

Ninety-one members of the Roswell High School class of 1961 reunited for their 50th Class Reunion recently in Roswell.

During the two-day reunion, the graduates and their guests, who totaled 136, met at the Roswell County Club for special entertainment Friday night and a dinner and presentation of awards Saturday night.

“It was the best reunion ever,” said Bette (Phillips) Leadingham of Roswell, reunion chairwoman. “It could not have been better. We are looking forward to our next one.”

During the entertainment night, Linda (Lepard) Weathers of Roswell and her senior group of ladies, known as the RAC-A-Taps, tapped danced their way into the hearts of the alumni.

The other tappers included Judy Armstrong, class of '64; Lynn (Snipes) Allensworth, Ann Chavez, Patsy (Skipper) Felber, Pat (Sullins) Schear, Tamara (Camper) Sullins, all class of '62; Toni (Camper) Hall, class of '59; and Emma Arrzola, Pat Clark, Sara (Huff) Hall and Gloria McDaniel.

In addition, the 1960-61 RHS Roadrunners, a barbershop quartet including Dennis Johnson and Steve Wolfe of Roswell, Harold Rives of West Hartford, Conn., and Rennie Scarborough of Oxnard, Calif., reunited to sing many of the songs that carried them to New York City where they won a Coca Cola sponsored national high school barbershop quartet contest that school year.

Some of the classmates managed to squeeze in a little golf, too, on Saturday morning. Ronnie Parnell of Pampa, Texas, shot a 73 and Ferrell Dunham of Amarillo, Texas, shot a 74 to take high honors in the golf tournament that drew 18 players. “That’s great golf,” said Paul Herring of Roswell, golf tournament coordinator. “Everyone had a great time.”

Robert Sherman of Roswell announced the award winners at the dinner, including:

Traveled the farthest: Vickie (St. John) Coutlee, of Ontario, Canada, a distance of 1,936 miles;

Married the longest: Dick and Norma Jo (Jacobs) Graves of Houston, 50 years; and

Chrome-Dome (Bald) Award: Don King of Ruidoso.

In addition to the awards, Roy McDaniel presented Tommy Jordan with Tommy’s long-lost 1956 Little League World Series Championship jacket that Tommy had left at Roy’s mother’s house soon after Roswell’s Lions Hondo All-Star team won the title.

Roy said his mother put it in a closet and forgot about it over the years. It was discovered after Roy’s mom died recently.

Tommy, who said he had no idea what happened to the jacket, was a pitcher on the world championship team.

Patty (Dodson) Johnson and Dennis Johnson of Barringer Florist and Johnson Jewelers provided the decorations and fresh flower centerpieces and balloons for each table at the dinner and awards night.

Sam Parker of Williamsburg, NM, retired professional entertainer, sang and played Saturday night. Parker entertained for many years in Las Vegas as well as Palm Springs, Calif., and best known for his recording of "Man of a Thousand Voices," featuring the 1950s and '60s music and "voices" of Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Big Bopper, Ritchie Valens, Fats Domino, Jerry Lee Lewis and many others.

Also Saturday night, Gary Fletcher of Aurora, Colo., presented a slideshow he created that featured a walk down memory lane highlighting popular places and events of Roswell during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Fletcher will send DVDs of the slideshow to classmates who attended and others who may want a copy may purchase one for \$10 by contacting Leadingham at 622-6158.

Whitney (Robinson) Blair of La Luz, is preparing a Profile Album of the classmates to be distributed later.

Gary and Sharon (Owens) Gallup of Kansas City, Mo., were co-masters of ceremonies and Ken Thompson, pastor at Highland Baptist Church, offered the invocation.

In addition to Leadingham and Weathers, other reunion planning committee members included Elaine (McFeeley) Flaherty of Knoxville, Tenn., and Suzie (Miller) Housewright of Roswell.

Marsha Sue (Clark) Hughes of Austin, Texas, and Linda Sue (Youse) Hood of Albuquerque hosted the sign-in table.

Don Gadberry of San Antonio, Texas, is keeping the graduates in touch and informed through a webpage he created at www.roswellhigh1961.net.

"This reunion could not have happened without Gadberry and Fletcher," Leadingham said.