

# Hal Braff, WHS 1952

**WHS Alumni Association co-founder to receive law group's O'Hern Award for a life and practice devoted to giving back**

**From The Bar Report, NJ State Bar Association**



In the summer of 1953, **Hal Braff** took a long walk with his father along the boardwalk at the Jersey Shore. Soon after returning to college that year he got word that his father, a 50-year-old Newark lawyer, had died, apparently of a heart attack.

When he came home for the funeral, his father's law partner put his arm around his shoulder and said the firm would keep the Braff name and hold a spot open for him. Hal was only 19, but his future path was set. Six years later, he passed the bar and took his place at Braff & Litwak.

Braff, who is still practicing law at 79, spent much of his career trying civil cases. He liked the profession and was very successful. *"I was pretty effective as a trial lawyer. But what really excited me about being a lawyer was being able to make a difference in the community,"* he says.

And he did; from serving as counsel to the Newark chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality to building the American Inns of Court movement across the country. In recent years, he's helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for graduates of Weequahic High School in Newark, his alma mater.

To honor his contributions, the New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law has awarded Braff the 2013 **Daniel J. O'Hern Award**. The annual award, presented to a senior member of

the bar with an outstanding record of commitment to professionalism, career achievement, and service to the community, was presented October 17th at the commission's professionalism awards luncheon in Somerset.

*"Hal lives his daily life helping all comers. He is selfless. He is the ultimate professional,"* wrote Robert E. Margulies, of Margulies Wind in Jersey City, in nominating him for the award. Since 2003, Braff has been of counsel at the firm, where he serves as mediator, arbitrator, special discovery master and counsel to select clients.

## A FATHER FIGURE AND MENTOR

To Rayvon Lisbon, a former gang member at Weequahic High School, Braff is the father he never had. *"Hal's been in my corner, guiding me and showing me a different life,"* says Lisbon, whom Braff took under his wing seven years ago.

Both were featured in *Heart of Stone*, a documentary about Ron Stone, the late principal of Weequahic High, and his efforts to purge the struggling school of violence. *"He let me know there is someone by my side. He's made me want more out of life. He's given me inspiration,"* adds Lisbon, now a 24-year-old college student.

In fact, Braff has four children of his own, including actor and director Zach Braff, former star of the TV comedy *Scrubs*. He also has two stepdaughters through a second marriage to Elaine Braff, a couples therapist.

Their blended families comprise a creative and collaborative clan. With his wife, Hal Braff teaches a therapeutic course for couples seeking to improve their relationships. Hal and Elaine will be extras in *"Wish I Was Here,"* Zach Braff's newest movie (which he wrote with his brother Adam).

## A SON OF WEEQUAHIC

Braff grew up in Weequahic during an era when the neighborhood, bordering Hillside in Newark's South Ward, was a

middle-class, mostly Jewish enclave. He has warm memories of a close family life, a happy childhood and a "spectacular" high school experience.

When his parents told him he could go to any college he wanted, he picked the University of Wisconsin. *"There was an aura of liberalism and openness that attracted me,"* he says. After college he came home and enrolled at Rutgers School of Law in Newark.

Eight years after he graduated, the city erupted in riots. By then Braff was living 25 miles south of Newark, and the firm had moved to East Orange. But he was devastated by the destruction to his hometown.

## LIFE AS A LAWYER

Braff gained extensive trial experience in varied areas. In 1982, he was certified as a civil trial lawyer and became expert at insurance and product liability defense work. In his free time he acted in regional theater and became active in the American Inns of Court, a movement fostering legal ethics and professionalism. Braff chaired the Arthur T. Vanderbilt Chapter of the Inns of Court in Essex County. In 1991 he was elected to the organization's national board of trustees, and in 1994, he received it's A. Sherman Christiansen Award for exceptional leadership.

In the meantime, Braff had become an adjunct at Rutgers School of Law in Newark, teaching negotiating skills and trial presentation. (He continues to teach the trial presentation course.) In class he emphasized that being a lawyer was a privilege, *"As an attorney you are among the few people who are licensed by the*



**Hal and wife, Elaine**

Continued on page 17

## Edwin Marshall, WHS 1964

### Retires as diversity leader for Indiana University



Edwin C. Marshall, Indiana University (IU) vice president for diversity, equity and multicultural affairs since July 2007, retired July 31st after 42 years as a professor and administrator at IU.

