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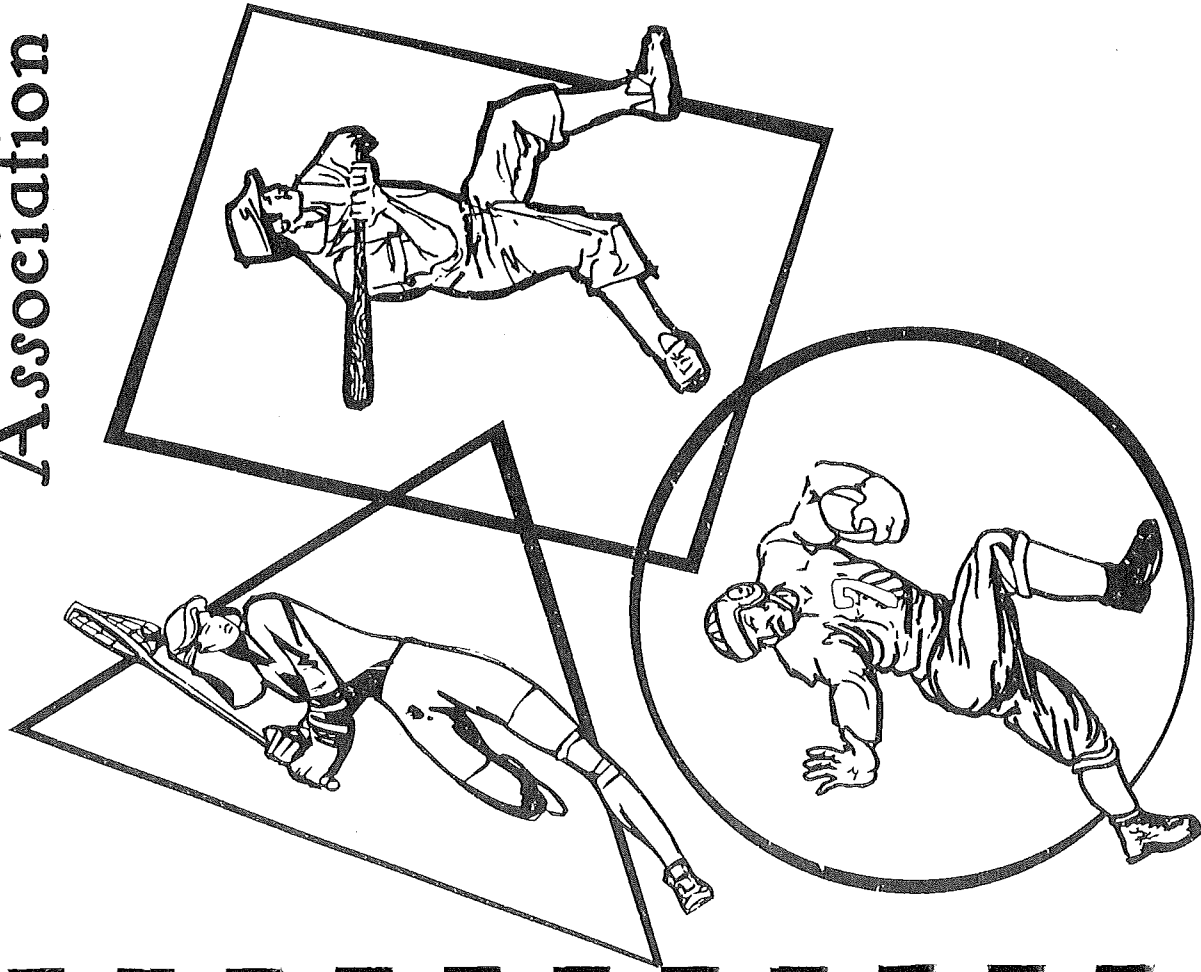
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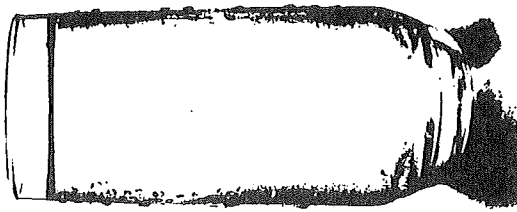
Ridgefield Old Timers Association



12th Annual Dinner
October 16, 2003

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Dear Friends

Welcome to our 12th annual Awards Banquet. First on behalf of the entire membership, it is my pleasure to congratulate the winners of this year's Scholarship Awards. It is with pleasure this Association offers a helping hand to young people in pursuit of the education which will help them toward their goals in life. Many of the sports award winners we've honored, several posthumously, were born at a time when a college education was beyond a family's reach. It is in their memory this organization was founded.

It is with the help of generous advertisers in our annual program, the Union Savings Bank's generous sponsorship of our annual golf tournament, and more than 100 players who participated, that we can increase our Scholarship Fund. Those scholarships are awarded on a basis of academic and athletic excellence and efforts in behalf of the community.

I thank those who have served on a variety of committees to help make both the golf tournament and tonight's dinner a success. I would appeal to those who have been honored in the past, and others in the community who would like to help the Organization, to become involved. There are very few meetings and little work. We also offer two or three informal picnic type meetings which heighten the camaraderie and offer considerable meaningful nostalgia. New memberships are vital to the life of the Organization. There are no dues, only an interest in what we are trying to accomplish.

Again, I thank the many who have been of such great assistance to me in the past year. Serving as chairman is both a privilege and an honor.

Andy Montanari, Sr.
Chairman

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KAY ABLES Civic Award

Kay's selection for the Old Timers' Civic Award was an excellent choice." remarked First Selectman Rudy Marconi, "The town was very fortunate when Kay moved here. Her love of Ridgefield and its history are reflected in the many hours of volunteer work that she has expended on our behalf. She is dedicated and extremely competent. That's one of the reasons we appointed her as our assistant town historian." Ridgefield Historical Society Vice President Jeanne Timpanelli agrees, "She's selfless and tireless in her volunteer work."



Kay and her husband, Jerry, moved to Ridgefield with their four year old daughter, Susan, in 1968. Their son, David, was born a year later. The children went to Farmingville School, which was where Kay began her long career of volunteer work for the town.

