

RIDGEFIELD OLD TIMERS ASSOCIATION



fellowship and scholarship



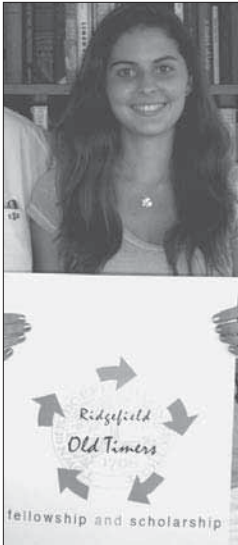
20th Annual Dinner

Oct. 1, 2011

A message from the president

For the past three years it has been my privilege to serve as president of Ridgefield Old Timers Association (ROTA). When the old timers were organized twenty years ago its charge was to provide financial assistance to a male and female Ridgefield High School scholar athlete to continue their education. Five years ago we increased our scholarships from one year to 4 years. As of this year we have awarded 38 scholarships to deserving Ridgefield High School graduates. Congratulations to this year's recipients Terra Briody and Dillon O'Brien.

This Spring ROTA had its first fundraiser "Celebrity Bartender Night" at Toscana Restaurant. I want to thank Raphael and his staff for a most successful evening.



**Sarah Kadagian
and her new logo.**

This year we changed our logo with the help of Ridgefield High School art students. After reviewing many impressive submission, we selected the logo design by Sarah Kadagian. I wish her continued success in her artistic endeavors.

I would like to congratulate all of this years awardees and thank the members of Ridgefield Old Timers Association for their continued hard work; a special thanks to Tom Belote for his bios; George Besse for the dinner arrangements; Doug Clewell and Barbara Serfilippi for ticket sales; Mark Fitzgerald, Greg Hutchings, Pat Ligos, Michael Ippoliti, Sandy Mosielo, Jack O'Keefe, Dick Scala and Reed Whipple for their hard work and dedication. I would especially like to thank Jack Sanders of The Ridgefield Press for producing our annual program book.

I would also like to thank Carl Scala for the past five years serving as our secretary. He and I will no longer be serving as officers but will continue our involvement with the association.

George Hanlon

President, Ridgefield Old Timers
Association

The 20th annual
Ridgefield Old Timers dinner
 Saturday, Oct. 1, 2011

Index

Bellagamba, Gary	16	McDonald, Thomas P.....	12
Briody, Terra	20	Morganti, Robert J.	17
Brooks, Harlan F.	8	O'Brien, Dillon	20
Fairfield County Bank .	Back cover	Officers of ROTA	3
Geary, Harry	11	Old Timers history	23
Gelfman, Nels and Mary	4	Pasquarella, Lee T.....	6
Hastings, Terry	5	Past awards recipients	22
Hoag, Erik	18	President's message	2
How to help	21	Ridgefield High history	21
Korczynski, Joseph E.....	13	Schmidt, Lea Ann.....	15
Lecher, Andrew	19	Yanity, Janet	9

Who's in charge of the Old Timers?

The Officers

George Hanlon, chairman; Mark Fitzgerald, vice chairman; Carl Scala, secretary and Chip Bliss, treasurer.

2011 Committees

Awards Dinner Committee: George Besse, Pat Ligos, Publicity/Program and Press Biographies: Tom Belote, Scholarship Committee: Dick Scala, Barbara Serfilippi, Sandy Mosiello Awards Committee, Sandy Mosiello, Tom Belote, Chip Bliss, Greg Hutchins and Mark Fitzgerald

Former Chairmen

Paul Baker, James Belote, Tom Belote, Frank Lancaster Sr., Rudy Marconi, Andy Montanari Sr., Jay Montanari, and John Pierandri.

Civic Award: Nelson and Mary Gelfman

Decades of service to Ridgefield and the region

This year's civic award is being given to Dr. Nelson "Nels" and Mrs. Mary Gelfman for their years of work for and on behalf of the Ridgefield Community. The Gelfmans moved to Ridgefield in 1964 when Dr. Gelfman began work in the Danbury Hospital Laboratory. Ridgefield's population at the time was approximately 8,000. Shortly after arriving in town Mary joined the League of Women voters and Nels was elected to the Scotland School Building Committee. He has also served on the Building Committee for the Branchville and Barlow Mountain schools.

In 1966 First Selectman Leo F. Carroll appointed Nels to the Conservation Commission. In 1967 he was elected to the Planning and Zoning Commission where he continues as a commissioner to this date. With forty four years of service to the town as a member of that commission Dr. Nelson is the longest serving elected official in the Town of Ridgefield.

Dr. Gelfman received his B.S. from Rutgers and his M.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He is the recipient of the James P. Colangelo, MD Achievement Award of the national Kidney Foundation of Connecticut and is a Diplomat of the American board of Medical Examiners, the American Board of Pathologic Anatomy and the American Board of Clinical Pathology. He is a member emeritus of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, the American Society of nephrology, the American Society of Artificial Organs, the American Association of Clinical



Nelson and Mary Gelfman

Chemistry, the International Society of Nephrology, the national Kidney Foundation and the American Society for Apheresis. Dr. Gelfman has published numerous articles in American medical journals relating to his fields of expertise.

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Mary Gelfman has been a member of the League of Women Voters since 1964. She was elected to the Ridgefield Board of Education in 1969 and served as the Board's Chair from 1976 until 1978. In 1978 Mary received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Connecticut School of Law. Mary resigned from the Board of Education in 1980 due to the possibility of a conflict of interest when she began working for the Connecticut State Department of Education in the Special Education Due Process Unit. Mary has been employed by

both the State Department of Education and the State Department of Social Services in a variety of positions relating to special education and education law. Mary has served on the Connecticut State Advisory Council on Special Education (1972-1980; Chair 1978-1980), the Ridgefield Community Kindergarten board (1971-1980; Chair 1978-1980) and the National board for the Certification of School Nurses (2008 to date). She has been employed throughout the 1980's and 1990's as a trainer for special education hearing officers in Louisiana, Maine,

New Hampshire, New York, Vermont and Wyoming and for special education mediators in Connecticut, Washington and Oregon. Mary has been a presenter at state conferences on special education throughout the United States and has published numerous articles on school nursing, school health services, student health and educational records confidentiality.