"Ed Marshall has made enormous contributions to IU for more than four decades, first as one of the nation's leading optometry professors and scholars, and for

the past six years as IU's leading voice on vitally important issues related to diversity and equity," IU President Michael A. McRobbie said. "His intellect, experience and passion for IU will be deeply missed, and I wish him nothing but the best in his retirement.

"Ed has also been instrumental in the successful launch last year of IU's two new schools of public health in Bloomington

and Indianapolis, and I am very pleased that he has agreed to continue to serve as chair of the IU Public Health Coordinating Council," he added.

Marshall called his decision to retire "a challenging one," given his deep ties to the university, but said he looks forward to remaining involved at IU through his ongoing work on the IU Public Health Coordinating Council and as chairman of the search committee for the next permanent chancellor at IU Southeast.

"Over the course of my time at IU, I have had the pleasure of working with great individuals across different disciplines on each of our campuses," Marshall said. "While there are many things I will miss as I phase into retirement, what I will miss most is working as part of a collaborative team to promote academic excellence through diversity and inclusion at IU."

Under Marshall's leadership, the percentage of minority students across all IU campuses, as a percentage of domestic enrollment, increased from 14.5 percent in 2007 to 19.8 percent at the end of 2012.

Additionally, he directed the creation of diversity plans at all IU campuses, launched and led the President's University Diversity Initiative - and also worked with the IU Bloomington provost to more than double the amount of scholarship funds available through the Hudson and Holland Scholars Program.

### BRAFF continued from page 16

*state to intervene on behalf of people who can't speak for themselves and who are very often, especially in litigation, in distress because they've been injured or charged. They're saying, in essence, 'Take care of me.' That's a huge responsibility," he says.*

### FOCUS ON MEDIATION

After 40 years of trying cases, though, he decided to try something new.

*"The culture was shifting to encourage mediation. I knew I had the skills to be effective," he says, "Litigation is time consuming, stressful, and unpredictable, and someone always loses. In mediation I try to help people resolve cases."*

He sold his interest in Braff, Harris and Sukoneck in Livingston and joined the Margulies firm. Ten years later, Braff says he has no regrets, and no plans to retire: "Mediation is a perfect fit. I like what I do, and I love those guys."

### ALUMNI PASSION

Yet of all his achievements, Braff says he is most proud of his role as co-president of the Weequahic High School Alumni

Association. The idea of connecting alumni from the school's glory days to current students came to him after he attended his 35th reunion.

*"Weequahic was now an 'inner city' school. The kids were using the same lockers as we did, and living in the same houses, but they did not have the same opportunities. I just thought to, myself, 'What if we could do something with the energy the alumni put into the reunions, and use it to benefit the people there now'"*

He paid a visit to his old school, but failed to get much support from the school's leadership. He was also shocked to find the school's proud traditions had disappeared. "The faculty had no idea about the school's history. They didn't know the songs, and a lot of them didn't know who Philip Roth was," he says.

Braff persisted, and eventually found a more welcoming environment. Since its founding 16 years ago, the Association has raised more than \$600,000 for scholarships and other opportunities, including trips to France, Montreal, and Washington, D.C.

## Miriam Nusbaum Span, WHS 1960

### Retired Superior Court Judge receives professionalism award



At the same event where Hal Braff was honored, another WHS grad, Superior Court Judge Miriam Span, received the 2013 Professional Lawyer of the Year from Union County award. However, she says that her "proudest award was the Bamberger Medal at my Weequahic High School graduation in 1960."

Miriam attended Rutgers Newark College of Arts & Sciences, Rutgers Law School, and served over 20 years as a Superior Court Judge in Union County.

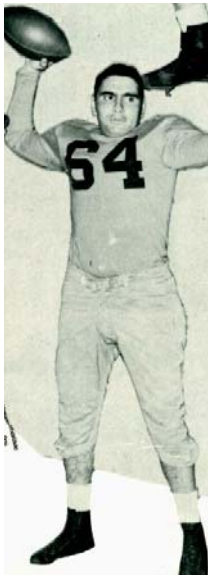


# You'll Get A Kick Out Of This!

By Phil Yourish, 1964

A couple of months ago the telephone rang in my office. It was Monroe Krichman. He had a new idea and wanted to share it with me. I met Monroe for the first time about a year ago when he was on the class of June 1955's reunion committee. Subsequently, he volunteered to assist us in the planning of our first Scholarship Fund Raising Dinner. Now he has become an alumni association Board member. I hear from Monroe often. You see, he's an idea man and he's never short on ideas.

