



The History of the Bell Game



Falls Church High School vs. J.E.B. Stuart High School

The “Bell Game” was started in 1960 by Stuart High School’s first principal, Mr. Leon Mason. Prior to working at Stuart High School, Mr. Mason was the principal at Falls Church High School. He and a few other Falls Church teachers transferred to Stuart to open the new high school. Since many of the original Stuart students were former Falls Church students, Mr. Mason wanted to create a healthy rivalry between the two schools. When a Stuart faculty member (and former Navy captain) obtained a bell from the U.S.S. J.E.B. Stuart ship and brought it to Stuart High School, Mr. Mason thought this bell could help him create a friendly rivalry and to promote good sportsmanship between Stuart and Falls Church. This is how the Bell Game tradition began.

The bell was made into a trophy that is given to the school that wins the varsity football game between Falls Church High School and Stuart High School each year (traditionally the last football game of the season). The wood frame which holds the bell was built by one of the original shop teachers at Stuart. Attached to the frame are metal plates. Inscribed on these plates is the name of the school that won each Bell Game each year that the games were played. During Bell Week, both schools plan special spirit activities to promote the game. During the Bell game, each school keeps the bell on their side for half the game. After the game, the winning school will be presented the bell by the principals of each school.

In the Bell Game’s 58 year history, Justice HS (formerly Stuart) has won the Bell 33 times and Falls Church has won 24 times. There was one tie. In the Bell Game’s most recent history, Justice won the Bell in 2017 and Falls Church won it the previous 5 years. The 2018 Bell Game will be played at Justice High School on Friday, November 2nd at 7:00pm.