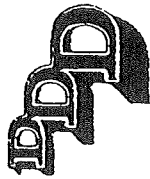
In 1971 Kay joined the Ridgefield Woman's Club, part of the General Federation of Women's Club which is the largest women's volunteer organization in the world. Several years later she became the president of the Ridgefield chapter. In the late 1980s Kay Henderson and Kay Ables researched a proposal for a telephone response system to aid the senior community. After presenting it to various town officials and service clubs, Kay was able to get the "Are You OK?" program operating in Ridgefield. Housed in the Fire Department, the program makes daily telephone calls to the homebound and to those living alone but want the comfort of someone knowing that someone is watching out for them.

During the early 1970s Karl Nash, publisher of The Ridgefield Press, entrusted the Hartmann Collection of glass plate negatives to the Keeler Tavern Museum. A committee was formed to clean, catalog and identify each of the thousands of images. The public was invited to help and Kay was in the forefront of that project. Each negative was projected on a TV screen as a positive image where it was given a number and recorded on tape with an identification and oral history about the people and places on the screen. It took Kay and the other committee members five years to catalog the complete collection.

In 1990 Jeanne Timpanelli formed the Ridgefield Archives Committee, forerunner of the Ridgefield Historical Society. Kay was elected chairman of the committee in 1995. The committee was made up of people from various organizations in town who were interested in locating and preserving historical material. Two of the committee's projects included copying and indexing two important collections that had run in the Ridgefield Press for many years, Dick Venus' "Dick's Dispatch" and Jack Sanders' "Street Names". The committee also published "Images of America", a pictorial history of the town.

When the future of the historic Scott House was in doubt, Kay joined the committee to help save it from demolition. After the structure was dismantled funds were raised to reconstruct it on Grove Street where it became the home of the town's historical society.

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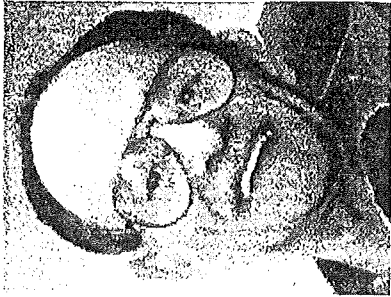
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**MIKE PONTELLO
Special Award**



There are few people who loved Ridgefield and its residents as much as Mike Pontello. Whether from his stool at the Early Bird or the seat on his Main Street watering cart, Mike would tell you how much he loved Ridgefield and its people. Not long ago he told the Ridgefield Press, "I love Main Street and hope

they don't screw it up. I'll do all that I can do to keep Main Street afloat. Ridgefield has class - its people and its stores." As for our townspeople Mike continued, "People just want to be loved." If you walked into Mike's Main Street shop or met him on the street you knew this was heartfelt. We had hoped that Mike would be here tonight so that we could celebrate his enthusiasm and achievements together but Mike passed away on September 22, 2003. Nevertheless, our dinner tonight is in no small part a tribute to all of the volunteer work Mike expended on the town and, in particular, on his favorite spot, Main Street.

Mike never knew his natural parents. As a foster child he went to live with the Tirella family in Norwalk at age seven. He attended the Norwalk schools and served in the U.S. Army in Korea until his discharge in 1953. In 1955 Mike met Agatha Mugavero. They married a year later. Mike went to work for his father in law as a barber in the Main Street shop next to Town Hall. When Jerry retired in 1970, Mike took over the business and in 1982 added his wood working business. When Agatha passed away in 1990, Mike was instrumental in erecting the new flag pole in front of Town Hall as a tribute to her.

Mike served as a member of the fire police for many years and his civic minded efforts resulted in a 1986 Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce Public Service Award. The Garden Club also honored him for his work on Main Street with its Greening of Ridgefield Award. In 1991 the Rotary Club honored Mike with its Citizen of the Year Award. Our award tonight is one more tribute to all the effort Mike expended to maintain and improve our town. Two years ago the Lions Club of Ridgefield also honored Mike with its Citizen of the Year award.

*Congratulations
to Past, Present and Future*

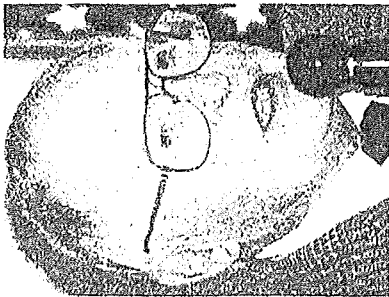
Old Timers Honorees

and

Scholarship Recipients

*Ridgefield has a rich history
and promising future because of you!*

Tom & Jane Belote



PAUL BALDASERINI BAKER Class of 1937

In 1996 we honored Paul with a special award for all of the work he did in establishing and promoting the Ridgefield Old Timers Association. Paul has been and continues to be a mainstay in our organization. Most recently, Paul and Andy Montanari organized the Old Timers' golf tournament and fund raiser. What would an Old Timers Awards dinner be without Paul as our emcee?

Tonight, and unbeknownst to him until this evening, we are honoring Paul again, this time with an Old Timers' athletic award. It is the first time the Old Timers have honored the same individual on two occasions.

During his years with the local radio station, WREF, Paul interviewed several of our former athletes and attempted on many occasions to establish an old timers association similar to the one existing in Danbury. Late in 1991, Paul with Bob Tulipani, John Tulipani, Steve Carboni, Julio Petriani and Joe Brunetti, created the nucleus upon which we have built our organization.

Paul was born in Ridgefield in 1920 and graduated from RHS in 1943. He served with the U.S. Army Air Corps until 1946 and was the first Ridgefielder to be recalled to active duty by the Air Force in 1950. After his discharge 1946 he took a job as a reporter for the Ridgefield Press. However, during his military service Paul had worked in programming for the Armed Forces Radio Service and had been bitten by the radio bug. When an opening occurred at WLAD in Danbury, Paul grabbed it and began working as a full time announcer and continued as a part time reporter. Eventually his 80 hour work week became too much and he had to drop his job as a reporter.