The Gelfmans continue to reside at their home on North Salem Road and have three children, Celia, Kay and David and four grandchildren, Timi, Lydia, Octavia and Zane.

Special Award: Terry Hastings, Class of 1978

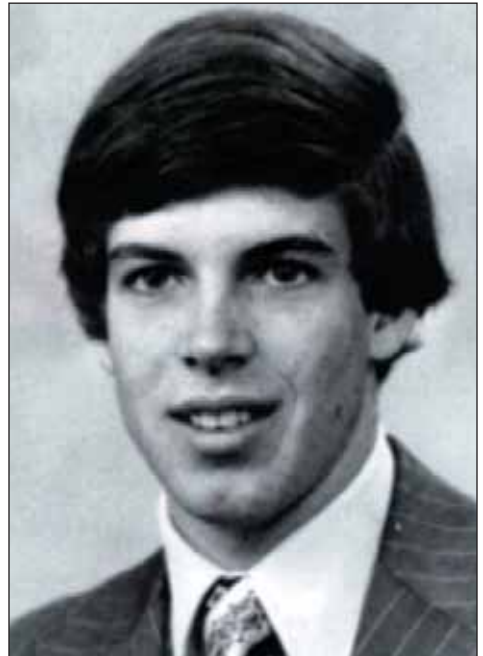
All-star at 12, coach for life

Terry, one of five sons of Ray and Ann Hastings grew up in the Great Hill-Limestone area of town. He and his brothers would sleigh ride down the huge hills, play hockey on Taylor's Pond and play pick up baseball, basketball and football with neighborhood boys.

Having four brothers, the competition in the Hastings family was fierce. Terry, being the fourth son learned to "take a lickin' and keep tickin'". Terry attended the newly built Farmingville Elementary school and played Little League baseball from T-Ball to the Majors on the Community Center teams.

He made the all-star team as a 12 year old, coached by Jack Darlington. He continued playing baseball on Babe Ruth teams. He also played one year of townie Basketball. His teammates in those early days were Bob Phalen, Mark Fitzgerald and Mark Lionnetti.

Three years after graduating from Central Ct State University (1983) with a BS in English, Terry teamed up with his original coach, Jack Darlington. He has been coaching the Community Center Little League teams for 26 years. Some of his players over the years were Dave



Terry Hastings

McClure, Chris Kane and Shawn Casey. He says he takes credit for Dave's fall

Continued on next page

away jump shot.

Terry has coached Ridgefield Girls Basketball for the past 8 years. Terry was a Director for Ridgefield Little League, of which his duties have included Secretary and Co-Equipment Director. He is also Director of the girl's house program for the Ridgefield Basketball Association since 2003.

He has been teaching Real Estate

Courses for 20 years with the Andover Real Estate School of which was founded by his father Ray. He is currently a senior Loan Officer with Hamilton Home Loans in Ridgefield.

A true coach, mentor and teacher, Terry continues to give his time and energy to the youth of Ridgefield. Terry resides in Ridgefield and has three daughters: Jessica (22), Tori (20) and Sara (14).

Sports Award: Lee Pasquarella, Class of 1960

Spectacular baseball plays

Lee Pasquarella grew up in Ridgefield and spent both grammar school and high school in the old high school on East Ridge. Lee served as president and treasurer of his class as well as having been elected as student council representative. Lee played football at RHS but is most remembered for his four years as an RHS basketball star and his three years as a powerhouse at the plate for the school baseball team.

During his senior year the Ridgefield basketball squad faced two major problems: double sessions in the school permitting only night practices and a home court that had to be played in the Veterans Park Elementary School gym. Despite the difficulties the team, coached by Mr. Paul Fako and consisting of Lee, Jack O'Keefe, Richard Lavatori, Peter Casagrande, John Drake, Tom Fossi, Willy Warner and Bjorn Larsen, made an impressive record in 1960 and advanced to the state tournament. Lee led the RHS baseball squad in the outfield and provided many thrills to the spectators by coming up with spectacular defensive plays.

One of Coach Allen's pitchers that year was Harlan Brooks who is also being honored tonight. The other members of the squad included Jack O'Keefe, George Besse, Vinnie Carboni, Fred Segesman, William Allen, Derek Warren, Dave



Lee Pasquarella

Coleman, George Mulvaney, John Drake, Craig Warren, Jim Toohey, and Robert Leclair.

After high school, Lee attended the University of Connecticut graduating



Lee Pasquarella's baseball team, with Coach Allen. Lee is first on the left in the second row.

with a B.A. in political science, and then joined the Peace Corps. He was one of the first volunteers to be sent to Pakistan, which was then a moderate Muslim country still recovering from the chaos of the partition with India. Working with a Peace Corps engineer and local officials he helped plan and manage the construction of roads, dispensaries, hospitals and schools.

Living and working in a third-world country was a transformative experience for Lee. It stimulated his interest in public service that has continued throughout his life. After the Peace Corps Lee received a master's degree in public administration from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University and then took a position in the Seattle Mayors Office which in time developed into the equivalent of a deputy mayor. It was then Lee married his wife, Robin.

Lee's next job was in Washington, D.C. where he worked for Senator Warren Magnuson who was the chairman of the influential Senate Committee on Commerce, Transportation and Science. Lee remained on the staff of that com-

mittee for four years when he returned to Seattle to head a large federal government program providing education, job training and employment services to several thousand people in western Washington. While in this position he was recruited to become the chief executive of a major Seattle law firm, one of the first non-lawyers in the country to serve in that role.