Back in 1955, he was the quarterback of the Weequahic football team. In those days they called him Monte. One of his teammates was a guy named Alvin Attles, who was an All-County receiver. That team won only 4 games, but beat Thanksgiving Day rival Hillside for the 2nd year in a row. According to Krichman, *"that was our legacy."*



Like all good quarterbacks, even at age 70, Krichman is always thinking on his feet. And it's the "feet" that has spawned his new interest in Weequahic football after 52 years. With the excitement about Weequahic's first state football championship still echoing in his head, Krichman with some help from his magic pigskin came up with an idea that he believes will give

the high school football team a competitive edge in the years to come and will help them continue their success.

So the former quarterback and successful entrepreneur is now in the *kicking* business. He convinced Coach Altarik White, with much persistence, that the difference between winning and losing could be the ability to make an extra point



or field goal with consistency. And he knows most high school teams do not have accurate kickers. According to Krichman, *"punting and place kicking control 50% of field position."*

Never willing to let a good idea wither, Krichman, a man of action and positive thinking even off the football field, started making arrangements for a kicking program. He brought his idea to the alumni association, made phone calls and wrote letters to former Weequahic athletes, and started to raise funds to make this happen.

Then on Saturday, May 5th, the *"Coach Krichman Kicking Academy"* opened to a small group of Weequahic football players at the newly renovated Untermann Field. (By the way, the field looks *fantastic* - check it out). The football players received lessons on the art of kicking from guest instructor George Jakowenko, a former kicker for the Buffalo Bills and Oakland Raiders in the National Football League.

The first session was a very classic before-and-after situation. At first, the football just dribbled off of the tees. The kicks hardly left the ground. For a time it looked like a hopeless endeavor. To their credit, the players never became discouraged. And by the end of the initial 2-hour lesson, they were kicking 20-yard field goals. The turnaround was amazing. And all of this was captured on film by Beth Kruvant, who is doing a

documentary on Weequahic.



Krichman feels that the players need at least five sessions to become proficient at kicking. For this to happen, additional arrangements have to be made with Jakowenko - and he gets paid for his services. Also, some equipment needs to be purchased such as practice football holders, a snapper's target, special kicking shoes etc. Coach Krich has already put together a manual on kicking and plans to have the sessions videotaped.

The next workshop is scheduled for Saturday morning, June 9th. Come and join us. And if you would like to make a donation to support this program, send in a check made out to WHSAA with *"kicking"* in the memo area and mail it to the WHS Alumni Association, P.O. Box 494, Newark, NJ 07101.

Meanwhile, in the office of Coach White the telephone rings. The coach scans the caller ID with a look of recognition and some apprehension. *"This is Krichman,"* the robust voice on the other end says, *"I have a another fantastic idea. You'll just love it! I'm coming over to tell you all about it."*

Stay tuned for the next chapter in the ongoing saga of volunteer kicking coach Monroe Krichman, former Weequahic High School quarterback.



**1955 Football Team Graduating Seniors - L-R Front Row: Alvin Attles, Bill Krim, Dave Matthews, Harvey Waldman, Back Row: Chuck Grossman, Bob Goldberg, Bob Lynn, Monroe Krichman.**

# A LIFE SAVED

**One terrible night in Newark 18 years ago, one young man lost his life and another had his changed forever. Now he wants to give back.**

**By Robin Gaby Fisher, Star-Ledger Staff**



**Ronald Griffin in the Navy in 1981**

David Horace was 16 and going nowhere. He was a reluctant student whose idea of a future was graduating from Weequahic High School so he could hang out full-time on the streets of Newark.

Then came a chance encounter between the street kid and a stranger. The meeting, at the corner of St. James Place and Aldine Street on a cold March night, was brief but life-changing. Horace says even now - and nearly 20 years have passed - he falls off to sleep seeing the face of young Ronald Griffin as he lay on the cold concrete dying. He still hears Griffin's pleading last words as clearly as if Griffin was now whispering in his ear: *"Please don't let me die here by myself."*

March 19, 1986, is the day Ronald Griffin - husband, son, brother, Good Samaritan - lost his life trying to save Horace and two friends, who were being robbed at gunpoint of a bomber jacket with a street value of 50 bucks.