While admittedly not the ball player that his brothers, Primo (Ridgefield Spartans) and Geno (Ridgefield Motors) were, Paul made his mark in golf as well as in the ever popular bowling leagues of Ridgefield. The April 1940 Press started carrying the weekly triumphs of kegger, Paul "Baldy" Baldaserini and his contest with Leo Pambianchi for first place in the league. Paul's name continued to be in the list of the top scoring Ridgefield bowlers for many years thereafter. His bowling experiences at the old four lane alleys behind Bissell's led to his becoming the television host for bowling shows on Channels 8 and 18 and Channel 11 in New York. (Paul was also the voice of Danbury Racearea and announced those races for 24 years. "I never missed a Saturday night including the day I got married", he told the Ridgefield Press in 1999.) In 1986 Paul was inducted into the Connecticut Duckpin Hall of Fame. Paul is also an avid golfer and made many winter trips to Florida with Wacabuc golf pro and Ridgefield native, Vince Paccadolmi. His golf trophies include the state FourBall Championship and he qualified in the state amateur championships four times.

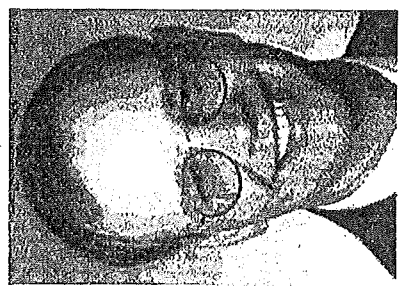
Paul and his wife, Mary Jane, now resided at Heritage Village in Southbury. They have a daughter, Paula, and a son, Joseph. But Paul has really never left Ridgefield. He is frequently seen at the Early Bird with other Old Timers planning our golf tournament or otherwise organizing our business.

Congratulations To All The Old Timers And Their Honorees

Thank You For All That You Have Contributed

Bob & Geri Lewis

Charles "Chip" Bliss Class of 1966



Charles "Chip" Bliss, nephew of Ridgefield sports legend Lynce Carboni was a 1966 RHS graduate and member of the National Honors Society. He lettered in basketball, baseball, cross country and golf. As a sophomore Chip played on the memorable 1963-64 RHS basketball team with seniors Harry Pierandri, Bugsy Santini and Paulie Carboni. In the play-

off game he held Abbot Tech top scorer, Joe Lahoud, to four points. In his junior and senior years Chip continued to be an outstanding forward on teams that included current First Selectman Rudy Marconi, Alan Wallace, Brad Mortensen, Neal Turner, Rick Polverari, Dave Carboni, Glenn Pierandri, Rick Miller, Peter Santini, Bill Baker and Dave Crucitti. Chipper also pitched for RHS during his sophomore and junior years playing with Rudy Marconi, Roy "the Early Bird" Cogswell, Rick Karwoski, Chip Landon, Lee DeForest, Phil Mitchell, Walt Valentine, Johnny Piambianchi, Garry Cassavechia, Dave Carboni, Alan Wallace, Mike "Buddha" Bedini, Rick Miller and Ken Church.

Chip ran cross country for Ridgefield in his sophomore, junior and senior years and was a member of the 1965 RHS State Championship team. With team members Jim Finklea, Tommie Hill, Randy Rowe, Lee DeForest, Walt Valentine, Glenn Pierandri, Bill Baker and Andy Koslaski, Ridgefield won the Class S championship. Chip did his part by passing 20 runners in the last mile to help the team win.

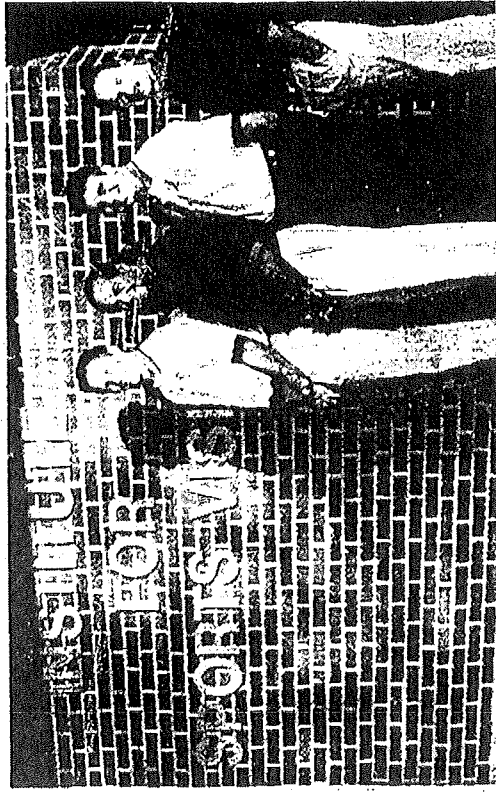
In the spring of his senior year Chip concentrated his efforts on golf and assisted in bringing the school golf squad back to a position of prominence. With him were teemen Gordon Casagrande, Phil Santini, Joe Knocke and Steve Carboni.

Chip entered Williams College and graduated with a bachelors degree in economics in 1970. He attended the NYU School of Business and became a certified public accountant. After working with Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co. (now KPMG) and Coopers & Lybrand (now Price Waterhouse Coopers), Chip opened his own firm in Brookfield, Connecticut in 1991.

Chip is married and has six children. He anticipates two grandchildren shortly.

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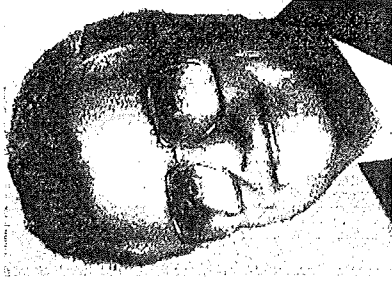
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ROBERT CARBONI Class of 1947



There have been Carboni family members starring in Ridgefield sports throughout the last century. Octavius "Tabby" Carboni was the first of the five Carboni brothers to leave his mark in the annals of Ridgefield sports history. Tabby and his brothers comprised what was probably one of the greatest athletic families that Ridgefield produced. In fact, Tabby and his brother, Lynce, were among the first of the outstanding Ridgefield athletes to be honored by the Old Timers Association at their first awards dinner in 1992. Among the honorees at this year's 12th Annual Old Timers Awards dinner in October will be a member from the second generation of the Carboni star athletes, Robert Octavius Carboni.

Bob Carboni is the oldest son of O.J. "Tabby" Carboni and Katherine Creagh Carboni. He was born in 1929 and grew up in Ridgefield during the Depression and the wars years. Bob was the president of the RHS Class of 1947, a member of the school's executive council and was the editor-in-chief of the senior class yearbook. He played varsity basketball and baseball during all four years of high school and was a member of the varsity football squad during his sophomore, junior and senior years.