Although he enjoyed the challenge, Lee could not resist the lure of having his own business and during the next few years he started three of them including an executive search firm that continues today as the Cascade Consulting Group. His practice focuses on placing public school superintendents in K-12 education and other leaders in foundations, nonprofit, and public sector organizations.

Lee and Robin have been married for 42 years and live in Seattle. They have two grown daughters, the eldest of whom is an attorney with the ACLU in Los Angeles and the youngest is an attorney in the public defender's office in New Orleans.

Lee current enjoyments include golf, travel, reading and gourmet cooking.

Sports Award: Harland Frederick Brooks, Class of 1962

RHS varsity & Canteen Ping Pong

Harlan ("Brooksy") played four years of football, baseball and basketball at RHS. During the 1961 and 1962 academic years he was the only Ridgefield student to letter in three sports. Harlan and his family moved from Vermont to Ridgefield in the winter of 1957/58. He says that, "you couldn't ask for a better town to attend high school. The curriculum was first class and the teachers were very professional. Two teachers, in particular, I would like to single out were Mrs. Gilchrist and Mr. Bollenbach. Coach Allen was my first varsity coach and I continue to be grateful for his excellent leadership."

On the baseball field Harlan starred as a pitcher and as a centerfielder. He was the quarterback and a halfback and played both positions on the RHS All Conference Team of 1961. On the basketball squad Harlan was a guard. In all sports Harlan was known for his speed and agility.

One item Harlan continues to omit from his list of sports related successes is his September 1, 1961 Teenage Canteen Ping Pong Championship when he beat Paul Carboni for the Canteen title.

His most memorable games at RHS were the 1961 football game against Bethel in which he scored three touchdowns to win the game 18-0; the 1961 baseball game against Joel Barlow when he scored 27 points and his first varsity baseball game where he pitched as a freshman.

After graduating from RHS Harlan enlisted in the U.S. Navy and rose to the position of Data Systems Technician Chief Petty Officer. While in the navy he received his Bachelor of Science degree from Southern Illinois University. At the time of his retirement in 1982 Harlan was responsible for the maintenance of all computer and electronic equipment in the Combat Information Center and Computer Center onboard U.S. Navy ships and shore stations.



Brooksy Brooks

Following his retirement Harlan became a civilian contractor supporting the Department of Defense (Navy). He assumed progressive responsibilities from Combat Systems Engineer, Test Director, Project manager and Program Manager. His responsibilities included: supporting the navy In-Service Board, Project manager and Test Direct for combat systems ship overhauls; supporting the live and simulation testing of the various Naval Tactical Data Links and testing the Aegis Weapons Systems Simulation Data Link Software.

Harlan resides in Palm Harbor, Florida with his wife, Sharon. They have three adult children: Tracy, Paul and Scott.



Harlan Brooks is #14 in this yearbook shot with Coach Chase.

Sports Award: Janet Yanity, Class of 1975

A scholar and multi-sport star

Janet follows the tradition of her parents Dr. Peter V. Yanity and Mrs. Beth Yanity and is a second generation Old Timers award recipient. Beth Yanity received the Old Timers Civic Award in 1994 and Dr. Peter Yanity received the 1998 Civic Award.

Upon graduation in June of 1975 Janet received the RHS Woman Athlete Award for excellence in athletics, leadership and scholarship. A summary of here four years at RHS demonstrates why she was selected. Janet was a member of the National Honor Society and the RHS Student Government organization. She played field hockey on the offensive line in her sophomore, junior and senior (Captain) years. She received three varsity letters in that sport. Janet also played point guard

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Janet Yanity



Janet Yanity is number 13.

for the RHS basketball team in her sophomore, junior and senior years and was captain of the team in both her junior and senior years. Janet remembers her senior year basketball game against rival Danbury High when, prior to the 3 point shot era, she had a game high of 24 points. Ridgefield's victory ended a long-running losing streak against Danbury. In softball she played second base and left field earning two varsity letter and the captainship in her junior year. Janet joined the track and field team in her senior year and was RHS first female 2-miler.

After graduation Janet attended SUNY Orange in Middletown, N.Y.. She earned an AAS in Dental Hygiene and played

intramural basketball. She transferred to Fairleigh Dickinson where she earned her B.S. in Dental Hygiene. At Fairleigh Dickinson Janet was a member of the university's Division I fencing team (That team was nationally ranked # 9 in her senior year.).

After graduating college Janet began a thirty-four year career as a clinical dental hygienist and served as an adjunct clinical instructor at SUNY OCCC from 1985 to 1990. She is an avid sports fan and enjoys hiking, golf and biking.

Janet says she very much enjoyed growing up in Ridgefield and attending Ridgefield High.

Thank you!

The Ridgefield Old Timers wishes to thank all of its many kind and generous supporters, and especially

FAIRFIELD COUNTY BANK

which again this year sponsored our banquet.



Captain Harry Geary (the yearbook called him “Heary Geary”) is third from the left in the front row.

Sports Award: Harry Geary, Class of 1982

Tiger and Husky star on ice

Harry played freshman baseball in 1978 at either second base or right field. He also played midfielder in the 1980 JV Lacrosse team. But it was on the ice where most RHS fans saw Harry excel. From 1979 to 1982 Harry played center for the RHS great hockey teams. In 1981 and 1982 he was named All FCIAC and All State in 1982.

After graduation from RHS, Harry attended Providence College where he played two years on the school’s ice hockey team. Harry transferred to the University of Connecticut and played varsity ice hockey until 1987. He was named the New England Sports Writers All Star in 1986 and 1987 and was a Titan All American in 1986. He was a UConn record holder at graduation with 1st in career points (148); 1st in career goals (70); 3rd in career assists (78); 1st in single season points (58); 1st in single season goals (34); and 1st in single season assists (31). He is still among the school’s top ten in all of those categories.