*"An apostle of mercy gunned down at 23,"* his obituary headline read. Through his death, Ronald Griffin gave David Horace's life a purpose. *"I didn't know what kind of man Ronald was until I read about him,"* said Horace, who is now 34 and a police chief in Georgia. *"How could I waste my life when a man like him died for me and my friends?"*

After all these years of living a clean life to honor the memory of a man he knew only fleetingly, Horace says it isn't enough. Now he yearns to do something to preserve Griffin's legacy.



**David Horace at work in Columbus, Georgia**

## DRIVEN TO SERVE OTHERS

Ronald Griffin's legacy was this: He couldn't pass an elderly person with groceries without offering to carry their bundles home, his family said. If he had a spare quarter, he'd give it to someone who needed it more. His story begins with Dorothy and James Griffin, a nurse's assistant and a forklift operator who moved north from Greenville, S.C., when Ronald was 12 to make a better life for their five children.

The Griffins raised a daughter and four sons, including Ronald and his twin, Donald. All except Ronald went to college. He graduated from Weequahic High and enlisted in the service. Unlike his twin, who made the Air Force a career, Ronald served four years in the Navy, then came home to Newark in 1984 with a new wife, Linda, whom he'd met on leave.

The newlyweds moved in with Griffin's parents on Renner Avenue while he contemplated whether to take computer courses or apply for the Newark Fire Department. Griffin was a born artist. His parents remember him bringing home odd-shaped tree boughs and whittling them into complex sculptures. He carved an entire chess set and primitive walking sticks.

On the night he was murdered, Griffin was returning home from the store, where he'd gone to buy supplies for one of his pieces. He was nearly finished with a sculpture of a pregnant African woman and had run out of

yellow paint for tiny flowers he'd carved on her dress.

About six months earlier, Griffin had become a born-again Christian. Newark then was as it is now: volatile and violent, in some areas. Griffin would read about *"black-on-black crime"* and tell his parents he wanted to help his neighbors get along. But even before he made that his life's mission, Griffin did what he could to help his little corner of the world.

Sometimes he'd approach drug dealers on the streets and try to counsel them. When his mother told him she worried that he was putting himself in danger, he told her: *"I know, Mom, but somebody's got to make a difference."*

One night, in the dead of winter, shortly before he died, Griffin surprised his parents when he came home with a bag lady. He told them he had seen the woman on the street and offered her a warm bath and a good night's sleep.

*"Ronald had just gotten some argyle socks and an argyle sweater,"* Dorothy Griffin recalled, her voice breaking at the memory. *"He knelt down in front of that bag lady and my son put those socks on her feet."*

The woman got her bath and a comfortable bed for the night. Griffin gave her his new argyle sweater, and wrapped her in his black woolen peacoat. He searched the kitchen cabinets and loaded every pop-top can into a brown grocery bag. Then he pressed \$25 in the woman's hand, hailed a cab for her, and bid her goodbye. *"That was the last deed he would do,"* said Dorothy Griffin. *"We did not have an inkling that day that that child was fixing to leave us."*

## A KILLING FOR A JACKET

While Griffin pursued opportunities, David Horace's only ambition was hanging out. He was the kind of kid Griffin would have tried to mentor. On the night Griffin died, Horace and two friends were walking toward St. James Place, where they often passed time hanging around.

When they reached the corner of St. James and Aldine, a car pulled up alongside them and a boy about their age jumped out. *"Give up the jacket,"* he said, pointing a .38-caliber handgun at Horace's friend, who was wearing a black leather bomber jacket.

- Continued On Next Page -



## A LIFE SAVED - Cont.

The friend was pulling off the jacket when a city bus pulled up and 23-year-old Griffin, carrying his shopping bag with yellow paint, stepped off. *"He saw what was going on, so he sat his bag down and he came over and started to say we shouldn't be robbing each other, that black-on-black crime was so destructive,"* Horace recalled.