Bob stood out as the quarterback on a Ridgefield football squad that included Fibber and Aldo Biagiotti, Carl Scala, Andy Montanari, Frank Lancaster, Frank Serfilippi, John Morganti, John Sturges, Jim O'Keefe, Leslie Peatt and Lou Fossi (manager).

Under coach Raymond Eppoliti's tutelage, Bob and the other members of the 1945 and 1946 RHS baseball teams won two consecutive Class B conference championships. Because of their extraordinary performances outfielder Carboni, short stop Lou Girolometti, catcher Gene McMahon and pitcher Romeo Petroni were named to the 1947 All Conference Team.

Bob was a guard on the RHS varsity basketball squad. He became a varsity starter in his sophomore year. He was the leading scorer in his senior year on a team that included Harry Dodson, Si Lavatori, Allie Frulla, Frank Lancaster, Aldo Biagiotti, Walter Boyce, Jim O'Keefe, Gene Anderson Duddy, Mead and Bill Sjoval.

Bob attended Ohio University and graduated in 1951 with a bachelor of science degree in journalism. He subsequently enlisted in the United States Air Force and served as a lieutenant during the Korean War.

After completion of his military service, Bob began a 41 year business career beginning with employment at the General Motors Corporation offices in Warren, Ohio. He subsequently continued work as a public relations and advertising executive for the General Foods Corp. in White Plains and for the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance.

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Dr. Peter Yanity ('98), Charlie Coles ('99), Kitty Rosa ('00), Lewis Finch ('01)
Edith Meffly ('02)

SPORTS AWARDS

1992

Tabby Carboni, Lynce Carboni, Leo Pambianchi, Tom Clark,
Charlie Frattini, Joe Forcelli, John Carboni

1993

Gene Casagrande, Bob Mulvaney, Vin Petrini, Charley Stolle, Joe Tulipani

1994

Lyman Anderson, Harry Bennett, Aldo Girolmetti, Evo Principi, John Tulipani

1995

Peter Casagrande, Dino Cingolani, Joe Brunetti, Ray Eppoliti,
Bud Mahoney, Reno Severini

1996

Ben Bedini, Fabio Biagiotti, Jack Leary, Harold Mead,
Romeo Petroni, Janaile Severini

1997

Primo Baldaserini, Dante Brunetti, Walter Evans, Frank Lancaster, Sr.,
Navio Ligi, Fred Mazzi

1998

Gino "Jinx" Baldaserini, Dr. Philip Martin, Dr. Joseph Moylan,
Andy Montanari, Julius "Bugsy" Santini

1999

Dick Bellagamba, Si Bellagamba, Gene Lavatori, John Lavatori,
Gene McMahon, Harry Pierandri

2000

Glen Anderson, Bill Elliot, Booker Jackson, Tom Mitchell

2001

Ned Carboni, Paul Carboni, Jim Costanzi, John Fossi, Art Frattini,
Nick Reid, Gloria Sharkany

2002

Ed Dowling, Jack Jones, Jack O'Keefe, Jim O'Keefe,
Mike Ryba, Aldo Travaglini, Harry Zandri

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Fran Moylan ('95), Paul Baker ('96), Walter Boyce ('98),
Earl Sturges ('99), Jerry Anello ('00)

POSTHUMOUS AWARDS

1994

Ralph Crouchly, Kip Holleran, Francis D. Martin

1995

Chuck Walker, Charles F. Ashbee, Frank E. Minnerly

1996

Lou Girolmetti, Ed & John Sullivan, John Bacchiochi

1997

Lick Santini, Red Dlugo, Bill Allen

1998

Joseph M. Venus, Art Sfondrini, Bob Stolle

1999

Alan Crowley, Don Ligos, Harold Hilton

2000

Art Bellagamba, Stubb Cummings, Margaret O'Sullivan

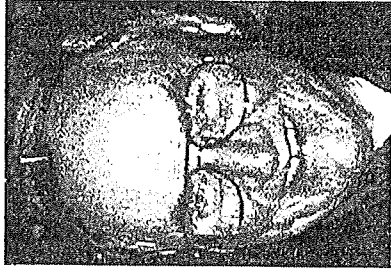
2001

Tony DeLuca, Walt Ryba, Bob Seymour

2002

John Sturges, Jimmy Warner

JIM MULLEN Class of 1957



Voted the most popular and best all round member of the Class of 1957, Jim Mullen is a true "townie". A man of many "firsts", Jim was the first child to be born in Ridgefield in 1939. Delivered by Dr. Woodford at the Mullen's home on the second floor of the old Martin block across the street from what is now Ridgefield Hardware, the future star athlete and father of three mused, "What a bargain . . . He only charged twenty-five dollars".

Jim initiated his Ridgefield sports career by playing on the town's first little league team. Noting that the team's uniform consisted of a baseball hat, he recalled that, "Each team had a different color hat". Jim was also a caddy at Silver Springs Country Club and competed in the annual caddies' tournament. He remembers just making the C flight and says that his game is "about the same today".

Like most other young men in town, Jim honed his athletic skills at the Boys Club under the tutelage of Ralph Crouchley, in addition to playing at the club, he has fond memories of traveling to surrounding towns with Mr. Crouchley and playing basketball against the area teams.

Jim played both basketball and football at RHS, but football was clearly his favorite sport and it opened the way for another "first" in his life. In his freshman, sophomore and junior years Jim played six man football for Ridgefield High School. By his senior year Jim was the high scoring half back on Ridgefield's first eleven man football team. In its first year the new eleven man squad played and skirmished against Darien, Brewster, Somers and Wooster Prep. Coached by athletic director Bill Allen and teacher/coach Paul Fako, the 1956-57 team included Tim and Peter Thomas, Fred Mazzi, Booker Jackson, Ned Carboni, Bob Earle, Doug Coleman, Fred Segesman, Fred Izzo, Walt Ryba, Dave Sturges, Lee Pasquerella, Jim Sossei, Barry Peckham, George Mulvaney, George Besse, Alan Janesky, Vinnie Carboni, Richard Venus, Jim Pirri, Dave Chapin, Jack O'Keefe, Charles Camp, Peter Tandy and Jim Mullen. In describing the starting offensive lineup, the 1957 yearbook noted, "The line was led by ends Bob Earle and Fred Izzo, while the starters in the backfield were Fred Mazzi, Booker Jackson, Jim Mullen and Ned Carboni. The passing combination of cocaptains Ned Carboni and Bob Earle, coupled with the hard running of Booker Jackson, Fred Mazzi and Jim Mullen, produced most of the RHS touchdown".