After graduation Harry tried out for the LA Kings of the NHL. He played for the new haven Nighthawks AHL, the Virginia

Lancers ECHL; the Knoxville Cherokees ECHL and the s’Hertogenbosch Pelicans of Holland. Harry was an assistant ice hockey coach at UConn from 1990 to 1992 where his team’s combined record was 40-11-4.

Harry received a master’s in secondary education in 1994 from the University of Bridgeport. He taught pre-algebra to middle school students in Stamford and Greenwich for 12 years; algebra and geometry to Seymour, CT high school students for two years. He is currently in his fourth year of teaching at the Gunnery Prep School in Washington, CT where he teaches algebra, pre-calculus and where he coached football and girls ice hockey. Harry also coached the Ridgefield and Greenwich ice hockey teams for fifteen years and has been involved in numerous youth ice hockey teams in those towns.

Harry recalls growing up in Ridgefield as “extraordinary.” “When I was a young adolescent, Ridgefield was a small town where you could ride your bike any where you wanted. I remember calling up my friends Tom Scala, Steve Lecher and

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numerous others to play baseball during the summer break. We would all show up by bike or by walking to spend the dog days of summer playing our version of baseball as we didn't have 18 players to field two teams. Splitting the team by where you lived into North and South Ridgefielders teams.

"Of course looking back now, I realize that I was extremely lucky to grow up in a town that had an ice rink, some of the

best kept fields in Connecticut and one of the best educational systems in the United States. There are quite a few days where I wish that I was back in Ridgefield so my children could experience what I have but I feel where I live in Washington gives them some of the same experiences I had as a child."

Harry resides in Washington, CT with his wife Sarah and their children Grace (6) and Harry III (4).

Sports Award: Thomas P. McDonald, Class of 1989

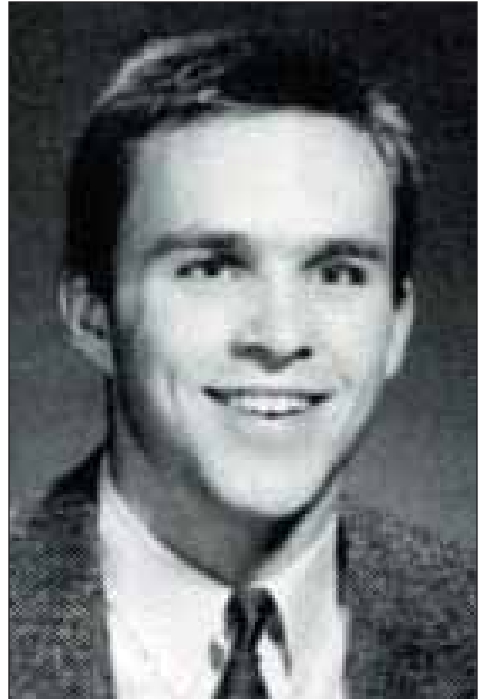
All-time leading scorer on court

Tommy McDonald played four years as a varsity starter for the RHS basketball team. He was captain of the squad in his senior year. He was a member of the 1987, 1988 and 1989 RHS basketball teams that were the first in Ridgefield history to qualify for the CT Class LL State Tournament and FCIAC playoffs. Tom was the All-Time leading scorer in RHS basketball history with 1,151 career points.

Tom earned a 4-year full athletic scholarship (basketball) to Division 1 University of New Hampshire. He was captain to the university's basketball team in his senior year. Tom had 954 career points and 197 career 3-pointers at UNH. He scored 28 points in a game against Brown and 22 points in a game against nationally ranked UMass. He graduated as UNH's All-Time 3 point scorer and set a school record that stands today with 8 three pointers in a game.

After UNH Tom graduated from the Fordham Law School and joined the F.B.I. was he is employed as a special agent to date.

Tom was the youngest of the 7 McDonald children who moved to town in 1971 and all grew up in the Westmoreland neighborhood of Ridgefield. He says he is proud to have grown up in Ridgefield and was lucky to have generous parents, sup-



Tom McDonald

portive older brothers, who all played ball, and great coaches. Some of his fondest memories were learning to play basketball at the Ridgefield Boys Club where the older guys were always willing to let him



That's Tom McDonald, #14, first on the left in the front row.

play. Tom says that is why he signed his letter of intent to UNH at the Boys Club and why he played every college game with "RBC" written on his sneakers. Tom later served on the board of the Ridgefield Boys and Girls Club from 2002 to 2007.

Tom lives with his wife Susi who is also an RHS graduate and an All-State RHS soccer player who played collegiately at the University of Rhode Island. The McDonalds have three boys and one girl: Timmy (11), Will (9), Allie (7) and Reece (4).

Sports Award: Joseph Korczynski, Class of 1965

Pioneer Raider becomes RHS star

Joe was born and raised in Ridgefield growing up in the Prospect Street neighborhood with fellow Ridgefield Old Timers Association (ROTA) awardees Rudy Marconi, Harry Pierandri and Julius "Bugsey" Santini. He was one of the first students to attend the newly constructed St. Mary's Parochial School in 1954.

In his early youth Joe played on the first organized Pop Warner football team the "Red Raiders" coached by George Fosolo, Peter Vanity and Bill Anthony. He also played baseball in the Ridgefield Little league and on the basketball team at St. Mary's School.

Joe was destined to become a football

star! He was a starter at Ridgefield High School varsity football from his freshman though his senior year. As a junior Joe was selected first team All Conference Line Backer. As senior co-captain of the 1964 Tigers he was selected first team All Conference Center and line Backer. Teammates that have also been ROTA awardees include Harlan Brooks, Mike Bowman, Bob Lewis, Rudy Marconi, Harry Pierandri, Paul Carboni, "Bugsey" Santini, Richie Polverari and Mike Ryba.