The gunman spun to face the Good Samaritan. Griffin put his hands in the air and backed away slowly. *"You don't think this gun is real?"* the gunman sneered at Griffin, while Horace and his friends shivered with fear. The gunman pulled the trigger. Griffin, a hole blown in his stomach, lurched backward. Horace remembers his friends running and yelling at him, *"Run! Run!"* The gunman and his partner sped off in the car. *"My legs were frozen,"* Horace recalled. *"I couldn't move. It was just me and Ronald left there."*

Dorothy Griffin was at home baby-sitting for her grandson when the phone rang that night. *"Do you have a son named Ronald?"* a woman asked. *"...Well, there's been a robbery."* *"My son would not have been involved in a robbery,"* Dorothy Griffin responded. *"You don't understand ....,"* the woman said.

By the time Dorothy Griffin got to the corner of St. James and Aldine, her son had been taken away by ambulance. *"I remember that even in the dark the blood looked so red,"* she said. Ronald Griffin was shot at 7:28 p.m. He was pronounced dead five hours later at University Hospital in Newark.

His last words were to young Horace ... *"Please don't let me die here by myself."* Horace did not leave his side.

## A LIFE TRANSFORMED

Horace was a senior in high school when Griffin's killer was brought to trial. Damon Venable was sentenced to prison for at least 30 years without parole. He is still serving his sentence. Horace attended the trial. He never forgot the reason Venable gave for killing Griffin: *"He said he should have minded his own business. That is what he said,"* Horace said. *"He was so cold."*

The only other memory of the trial Horace has is briefly meeting Griffin's mother: *"She was so sweet, a real motherly kind,"* he said. Dorothy and James Griffin moved back to the Carolinas after the trial.



David Horace's 1987  
WHS yearbook picture

She sadly cut her ties with the family, saying that being with them reminded her too much of Ron. *"I wish I knew where she was,"* Dorothy Griffin said. *"I would love to hear from her."* Over the years, Dorothy Griffin said, she often thought about the boy who stayed with her son while he lay dying. What had become of him? she wondered.

David Horace didn't hang out much after the shooting. After graduating from Weequahic High, he agreed to give his mother a year in college. He attended Rider University in Lawrenceville, then transferred to Morris Brown College in Atlanta to study criminal justice. He graduated from college and went into police work in Georgia. He thought about Griffin every day. Two years ago, Horace earned his master's degree in public administration justice at Columbus State University in Columbus, Ga., where he is chief of the university police department. He and his wife have a 2-year-old son.

Horace keeps in touch with Sam Bearfield, one of the friends he was with the night Griffin was killed. Bearfield works as a UPS driver and lives in Newark with his wife and two sons. The third friend, Bearfield's cousin, Ronald Barnes, whose jacket the robbers demanded, also still lives in the city. Bearfield said he doesn't remember much from that night. Just fleeting scenes. The picture is fuzzy, but he can still see Griffin's face in his mind's eye. He can hardly recall the killer or how things happened. *"I think I've pushed it way back too far in my head,"* Bearfield said.

But every time he and Horace have spoken over the years, Bearfield said, Ronald Griffin's name always comes up. Horace, he said, *"always talked about doing something, and I always told him to call on me and I'd help him with it."*

They couldn't pass the corner where Ronald was killed without feeling the horror of his death every time. *"We needed to get away to heal,"* James Griffin said.

Ronald Griffin's wife, Linda, also tried to heal.

Recently, Horace completed a year in the ministry. His first sermon was about Ronald Griffin, he said. *"If someone had told me way back then that I would be a policeman and a minister one day, I would have never believed it,"* Horace said. *"Ronald Griffin played a major role in all of that. Now it's time to do something for him."*

## A FAMILY'S GRATITUDE

After searching for months, Horace recently traced Dorothy and James Griffin to South Jersey. The couple returned to the state a few months ago to be nearer to their children. The Griffins keep their son's memory alive with photographs scattered among those of their four surviving children and eight grandchildren in their new home.

Horace phoned them in July to say he wanted to start a scholarship fund in Ronald Griffin's name. His idea is to raise enough money to send a student, maybe from Weequahic High School - his and Griffin's alma mater - to college. The goal is to raise \$10,000 in time to send a student to college in the fall of next year.

*"Just like he helped me, I want to help someone and continue his legacy,"* Horace said. Dorothy Griffin dissolved in tears when Horace told her his idea. *"Thank you,"* Dorothy Griffin told Horace at the end of the call. *"Thank you for not leaving him there alone in those streets."*

Griffin's older brother, James, said the family is honored by Horace's plan to start a scholarship. *"He has become such an outstanding individual and to realize how much Ronald meant. Wow. It's overwhelming,"* he said. *"We're very proud."*

A quote from former U.S. senator and famed environmentalist Gaylord Nelson goes: *"The ultimate test of a man's conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard."* Horace has it posted in his office in Columbus, Ga. *"It makes me think about Ronald Griffin and about how he sacrificed his life that night for three boys he didn't even know,"* Horace said. *"And he would never hear us say, 'Thank you.'"*

Contributions can be made to: The Ronald L. Griffin Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Community Foundation of New Jersey, P.O. Box 338, Morristown, N.J. 07963-0338.