After high school Jim attended the University of Connecticut and then spent two years in the Army. Part of his tour of duty was spent in Yorkshire, England where he was assigned to the US Army Security Agency. After completing his military service, the native Ridgefielder returned to town and, in the early sixties, played in the Ridgefield Men's fast pitch softball league on a team sponsored by Craig's Jewelry. He also attended computer programming school and commenced a twentyseven year career at Perkin Elmer's IT department. Jim retired from Perkin Elmer in 1995 but continues to use his IT experience in the service of a business in Westchester.

VINCE PACCADOLMI Class of 1940



Vince, a native of Ridgefield and 1940 graduate of Ridgefield High, began playing golf at age nine on the Ridgefield Golf Course, a nine hole course that occupied the area around Golf Lane and the former Ward Acres Farm. Following his older brother's footsteps he began caddying at the Silver Springs Country Club.

In high school Vince played basketball in the basement of the Town Hall and in the old high school on East Ridge. Like so many other native sons, Vince was coached during this period by Kip Halleran. In addition to basketball, Vince's other sporting interests included playing ice hockey at the Silver Spring Swamp and hunting and trapping with his close friend, Bill "Bunky" Smith.

After graduation Vince was employed at Winchester Arms. He attended the University of Bridgeport before entering the Army Air Corps in 1941. While he has stated that he wanted to be a businessman after graduation from college, the golf bug had already bitten him. Stationed in Colorado, Italy and North Africa, Vince never lost his passion for golf and occasionally played while in the service. He returned to Ridgefield in 1943 and reentered the University of Bridgeport where he completed his business degree. While at Bridgeport he played on the UB golf team and was elected its captain.

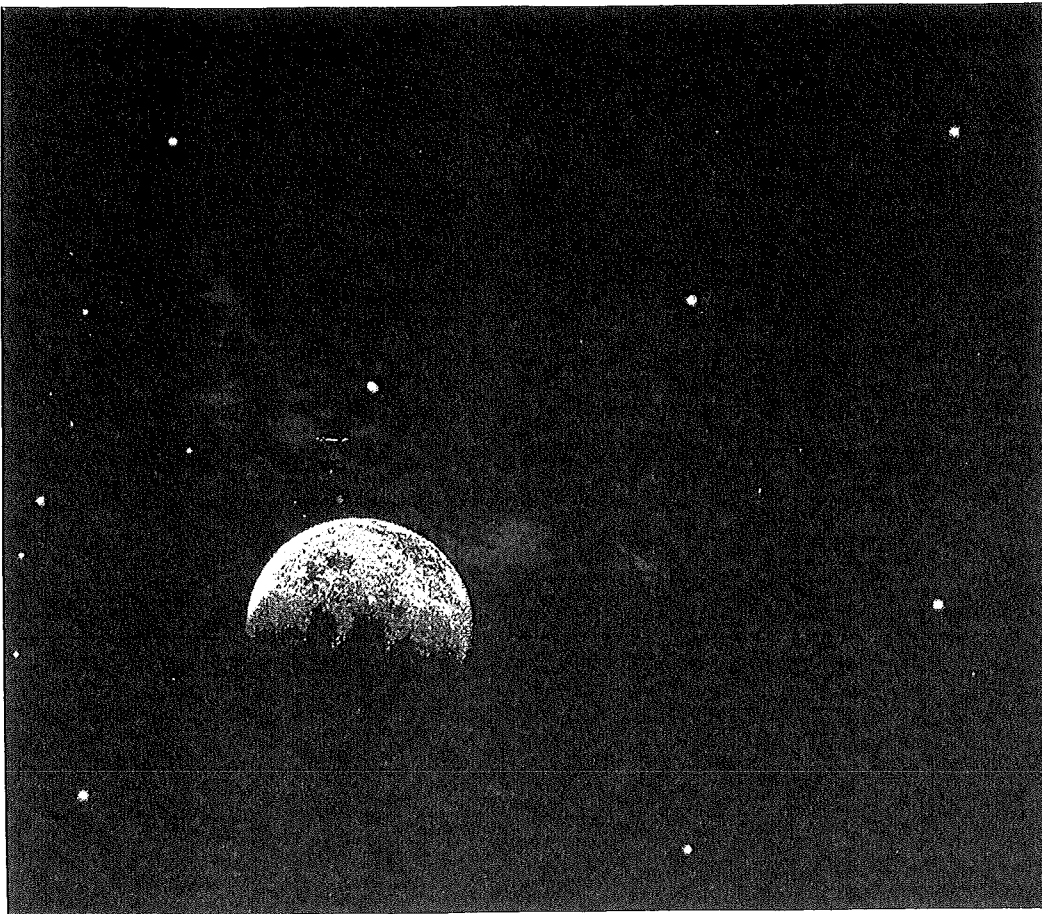
Vince's professional career in golf began at Waccabuc Country Club in 1946. He became the head golf professional at WCC in 1950. As head pro he participated in many charity events including the Bermuda Goodwill ProAm, a tournament that he played in for twenty years. While at Waccabuc, Vince also hosted the qualifying rounds for the U.S. Open, as well as many USGA sponsored tournaments. He also played in the Thunderbird Tournament which is now known as the Westchester Country Club Buick Classic.

Some of the highlights in Vince's career include meeting and playing golf with Ben Hogan, Ken Venturi, Don January, Tommy Jacobs and coaching the current LPGA Tour professional, Julie Larson Piers.

Vince held the course record at Waccabuc for many years with an 18 hole round of 64 on a par 69 course. He also had four holes-in-one.