After graduating from RHS, Joe enlisted in the US Air Force and played two years of football at Anderson Air Force Base on

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Joe Korczynski is number 64 in the front. The second person to the left of him is First Selectman Rudy Marconi, and the third person is Old Timers President George Hanlon.

Guam. Joe attended Norwalk Community College receiving an Associate's Degree and where he played his final year of football. In 1969 Joe married Marsha Hatter, a former RHS classmate. They now reside in Danbury. Joe and Marsha breed, raise and show German Short Hair Pointers, Vizalás and Weimaraners. They've shown their winning breeds throughout the United States winning top honors. Joe has been a judge for the American Kennel Club, Hunting Tests, for 35 years. Joe enjoys hunting and fishing in his spare time.

How can you help future students?

Contribute to the Old Timers
scholarship fund.

See Page 21.



Joe Korczynski



Lea Ann is sixth girl from the left, standing. Coaches are Charboneau, left, and Matteo right.

Sports Award: Lea Ann Schmidt, Class of 1984

Field hockey Hall of Famer



Lea Ann Schmidt

Lea Ann is a 1984 RHS graduate who was a two-time field hockey All-FCIAC and All-State selection.

After graduation from Ridgefield High she went on to play Division 1 field hockey at the University of Connecticut and was a starter for the 1985 UConn field hockey team that won the NCAA championship with a 1-0 victory over Old Dominion.

Lea Ann, who was arguably the best field hockey player in Ridgefield High's history, came back to RHS to coach the freshmen and junior varsity field hockey team in 1990's and 2000's.

In 2009 Lea Ann was inducted in the Connecticut Field Hockey Hall of Fame.



Get out your magnifying glasses: Gary is the 10th player to the left from Coaches Ciancio and Zoppi in the back row.

Sports Award: Gary Bellagamba, Class of 1975

Star and coach in two sports

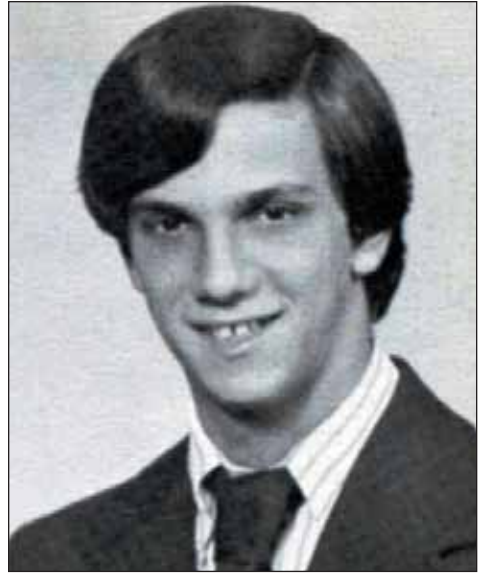
Gary Bellagamba is a member of one of Ridgefield's oldest families whose roots date back to the 1920's. He is just one of the many Bellagamba Athletes' who have actively participated in Ridgefield Sports Programs. In fact, his father Si was a star athlete who was also honored and inducted into ROTA in 1999.

Gary's distinguished RHS sports career is just one of the many athletic accomplishments in his life. Gary was one of a few RHS Athletes who played both baseball and football during his four years in high school. Gary's baseball talents after high school took him to the American Legion baseball league where he was a star and stand out player.

Gary eventually retired from playing competitive sports and married his high school sweetheart Janet Mitchell. He established Bellagamba Electric in 1982 and has built a very successful business.

The sports bug has never left Gary and he has built a very impressive coaching resume in both baseball and football. In 2000, his team was Connie Mack State Champions in baseball and they also won the Candlewood Valley Championship. His coaching years in football have had teams that were state champions in 1990, 2004, 2005.

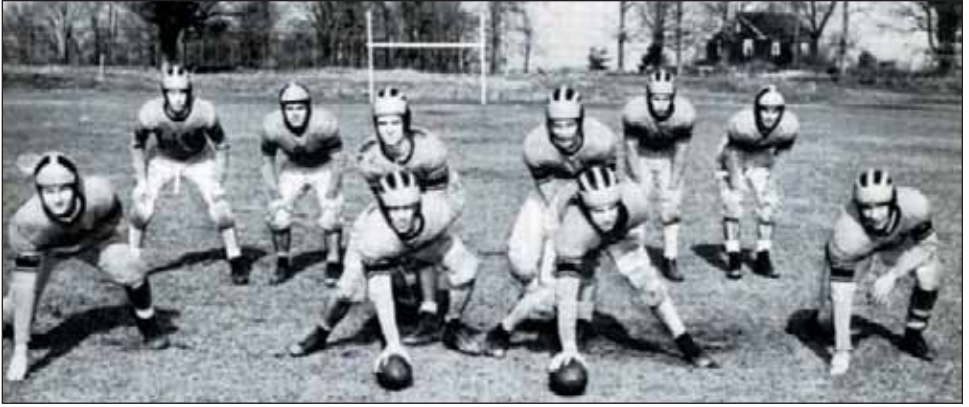
Next Gary was the head football coach at



Gary Bellagamba

Immaculate High School and now he is the new offensive coordinator of New Milford High School.

"It has been a great privilege to have played and coached for so many years of which I have thoroughly enjoyed throughout my life," Gary told us. "I am truly honored to have coached and helped so many athletes in both baseball and football.



Old six-man football in 1950s: That's Bob Morganti, with football, on right.

Posthumous Award: Robert J. Morganti, Class of 1954

Veteran of six-man football

Bob Morganti was born and raised in Ridgefield and kept his emotional and physical ties to his hometown to his last days. He was the youngest son of John Morganti, a local contractor who with his sons built the Morganti construction company first into a state wide construction firm and, subsequently through the efforts and astuteness of his sons built Morganti Inc. into a nationally and internationally recognized construction firm.