# Weequahic Wins State Group II Basketball Crown - 1st Title Since 1973

By Mike Kinney, Star-Ledger

One more chance. Nagee Johnson secretly pleaded for just one more opportunity to help Weequahic. Then Donnell Bey's baseline jumper fell off the side of the rim. The second chance Johnson wanted fell into his hands - figuratively and literally. And Johnson, who already had played a fantastic game, made the most of it.

The junior hit the putback, was fouled, and converted a free throw with 6.4 seconds left in overtime to give Weequahic a 91-90 victory over Pleasantville yesterday for the NJSIAA/First Union Group II championship at the Rutgers Athletic Center in Piscataway. The victory gives Weequahic, No. 16 in The Star-Ledger Top 20, its first state title since 1973. Johnson had a chance to tie the game



just short. As soon as the senior released his shot, he saw Johnson flashing to the left block for the rebound. "I had a perfect view," Bey said.

"As I stepped down, their big man (Dozier) stepped up to me and I saw Nagee slashing inside. I just knew in my heart he was getting the rebound." After Johnson's winning free throw, Pleasantville freshman Kamron Warner dribbled down-court and missed a running jumper that rebounded far from the lane as the buzzer sounded.

Weequahic showed composure late in regulation to put itself in position to win. It trailed, 74-64, one minute into the

fourth quarter with one starter, Ike Anaele, having fouled out and the other four in foul trouble. Dane Walker (15 points), Weequahic's leading scorer, fouled out with 2:48 left and Weequahic behind, 78-77.

Sophomore Rasheed Huggins, who only recently began to see important minutes, tied the game at 82 off a pass inside from Bey with 59 seconds left in regulation. Huggins then dribbled into the lane and found Saddiq Gaddy alone inside for a two-point lead with 15 seconds to go.

Pleasantville forced overtime when Dozier, who led all scorers with 33 points, hit Ronald Scott inside for a layup with 4.2 seconds to play. Bey found Johnson inside, but the buzzer sounded before he released his shot - which missed.

Bey, as always, was an outstanding floor leader down the stretch despite playing with four fouls the final 2:36 of regulation and the entire overtime. He came up with a huge defensive play late in overtime when he drew an offensive foul against Sterling Duncan (16 points), sending him out with his fifth foul.

In the fourth quarter Bey scored seven of his 20 points, including five straight to put Weequahic in front, 79-78, with 2:26 to play. Gaddy also scored seven points in the fourth after getting only two in the first three quarters.

"We've been saying all along that this is a real team," Walker said. "I've got to tell you, I was a little scared when I wasn't in the game anymore. We were on the bench, praying, holding hands, doing whatever we could think of. In the game or not, you still have to support your team no matter what."

*Note: Pleasantville is located near Atlantic City and they have one fabulous basketball team. Kudos to a very competitive and well-coached team.*

WEEQUAHIC	91	PLEASANTVILLE	90
Nagee Johnson **	29	Dozier	33
Donnell Bey *	20	Kelly	23
Dane Walker *	15	Duncan	16
Saddiq Gaddy *	9	R. Scott	7
Asmar Bullock	8	Simpkins	6
Ike Anaele *	5	Everett	2
Julian Dickerson	3	Warner	3
Rasheed Huggins	2	Whetstone	0
Patrick Ford	0	B. Scott	0
Rasheed Nelson	0		
Andrew Jones	0		
Coach: Frank Gavin	Coach: Harold Warner		
* Starters /**MVP			

with 1:10 remaining in overtime but missed two free throws. Pleasantville's Antwan Dozier returned the favor when he did the same with 28 seconds to go. "When I missed those two free throws, I just wanted to die right there," said Johnson, who finished with 29 points and 10 rebounds and earned team MVP honors. "But then Bey came up to me and said, 'You're going to get another chance. Don't worry.' I was just praying he was right."