As years passed Vince recognized that competition in the tour circuit was getting increasingly difficult and that he would "have a hard time" of it. For Vince, however, the real joy of golf was not merely the tournaments. "The most enjoyable time of my career was when I played as an amateur back in my college days," Vince was quoted as saying when asked about his years at Waccabuc. He also said that one of his best moments was when he had the opportunity to teach a young polio victim the fundamentals of golf. "It was difficult for him but he was eager to learn."

Vince retired in 1983 and maintained his home in Ridgefield and another house in Myrtle Beach with Anne Stewart Paccadolmi, his wife of 39 years. The couple have two children, Thomas Paccadolmi of Ridgefield and Patricia Paccadolmi of Charleston, South Carolina.



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**Fred Romeo
Class of 1953**

Fred Romeo, a 1953 Ridgefield High School graduate was a star receiver on the RHS varsity six man football teams in the early 1950's. A native of Ridgefield who lived on New Street, Fred, like his father, was also an excellent baseball and basketball player. In high school Mr. Romeo played varsity football, baseball and basketball for three years and like many of Ridgefield's outstanding athletes began his interest in sports under the tutelage of Ralph Crouchley at the Ridgefield Boys Club.

The 1953 Ridgefield High School year book noted that the school's success in football during the 1952-53 season "was due mostly to the good passing of Bob Stolle and Fred Romeo's receiving." Fred was the squad's center. His senior year varsity included Bobby Morganti, Bob Mannion, Bobby Scala, Jack Coffey, Fred Brown, Rudy Pancotti, Bob Hall, Roger Deeks, Arkie Vaughn, John Brady, Frank Shaw, Jack Cartin, Paul Venus, Phil Ritch, Don Cairns, Dave Scott, Fred Ferry and Paul Van Wagner.

In basketball Fred again teamed up with Bob Stolle and varsity players Jack Coffey, Evo Bellagamba, Paul Venus, Jim Smith, Don Cairns, Ed Zandri to continue Ridgefield's valiant but frustrating efforts in a basketball league that was dominated by much larger schools from lower Fairfield county. Despite their talent and technical expertise, the RHS squads continued to be outmanned and outgunned for a number of years, leading many residents and sports writers to urge that the Ridgefield leave that league and join a Housatonic League with schools of similar size.

Despite its size RHS continued to hold its own in baseball. Fred, with teammates Tony Deluca, Bob Stolle, Arkie Vaughn, Don Scott, Jack Coffey, Dave Scofield, John Brady, Jack Cartin, Phil Ritch and Ed Zandri, furthered Ridgefield's reputation for excellence on the diamond.

Fred was also recognized as a sportsman off the court and playing fields of RHS. He took over Fibber Biagotti's trap lines when Fibber went to UConn and was known by his fellow students as an excellent hunter and angler.

Following graduation Fred served in the United States Army for two years including a one year stint in Korea. While abroad he met up with Tony Deluca and the two former baseball teammates sailed back to the United States from Korea together.

Fred received his bachelor's degree in geology from the University of Connecticut in 1957 and his master degree in education in 1968. While at UConn he played freshman baseball.

After receiving his bachelors degree Fred worked briefly as a geologist in Canada but returned to the United States to begin a life long career in education. He has been employed as a science teacher in the Bristol and Salisbury, Connecticut school systems and was invited to be a presenter at the national science teachers conventions in New Orleans and Charlotte.

POSTHUMOUS AWARD

SCOTT NYE Class of 1963

The early 1960's were a turning point for Ridgefield generally and for RHS athletics in particular. Scott Harrison Nye, or "Scottie", was a significant part of some of the advances that Ridgefield High School made during that period.

Scott played varsity football in his freshman and sophomore years. He was a member of the band, the glee club, the All State Connecticut Chorus and the Ridgefield Opera Guild. He served on the art staff of the 1963 Year Book and his academic success at RHS is evidenced by his membership in the National Honor Society.

Scott played RHS varsity basketball in his freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years. In his senior year Scott was a member of the RHS basketball squad that went 175 and almost won the Class C State Championship. Four of the season's losses were to Class B schools. The team's success that year was a major achievement for the school and Scott Nye was a significant player in that RHS athletic accomplishment. His senior year team mates year included some of RHS's best early 1960's basketball athletes: Lance Harrison, Wayne DeForest, Harry Pierandri, Bob Howe, Bob Degan, Terry McManany, Pauli Carboni, Rich Polverari, Bob Mulvaney, Chet Zawacki, Gary Casavechia, Jackie Baldaserini and Julius "Bugsy" Santini.

In his senior year Scott was instrumental in the formation of a new RHS sport, crosscountry. Senior Scott Nye was elected CoCaptain of the first RHS crosscountry team. Under his leadership the team finished third in the WCC league, ahead of arch rival Wilton. It followed that success by finishing fifth in the State meet, quite an achievement for a group of eight novices that included Scott, Wayne DeForest, Steve Johnson, Tom Nelson, Rick Capolla, Skip Bowie, Mike Robinson and Jerry Keith.



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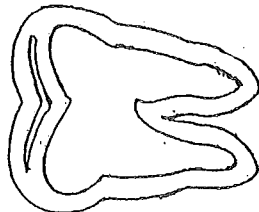
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POSTHUMOUS AWARD

FRED J. ROMEO SR.
Class of 1924

Fred Romeo Sr., a well known local athlete, is one of ROTA's 2003 posthumous award recipients. His son, Fred Jr. is also being honored tonight.

Fred Romeo was born in Katonah, New York on February 23, 1905, the son of Joseph and Franchesca Schivone Romeo. Fred father, a native of Italy, was a stonemason who worked on the Panama Canal before moving to the United States. The family moved to Ridgefield in 1912 and settled on Bailey Avenue. Fred Sr. attended the Ridgefield schools and graduated in 1924. He played varsity baseball and basketball. After graduation he played with the semiprofessional Ridgefield Baseball Club and was a boxer at the old Ridgefield Gym club in the 1920's. Mr. Romeo clerked for a time at H.P. Bissell's Drug Store in the 1930s and during the Second World War he was employed at the old Outpost Lumber Mill where he cut wood for naval ships. Later, Fred began practicing his trade as a carpenter for local contractors such as Harold Ritch and Bacchiochi Inc. Fred married the late Corinne Bertotti Romeo in 1930 and the couple moved to New Street. Fred's wife passed away in 1978 shortly after they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Fred died at age 97 on March 8, 2002.