Bob attended Ridgefield Elementary School and High School at the East Ridge School, which now serves as the Richard E. Venus Municipal Building.

A member of the Class of 1954 Bob was a member of the RHS Opera Guild, the Thespians, the Dramatics Club the Yearbook and the Hilltop Dispatch school magazine.

In 1954 RHS had a faculty of 19 including Kip Holleran, the principal, and a senior class of 37 students. Coach Bill

Allen coached the athletic teams which consisted of football, baseball and basketball.



Bob Morganti

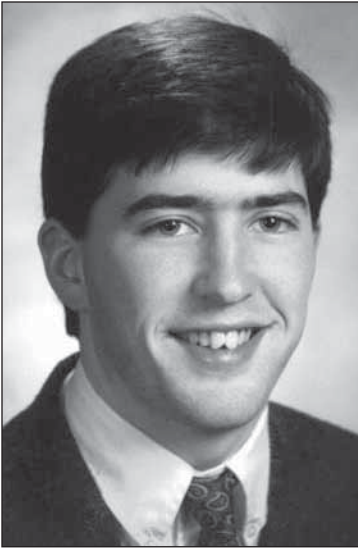
Bob played on the RHS six-man football squad for all four years of high school. In his senior year the first team consisted of his lifelong friend and classmate Bob Scala, P. Ritch, Ed Zandri, Bill Hall, R. Zimmerman, John Brady, Rudy Pancotti, J. Cartin and Tony DeLuca. Bob's senior year team was one of the best in the school history. At the close of the season the team had the enviable record of five wins and only one defeat at the hands of Bedford Hills. That record placed the team in second in the league.

Both during his career with his family's firm and after his retirement Bob

Morganti was known for his philanthropy. He served on the Board of the Ridgefield Visiting Nurses Association and with his wife of many years, Pamela, was a significant donor to the association.

Posthumous Award: Erik F. Hoag, Class of 1986

He made the game special



Ridgefield High School alumni hockey is known as the Erik F. Hoag Cup. While playing in the Ridgefield youth and high school programs, Erik consistently provided a sense of teamwork, competitive spirit and joy in playing the game. These qualities made the game special for all of his teammates and this is how he is remembered.

The Ridgefield Hockey Booster Club has dedicated the alumni game to Erik and his family.

In 1996 the Erik F. Hoag Memorial Hockey Scholarship was established. The scholarship has been awarded to a senior who best exemplifies a winning attitude, an abounding love of the game of ice hockey and interactive camaraderie among team players.

Seniors must meet two criteria to be considered for the scholarship award: demonstrate leadership and unselfish play and assume other roles that influence younger hockey players such as officiating, teaching or coaching.



Erik Hoag, second from right in front row, and his hockey team.

The old days in Ridgefield

on *Facebook*

Look for the 'Old Ridgefield' group

Posthumous Award: Andrew Lecher, Class of 1980

Legendary golf skills

Andy "Lech" Lecher was born in the Bronx, N.Y. on August 15, 1962, which is fitting as he was a lifelong Yankees fan and went to many games with his family growing up. Andy moved to Ridgefield when he was 4 yrs old and attended Farmingville and Scotland schools. During these younger years Andy was a fixture at the boys club during the "Ed" and "Buddha" years where he became a crack billiards player and won the boys club billiard championship and also won the Boy's Club bike marathon.

Andy participated in Ridgefield's Little League Baseball program from Minors through Majors and played Babe Ruth league and was selected to many of the Town's All Star travel teams. During this time Andy was a strong player on teams that also included Ridgefield baseball greater Anthony "Tony" Wilmot and future Chicago White Sox catcher Matt "Mattie" Merullo.

In high school, Andy skied on the RHS Ski team which won its division and was second in the State behind Staples. As a member of one of the most successful Ski Teams of the time, Andy was one of five RHS skiers who were also selected to ski in the Individual State championships. Andy was joined by fellow RHS skiers David Quisenberry, Walter "Bo" Beatty, John Mitchell and Bob Isely at the State Championships. As a sophomore, he also ran cross country track with lifelong pal Jim "Jimbo" Sheriden under the tutelage of the legendary RHS track Coach Rick Medve.

After graduating RHS in 1980, Andy

attended Syracuse University where he studied Civil Engineering. It was at Syracuse where Andy honed his now legendary golf skills. Upon graduation, Andy played and won numerous local golf tournaments and whittled his handicap down to a scratch golfer. After briefly toying with the idea of going to Florida to compete in the PGAs Tour School, at the young age of 22, Andy opted instead to run a large condominium project for his father in Woodbury. It was while he was living and working in Woodbury that he joined the small but popular Golf Club at Lake Waramaug.

During his 20 plus years at Lake Waramaug, Andy went from being one of its youngest members to being one of the club's

finest Presidents as well as its most prolific club champion. During many of these years, Andy was famous for winning many epic battles for the Club Championship with legendary Tennis Pro Ivan Lendl, who, after retiring as one of the history's best pro tennis players, became a PGA Senior Tour caliber golfer.

While at Waramaug Andy was also the founding sponsor of the Lake Waramaug Invitational Golf Tournament. Known around the local Golf community simply as "Andy's Tournament", for some 15 years it was a wildly popular yearly event that drew many of the top local golfers and featured many Ridgefielders, including family hackers, Carl, Steve and Matt Lecher, Charles "Chip" Wilson, "Woody" Peatt, George Hanlon, Paul McNamara, and Gary Smith among others.



Andrew Lecher

Continued on next page

Andy's presence in the Ridgefield community will also forever be marked by the many area homes and building that he built during his life. From the Fairfield County Bank building on Danbury Road to

the Alice Lawrence's "modern" house on "Pope's" corner and dozens of Residential homes, Andy's legacy will always be present in the shaping of Ridgefield's landscape.

