was accomplished because I was told "I could do anything I put my mind to do, the stars were the limit," and now we can strive beyond the stars!