*Cupress
Sports bar
White barhead
Web-forehead*

POSTHUMOUS AWARD

MARIO SCALA Class of 1946



Mario Scala, the eldest son of Giancarlo and Victoria Scala, proprietors of the Elms Inn during the 50's and 60's, was the president of his class and one of the best all-around six man football players fielded by RHS in the 1940's

While Mario played both baseball and football in the early to mid 40's, football was clearly his game. A versatile offensive player and defensive end he played wing back, right end and sometimes substituted as quarterback and halfback. His team mates from the 40's included Dan Fishialetti, Romeo Petroni, Lou Girolometti, Lou Zandri, Eddy Green, Gus Montanari, Bob Carboni, Jim Lee, Frank Lancaster and Gene McMahon. The typical six man line up included Mario at right end and his best friend, Romeo Petroni, at left end. According to Petroni, Mario was "one of the best all round players on the team." Eddy Green, a senior year transfer from Katonah and the best running back on the team, agreed with Romeo, "Mario could really move and physically he really mixed it up." Petroni added, "He was a great defensive end. You couldn't get around him. He was a tough competitor."

Following the 1944 football season events at RHS seemed less important to Mario than those that were occurring in Europe and the Pacific. Teammate Ed Green enlisted in the army during the winter of 1944 and Mario, without telling his parents or friends, enlisted shortly thereafter. When Romeo asked his "typically close to the vest" friend why he had enlisted before graduation, Mario wryly replied that he didn't like the role assigned to him in the school spring play. In fact, the now defunct Bridgeport Herald carried the story of his enlistment with the headline, "Youth Quits School Play, Joins Army".

Mario completed his two year enlistment and reupped for another two years. When he returned to Ridgefield he commenced studies at the University of Bridgeport but family exigencies took priority over his academic career. His father had recently sold the White Spot Restaurant at the corner of Main and Catoonah Streets and purchased the Elms Inn. Mario was needed to manage the dining rooms and tavern.

In 1952 Mario married Violet Natoli. The couple had three children, Stephen, Edward and William, all of whom still live in Ridgefield. The sons were also Ridgefield football players. Over the course of their school years, Mario served as a Red Raiders coach. Later, when the boys played for the RHS varsity team, Mario could usually be heard rooting from the stands.

After the death of his father in the 1960's, Mario succeeded Giancarlo as chef at the Elms. He died in 1978 but his wife, Vi, continues to manage the hotel operations at the Elms Inn with her sons, Ed and Bill.

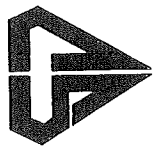
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NICHOLAS PETRINI
Scholarship Recipient
Class of 2003

Nicholas Petrini descends from two well know and respected Ridgefield families. He is a twin and one of four brothers who considers themselves fortunate to have been raised in the same town where their grandparents and a large number of immediate family members reside. His uncle, John Fossi, was an Old Timers award recipient two years ago and his grandparents, uncles and aunts have been long time ROTA supporters. While Nicholas' roots to our community are deep, his selection as one of our scholarship recipients is due to his exceptional achievements at RHS and his service to our community.

Nicholas was a member of the National Honor Society, an RHS tutor and the recipient of the high school's scholar athlete award. To be inducted into the National Honor Society Nicholas had to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.5 over ten consecutive quarters. In addition to academic requirements, Nicholas was required to perform seventy five hours of leadership and service in three distinct areas prior to his induction into the society. Given the highly competitive nature of Ridgefield High, Nicholas' achievements are significant and indicative of his willingness and ability to engage and succeed in a most challenging environment.

Nicholas' achievements in academics are but one part of his high school successes. He played six years of Pop Warner football and became a three year varsity starter and letterman on the RHS football team. Nick was member in the high school squad that played in the 2002 State football playoffs. He also lettered in track.

With four years of Youth Lacrosse training behind him Nicholas lettered in varsity lacrosse during his freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years and was a member of the 2001 State Championship Team.

In his junior and senior years Nicholas was a youth coach for the Pop Warner football league and spent four years coaching youngsters in the Youth Lacrosse league.

Nicholas' extracurricular activities included work as a volunteer for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the Red Cross Blood Drive, Tiger Hollow and the Chamber of Commerce.

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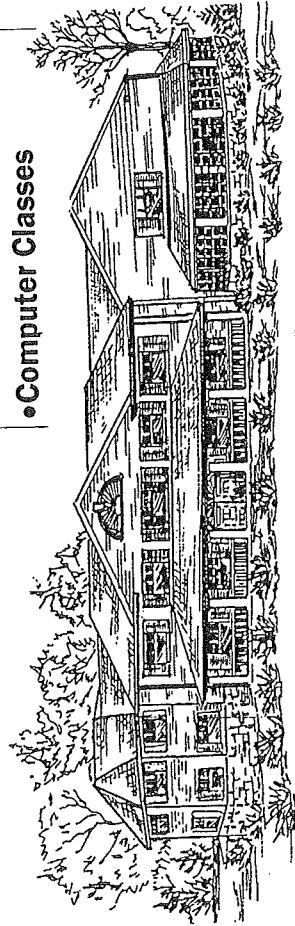
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JENNIFER SCALA Scholarship Recipient Class of 2003

Jennifer, one of our two scholar athlete award recipients, is a fourth generation Ridgefielder. During this year's presentation of the Old Timers scholarships at the Ridgefield High School awards ceremony, ROTA Chairman Andy Montanari, Sr., told the audience that he had known the great grandparents, grandparents and parents of each of our scholarship recipients and noted how proud he was to present our awards to these outstanding students. In each case our scholarships are well deserved.

Jennifer Scala's academic achievements include her selection for Honors Social Studies and English in her freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years and her advance placement in Government and Politics in her senior year. Jennifer was on the Honor Roll during every school term from her freshman to her senior year. She received awards for excellence in biology and physics and awards for achievement in statistics and language arts. She was also the recipient of RHS' scholarathlete award.

Jennifer's athletic achievements are no less impressive. She played freshman soccer and freshman and junior varsity lacrosse. She received varsity letters for her membership on both the high school ski team and on the varsity cheerleading squad.