Terra Briody and Dillon O'Brien

The ROTA Scholarship Winners

When the Ridgefield Old Timers Association was organized in 1992 one of its primary goals was to honor athletes, scholars and notable Ridgefielders of the past by establishing a scholarship endowment for RHS graduates of the future. One year after our first Old Timer's banquet at the Italian American Mutual Aid society club, Thomas Gareau was awarded the first ROTA stipend for college study.

In 1997 the association began awarding two stipends, one to a senior girl and another to a senior boy. Since then a number of deserving RHS graduating seniors have received the association's annual scholarship awards.

In 2008 we began awarding our new four-year scholarships. This year's recipients are Terra Briody and Dillon O'Brien. In granting these scholarships the Old Timers continue their tradition of honoring scholar athletes who are deserving and who have contributed to our community.

Terra Briody

Terra was a student athlete at RHS for 12 consecutive seasons. She played varsity soccer for two seasons and basketball for three seasons and was selected team captain. Terra was also on the RHS cross country and track team for seven seasons. In addition to being selected as team captain she was named All-County Cross Country Runner, All-State Relay Runner and received the Most Improved Athlete Award and Tiger Pride Coach's Award for three straight years.

Off the field and off the track Terra was a member of the National Honor Society and was the principal performer in the RHS orchestra's viola section for four

years. She was a Leader-in training, camp counselor and life guard at the Ridgefield Boys and Girls Club. Terra volunteered for the Appalachia Service Project with St. Stephens Church and was a Safe Rides team captain for two years. Her part-time after school employment was at the Yanity Gymnasium.

Terra is attending the University of Connecticut in the honors program and is running on the women's cross-country team.

Dillon O'Brien

Dillon was on the RHS Varsity Ski Team throughout his four years of high school. He was the team's captain in his senior year. The 2008 RHS team was the State Class L Champions. Individually, Dillon was named an All-State skier in his junior and senior years and received the RHS Outstanding Achievement award in his freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years. This Spring he was named the RHS Scholar Athlete.

In addition to his excellence on the slopes, Dillon was a star football player for RHS. He played freshman and junior varsity football in his ninth and tenth grades and varsity football in his junior and senior years.

Dillon was an All-FCIAC player in his senior year and the Offensive Player of the Year for RHS in 2010-11.

Dillon's extracurricular activities included Safe Rides, project lead the Way, the Younglife Church Group and participation the Distributive Education Clubs of America.

Dillon is attending the University of Connecticut.



The three high schools

In 1882 governor Phineas C. Lounsbury donated the land and money to building a new Bailey Avenue grammar school (top). Soon, the premises became inadequate and Dr. William H. Allee donated land for the East Ridge School, opened in 1915. One year later the town voted to establish a Hamilton High School in the old building on Bailey Avenue. The school had no gym; town hall was used for basketball. The growth of the secondary enrollment made it necessary to move the high school to the East Ridge School in 1926. The school was remodeled in 1925 and 1939 and additions built in 1957 and 1968. In 1952 the Veteran Park School was built as an elementary school. Grades K-3 were moved to there and later, and later schools meant all elementary grades could move out of East Ridge. By the late 1960s, East Ridge was overcrowded again and the current RHS (bottom) was opened in 1972.—T.B.



Help the Old Timers help our students

Please make a contribution to our scholarship fund. Any amount is appreciated, and will assist deserving Ridgefield High School graduates in the future.

• • •

Send your tax-deductible gift to:
 ROTA Scholarship Fund
 c/o Chip Bliss, ROTA treasurer,
 246 Federal Road
 Brookfield CT 06804

• • •

Thank you!

Past Posthumous Awards

1994: Ralph Crouchley, Kip Holleran, Francis Martin	2000: Art Bellagamba, Stubb Cummings, Margaret O'Sullivan	Leighton, Pete Carboni
1995: Chuck Walter, Charlie Ashbee, Frank Minnerly	2001: Tony Deluca, Walt Ryba, Bob Seymour	2005: Charlie Ritch
1996: Lou Girolmetti, John Sullivan, John Bacchiochi	2002: John Sturges, Jimmy Warner	2006: Roy Cogswell, Hank Wilson
1997: Lick Santini, Red Delugo, Bill Allen	2003: Scott Nye, Fred J. Romeo, Sr., Mario Scala	2007: Tony Del Biondo
1998: Joseph Venus, Art Sfondrini, Bob Stolle	2004: Steve Lancaster	2008: James Principi, Jeanne Timpanelli
1999: Alan Crowley, Don		2009: Bradford Mortensen and Edward Zandri
		2010: Richard Ligi, Richard McGlynn, Richard Serfilippi

Past Civic Awards

1992: Richard Venus	Pambianchi Family	2003: Kay Ables	2008: Maureen
1993: Bob Tulipani	1998: Dr. Peter Yanity	2004: Chuck Dean	Kiernan, Dave Scott
1994: Beth Yanity	1999: Charles Coles	2005: Doug Main, Renee Franks	2009: Vincent
1995: Aldo Tulipani	2000: Kitty Rosa	2006: Jack Sanders	Ponnozzo, Jeanne Cook
1996: Ferdinand Bedini	2001: Lewis Finch	2007: Ancona Family	2010: Christine and Philip Lodewick
1997: Matty	2002: Edith Meffley		

