

## Benoit

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His sister inspired him to follow the path of education because she herself was involved with it. "We were always pretty close," said Mr. Benoit.

She attended CMU before he did and he wanted to follow in her footsteps. "There's a big influence there," he said.

This decision has taken him to a few different schools, from Cardinal Mooney High School in Marine City to the Richmond School District. His sister had even taught in Richmond for a short period of time in the early 1970s.

Just this year, Mr. Benoit made the transition from Will L. Lee Elementary School to the high school, but it wasn't an unfamiliar occurrence for him. The first 20 years of his career were spent in a high school, so he said this transition was pretty seamless.

Now that he's at the high school, his work life is a bit different now. Although different, he does appreciate the environment the school offers as well as the people within it. "I enjoy seeing the amazing gifts and talents students have at such a young age," said Mr. Benoit. When he made the conversion to

the high school from Will L. Lee, his daily routine changed even after normal school hours. He now attends more sporting events, plays and band and choir concerts. With all these functions he attends, leaving at five everyday like he often did at the Elementary school is now a thing of the past. "The hours are different than what I had at the elementary," he said.

Since Dr. Myylaert's leaving of the high school, Mr. Benoit has stepped in to watch over the athletic program. He said, "I oversee the entire athletic program and lead by example. Essentially create a vision of the athletic program and establish a culture."

Mr. Benoit has been no stranger to high school sports, so his position at RHS as Athletic Director isn't unfamiliar. "I've coached high school sports for 33 years," said Mr. Benoit.

During his time at Cardinal Mooney High School, he learned a lot from the preists there. They became role models for him and taught him lessons that one couldn't learn from classes or books.

There are also plenty of lessons he's learned outside of the school

environment. "My son is a special

needs child. Working with him as a parent has helped me become a good administrator," said Mr. Benoit. "It's helped me with students. My son deserves a lot of credit."

Mr. Benoit is grateful for the knowledge he's gained from Richmond Schools and how it has impacted his life. "I'm blessed," he said. "I've learned so much from so many people here; it's remarkable."

He is proud of what he's accomplished in his career, such as when he coached his softball team to the state title. "That's a moment of time," he said.

Mr. Benoit has filled in for various coaching positions over the years along with coaching softball for 33 years.

With his experience and knowledge in his profession, Mr. Benoit has high hopes for the Athletic Department this year. He said he wants to "maintain the culture and the environment and the work ethic that Dr. Myylaert established. Make sure Richmond is what academic/athletics is supposed to be."

Distant from this year, he expects

the athletic department to continue to thrive and prosper for classes to come. "I see our community -- our athletic department -- being an athletic department that does things the right way and puts students first," he said.

Mr. Benoit plans to continue the course the department is on and push it even further. He sees it being very successful in many ways. "Not because of wins or losses, but because we have students who are wonderful athletes. I see the athletic department being a class act," he said.

Not only is he the current Athletic Director of the high school, he is also Director of Student Services. "I work with all the moderators of any club or organization," he said. From Student Government and Key Club to S.A.D.D. and the school newspaper, he works with all of it.

Equipped with an arsenal of great athletes and students, Mr. Benoit is ready to through the rest of the year commanding and directing the athletic program here at RHS. Mr. Benoit said, "If people aren't following, you're not leading."

## Young Blood

**By: Nick Thomas**  
News Editor

Young blood: This is a term usually used to refer to young, talented basketball players.

Richmond High School has a "young blood" on their varsity girls basketball team this year. Freshman

Carley Barjaktarovich earned a spot on the defending girls basketball District Championship team after tryouts in the beginning of November.

"I went to the open gyms over the summer and did summer basketball. I think this showed that I would give the effort which is what they wanted," said Barjaktarovich, a point guard.

Dedication is a characteristic coaches love to see. This dedication shown by Barjaktarovich played a major role when the coaches sat down to pick players for the varsity girls' basketball team.

"Coach Holdwick and I saw some good things out of Carley during the summer and thought she was capable of playing varsity basketball. Plus, she can learn a lot from



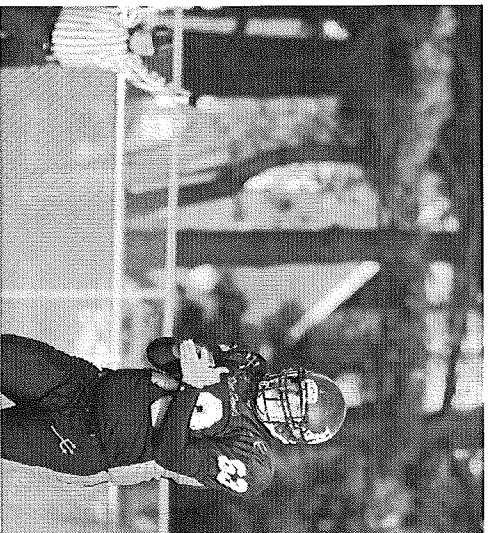
**Jessica Niebauer**

**Nickname:** Chachi  
**Age:** 15  
**Grade:** Sophomore  
**Sport(s):** Soccer, Bowling, Cross Country, Tennis, Softball  
**Favorite pump-up song:** "All About that Bass" by Meghan Trainor  
**Goals:** To consistently bowl 180

# SENIOR CENTER

## August Aiken

**Nickname:** Gus da Bus  
**Age:** 15  
**Grade:** Sophomore  
**Sport(s):** Football and Wrestling  
**Favorite pump-up song:** "Do the John Wall" by Troup 41  
**Goals:** Bring home a state title for the boys



our senior guards," said Coach Chris Schrouf, via email.  
Last year, Barjaktarovich played for St. Augustine's eighth grade basketball team. Making the transition from playing basketball in eighth grade to a varsity team the next year can be a very difficult transition for some athletes.

"It's all a lot faster," said Barjaktarovich.

Although this can be a tough transition for many athletes who do experience playing on a varsity team as a freshman, for Barjaktarovich, this has seemed to be no problem at all.

The toughest part of this transition could be adapting to a new team. Barjaktarovich is no longer playing with the girls she grew up playing basketball with. She now has to play with and against people who are two or three years older than her.

"It's really not that weird. Everyone on the varsity team is really nice," said Barjaktarovich.

Barjaktarovich played basketball for St. Augustine since the fifth grade. This will be her fifth season on an organized school team, and she is already prepared to play for a varsity team. For some people it may take them until their junior and sometimes even senior year to be ready to play on a varsity basketball team. This is however not the case for Barjaktarovich, who has a tremendous amount of talent as a freshman.

Beth Bendit, a senior at RHS, who is also on the girls' varsity basketball team, suffered a high ankle  
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