Jennifer's extracurricular activities included participation in the Distributive Education Clubs of America. She was president of the RHS chapter in her senior year. Jennifer was also active in the Future Business Leaders of America, the Big Brother/Big Sister Club, Safe Rides and Youth to Youth and, like many teenagers from "Old Ridgefield", Jennifer actually worked while studying and participating in athletics and extracurricular activities. During the school year and summer vacation Jennifer held a variety of jobs, including work as a camp counselor for the Ridgefield Parks and Recreation Department, clerking at Bissells, babysitting and, of course, working with her dad, grandmother and uncle at the Elms Inn.

Jennifer entered her freshman year at the University of Connecticut in September. In addition to our scholarship, Jennifer is the recipient of the Ridgefield Thrift Shop Scholarship, the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department Memorial Scholarship and the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary Scholarship.

Jennifer's grandfather, Mario Dante Scala, is receiving a posthumous award from the Ridgefield Old Timers this year.

RIDGEFIELD OLD TIMERS - 2003

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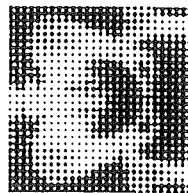
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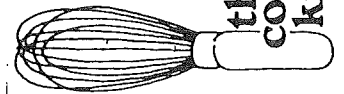
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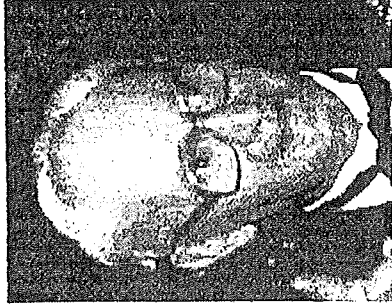
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John Forcelli



Ridgefield has produced several outstanding baseball players and one of the best, Johnny Forcelli, will be honored by the Ridgefield Old Timers Association in October. A member of the Ridgefield High championship team of 1940, Johnny went on to star later with the Abbott Tech team. Among the highlights of his career was the opportunity to play with and against several major and minor league baseball players while serving with the 34th Infantry of the U.S. Army in Japan during World War Two. He recalled the devastation at Hiroshima following the explosion of the atomic bomb.

John's play caught the attention of scouts and he was offered a contract by the St. Louis Cardinals to play in the Appalachian League. He had also been invited to try out for the New York Yankees at Yankee Stadium. As was the case with many other promising young players the pay scale to play in the minors back in the 40's was barely enough for a person to make a living and offered less security than steady employment.

After returning from war duty, Forcelli went on to star as a shortstop with the Ridgefield Motors and Branchville Civics teams and also with the great Hoffman Fuel team in the Danbury City League. He was also hired to play in Norwalk. While a stellar defensive player, he carried an outstanding batting average and was particularly noted as a line drive hitter.

He has always maintained an intense interest in sports at both the local and national levels. John has devoted considerable time to Ridgefield's Little League baseball program was involved with the Branchville Civics community association. While he is proud of his own accomplishments he takes great pride in son Tony's playing and coaching ability and the latter's work with the Ridgefield Junior baseball team.

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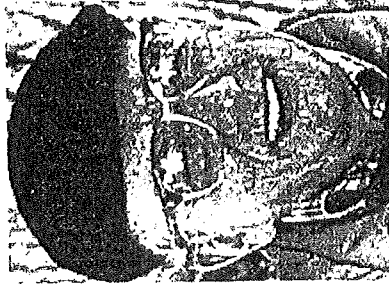
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ALDO BIAGIOTTI Class of 1947

A member of the Ridgefield High School graduating class of 1947 Aldo was voted the best male athlete. The choice was well deserved. Aldo first exhibited his athletic ability when he made the starting line up of the varsity baseball team as a freshman. He divided his time between the outfield and third base. He continued to play throughout his high school years, primarily at third base. Aldo was a member of the RHS league championship baseball teams of 1946 and 1947.

In his junior and senior years he shared some pitching assignments for the team. By his senior year Aldo's younger brother, Fabio "Fibber" Biagiotti, had become the team's starting catcher and the two enjoyed confusing the opposition by calling out to each other in Italian. According to Fibber signals were never needed because the brothers had their own way of communicating in Italian.

Aldo played with some of the best athletes to attend RHS in the 1940's including pitchers Dino Cingolani, Danny Fischialetti, Romeo Petroni, and Jim O'Keefe; infielders, Lou Girolometti, Jim Costanzi, and Al Frulla; outfielders Bob Carboni, M. Giambartolomei, Mario Scala and Harry Zandri; catchers Harry Zandri, Gene McMahon and brother Fibber Biagiotti.

Football was a six-man sport when Aldo attended Ridgefield High and he played center in his junior year and fullback in his senior year. Although not a speedster, he was very strong, ran very hard and was tough to bring down.

Aldo attended the University of Connecticut and received his bachelors degree in 1952. He entered the military and was assigned to the Counter Intelligence Corps serving both at home in the States and in Panama from 1951 until 1954. After completing his military service he attended the Università per Stranieri in Perugia, Italy. In 1971 he received his masters degree from Fairfield University.

Aldo worked for the United States Department of State as a Foreign Service Officer in Palermo, Italy between 1954 and 1955. He joined the New York State Waterfront Commission as an investigator in 1956 and returned to the military in 1958 as a Civilian Intelligence Officer for the Department of the Army serving in the United States and Italy until 1968. Between 1968 and 1971 Aldo worked as an investigator for the Department of Agriculture and between 1971 and 1990 was employed by the Stamford Board of Education as an Italian teacher.

Aldo married Gloria Perini on Valentine's Day February 14, 1959. The Biagiotti's have four children, Aldo (Peter), Paul, Theodore and Lisa and five grandchildren, Nathaniel and Hadley Biagiotti, Katie Biagiotti and Jakob and Jillian Lyman.

Aldo is involved in the daily care of the great assortment of animals at the Biagiotti farm, Casa di Campagna, on North Salem Road and each fall produces his vintage homemade wine. When not attending to his agricultural responsibilities Aldo writes both fiction and nonfiction. He is the author of "Impact: The Historical Account of the Italian Immigrants of Ridgefield, Connecticut" and has published several articles on gardening for The New York Times, Organic Gardening, National Gardening and the Gardner's Gazette.