Past Sports Awards

1992: Tabby Carboni, Lynce Carboni, Leo Pambianchi, Tom Clark, Charlie Frattini, Joe Forcelli, John Carboni	Harry Zandri
1993: Gene Casagrande, Bob Mulvaney, Vin Petriani, Charly Stolle, Joe Tulipani	2003: Aldo Biagotti, Chip Bliss, Bob Carboni, John Forcelli, Jim Mullen, Vince Paccadolmi, Fred Romeo
1994: Lyman Anderson, Harry Bennett, Aldo Girolmetti, Evo Principi, John Tulipani	2004: Faust Verna, Lou Bellagamba, Chip Salvestrini, Alley Frulla, Rudy Marconi, Jim Tulipani and the CYO Girls Championship Basketball Team
1995: Peter Casagrande, Dino Cincolani, Joe Brunetti, Ray Eppoliti, Bud Mahoney, Reno Severini	2005: Tom Cesca, Tom Santini, Richard Polverari, Bob Pambianchi, Greg Hutchings, Carol Torcellini, Bill Polverari, Renzo Falcinelli, Jimmy Bacchiochi
1996: Ben Bedini, Fabio Biagiotti, Jack Leary, Harold Mead, Romeo Petroni, Janalie Severini	2006: Larry Bossidy, Jr., Isabel Carporale, Frank Lancaster, Jr., Carl Scala, John Stolle, Dave Sturges
1997: Primo Baldaserini, Dante Brunetti, Frank Lancaster, Sr., Walt Evans, Navio Ligi, Fred Mazzi	2007: Dave Landers, Jay Contessa, Chip Dean, John Devendorf, Marie Frulla, Steve Martin, Alan Wallace
1998: Gino "Jinx" Baldaserini, Dr. Phil Martin, Dr. Joe Moylan, Andy Montanari, Julius "Bugsy" Santini	2008: Richard Lavatori, Judy Laslo, Craig Saltzgaber, Frank Serfilippi, Paul Vaughn, Chip Wilson
1999: Dick Bellagamba, Si Bellagamba, Gene Lavatori, John Lavatori, Gene McMahon, Harry Pierandi	2009: Robert Leary, Robert Lewis, Patricia Girolametti, Richard Miller, Peter Santini, Michael Principi and Dr. Richard Scala
2000: Glen Anderson, Bill Elliot, Booker Jackson, Tom Mitchell	2010: Abe Morelli, Tom Fossi, Michael Bowman, Amy Fredericks, Christopher Winnes, Janel Jorgensen, Michael Dell'Aquila, Tony Wilmot.
2001: Ned Carboni, Paul Carboni, Jim Costanzi, John Fossi, Artie Frattini, Nick Reid, Gloria Sharkany	
2002: Ed Dowling, Jack Jones, Jack O'Keefe, Jim O'Keefe, Mike Ryba, Aldo Travaglini,	

Honoring Ridgefielders since 1992

More than 15 years ago, a group of friends got together with the idea of forming an old timers group for Ridgefield. Paul Banker, Julie Petrini, John Tulipani, and Joe Brunetti met at a dinner. They decided to model the new organization after old timers groups in Danbury and Norwalk, which had already honored several Ridgefield athletes over the years.

The original purpose of the new organization was to honor great athletes who were unable to continue their education past their school days, and set up a scholarship to assist current athletes. The organizers held several meetings and drew in 18 other supporters. They elected a board of officers with Paul Baker as the first chairman. Walt Evans was elected treasurer, a position he still holds and Julie Petrini was the first secretary.

The Ridgefield Old Timers Association began to have awards banquets in October 1992.

Seven Ridgefielders were selected to be the honorees and the first Special Award went to Richard E. Venus. The first scholarship recipient was Thomas B. Gareau. He had been accepted at the University of Virginia.

The guest speaker at the first banquet was Spec Shea, a pitcher for the New York Yankees.

The advertisement book for that first gathering was only 20 pages, cover to cover. The event was a success and money was put into a scholarship fund. The award of the scholarship to a female Ridgefield High School graduate occurred in 1996. Janine Murphy was involved in three sports and many civic endeavors. A year later, it was decided to annually award scholarships to both male

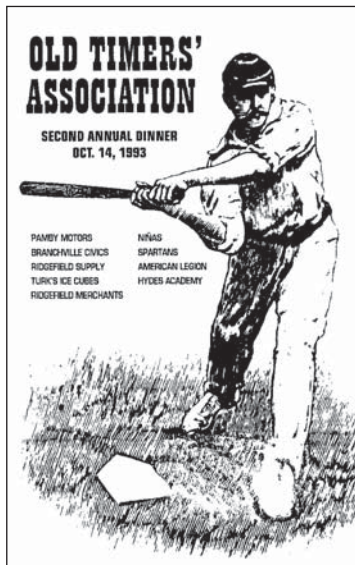
and female recipients, and the winners in 1997 were Charles Bliss and Kerry Bennett. The amount of the scholarships has grown over the years as a result of the advertising placed in this book, as well as other fundraising efforts — especially the annual golf outing and pig roast, which takes place in June at the Ridgefield Golf Course.

In the association's second year, it introduced the Civic Award, and the first recipient was Bob Tulipani, who is a very active club member to this day. The next year, Beth Yanity became the first female recipient of the Civic Award. In 1999, Sandy Pierandri Warner became the first female member of the board of directors, she was also the association's third secretary.

The motivational guest speakers, once thought necessary for a good event, began to make the banquets stretch late into the evening. Members and guests wished to hear more from the award winners. After the event ran until 11:10 p.m. in 1999, the association decided to drop the guest speakers and to feature the honorees, as well as the emcee,

often founder Paul Baker, who had a long career as a radio and television broadcaster.

The Ridgefield Old Timers Association has continued to meet annually in October to honor athletes and others, and to award scholarship. In 2006, the bylaws were updated to allow Ridgefield residents who have lived here at least 25 years to become members. Before this, members had to be natives and/or graduates of Ridgefield High School. And to paraphrase the United States Marine Corps, "we are always looking for a few, very good, hard-working new members."



Cover from 1992 Old Timers banquet

Best Wishes!



Many thanks to those who enrich our community
with their talent, passion, and dedication.

We are proud to support
The Ridgefield Old Timer Association



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