

# Happy birthday, Streaky Bear

Sandusky High mascot turns 50

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NEESE

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**SANDUSKY**

Move over, Brutus Buckeye.

Another Ohio mascot with a storied history has found his way into Ohio hearts, and he's celebrating a milestone year in 2014.

His name is Streaky Bear, and his specialty is fostering Blue Streak spirit.

As of this week, the iconic mascot has accompanied Sandusky High School cheerleaders on the sidelines of sporting events for exactly 50 years.

On Tuesday, members of the district's bond issue campaign committee celebrated Streaky Bear's 50th birthday with balloons, cake, cheerleaders, pictures and reminiscing.

"He's as loved today as he was at his inception," said Judy (Lewis) Corso, committee co-chair and member of the Class of 1965, which created the mascot during the 1964 football season.

Kathy (Silcox) Holmes, senior captain of the varsity cheerleaders that year, first suggested the idea of Streaky Bear as a Sandusky Schools mascot, Corso said.

Holmes, who now lives in South Carolina, used Skype to talk with meeting attendees Tuesday.

At first, the mascot was a tiny stuffed teddy bear with a hat, who accompanied the cheerleading squad to sporting events, Holmes explained.

In November, members of the Class of 1965 crafted the first official Streaky Bear — a towering, 8-foot structure on wheels — out of papier-mâché for the Pigskin Parade. Art teacher Don Nath and senior art students led by Beatrice (Smith) VanMeter coordinated the effort.

"He got moldy quickly, so he didn't survive too long," Corso joked.

The first costumed Streaky Bear, with a hot, heavy plaster head, debuted in 1967. His image also appeared on pins, spirit badges and advertisements.

Since then, Streaky Bear has transformed into different colors, sizes and shapes, but no matter the medium, he's always maintained one important



Sandusky cheerleader Deja Johnson performs the fight song during Streaky Bear's 50th birthday party Tuesday. Kathy Holmes, a Sandusky High graduate who helped create the school mascot, participated via video chat using the screen behind Streaky Bear. Visit [sanduskyregister.com](http://sanduskyregister.com) to see more photos from the celebration.

Register photos/  
ANGELA WILHELM



Brad Kraft, food service director at Sandusky schools, cuts the birthday cake he made for Streaky Bear's 50th birthday.

characteristic: Blue Streak and will go on for many years," VanMeter said at Tuesday's meeting. "The sensational spirit this little bear symbolizes is a spirit in

**Streaky Bear facts**

- Streaky Bear's inspiration reportedly came from Buzzy the Bear, a mascot at Medina High School in the 1960s.
- The first images of Streaky Bear appeared in 1964. One was a stuffed teddy bear that accompanied cheerleaders to sporting events, and another was an 8-foot papier-mâché bear on wheels that was carted through the Pigskin Parade (now called homecoming).
- The first mascot costume, with a plaster of paris head, debuted in 1967 and was worn by cheerleaders.
- Today's Streaky Bear costume is about 10 years old, and both male and female students wear it throughout the school year.



Provided photo

Past Sandusky High School students Jim Eiselstein, Jim Collings, Richard Schweck and Robert Brown stand with a papier-mâché version of Streaky Bear in the 1964 Pigskin Parade.