Johnson's opportunity almost came in the form of an assist, but Bey's jumper was

☺ This is the 1st state championship in basketball since 1973 when WHS beat Atlantic City as a Group IV school.

☺ WHS also won the Group IV state championships in 1966 (Hackensack), 1967 (Camden), and 1962 (Westfield) and came in 2nd in 1980 (Group III), 1960 & 1959.

☺ This is only the third time that Newark has had two basketball champions at the same time: 1962 (Weequahic & South Side) and 1995 (Shabazz & Science).

☺ Al Friedman, a star player on the championship 1962 team, was at the game.



Throughout the years, Evelyn Jacobs Ortner has been the recipient of many honors. She received commendations from President Clinton and Senators Bradley and Lautenberg. New Jersey's Governor Christie Whitman presented her with the Governor's Volunteer Award. The Summit College Club gave her its annual achievement award. In addition, she has received tributes from Millburn Township, the NJ Association of Female Executives, Montclair State University, Union County Municipal Clerks Association, and the NJ Girl Scout Council. She is listed in *Who's Who in America*. She has authored "Domestic Violence - A Loss of Selfhood," in the volume *"The Woman's Experience: The Emergence of Women in the 21st Century."* Below are excerpts from an article in the NY Times written in 1999 about Evelyn Ortner's trailblazing work in the area of domestic violence.

At the age of 72 and financially secure with her children on their own, Evelyn Jacobs Ortner could easily choose the genteel suburban life of country clubbing and shopping. Instead, over the last decade, Mrs. Ortner has chosen to run the *Unity Group Inc.*, a nonprofit advocacy organization for battered women and their dependent children, which she founded. The group, a United Way member agency, has aided hundreds of battered women around the country, free of charge, without taking government funds or paying salaries.

She says volunteerism was part of her upbringing. At age 8, she said she organized a group of children, which she called the *Charity Girls*, to perform plays, sing and dance for the residents of the *Daughters of Israel Home for the Aged* in Newark. She received a master's degree from Drew University in Madison. Over the years she raised two children - Peter, now 41 and a photographer, and Nicole, 39, an ice-skating instructor.

In 1990, Mrs. Ortner started *Unity* "with three people and \$15," she recalled. Today the organization has a 10-member board and hundreds of supporters who pay an annual \$25 membership fee to help victims of domestic violence find counseling, legal, medical and other services. Its support group for battered women, run by formerly battered women, meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at the Millburn Public Library.

Membership fees, income from a thrift shop in downtown Union, grants, donations from private businesses and fund-raisers like the \$60-a-person cocktail party and silent auction at the Short Hills

## WHS 1945 Grad Evelyn Jacobs Ortner Advocate For Battered Women



Hilton helped the group purchase its own shelter. A spacious house in suburban Essex County, painted by volunteers and decorated in part with furnishings donated by the Short Hills Hilton, opened in September 1999.

The organization recently hired a lawyer to direct the new shelter and to take over the referral work and myriad follow-up calls necessary to get victims the help they need - calls that Mrs. Ortner has been handling at all hours from an office in her home.

Her husband of 52 years, Robert, a retired economist, said: "she has enormous passion for what she's doing. She has hold of something. To some extent, it may have hold of her, which is my only concern." His wife's soft green eyes filled with tears in response to the words of her husband, whom she has known since she was a 14-year-old high school (*Weequahic*) student. To relieve the stress of her work, she and her husband like to go dancing at the Short Hills Hilton on Saturday nights; the jitterbug, she said, is a favorite.

But frequently, she is consumed by her work. In a voice charged with emotion, Mrs. Ortner said that in this country, a woman is battered every nine seconds. "During the period of the Vietnam War, we lost about 55,000 men and women," she said. "During that same period, we lost 55,000 battered women. They're dead."

According to the NJ State Police in 1997 - the last year for which information was available - there were 82,627 domestic violence offenses reported by the police in the state, down 3 percent from 1996 when there were 85,018. But there were 50 murders resulting from domestic violence in 1997,

up 16 percent from 43 murders committed in 1996.

Mrs. Ortner became aware of the enormity of the problem of domestic violence in the 1980's, while working as an advisor and speech writer for Margaret Heckler, Secretary of the Federal Department of Health and Human Services in the Reagan Administration. Her husband who was then senior vice president at the Bank of New York was serving as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs at the Commerce Department.

When she returned to New Jersey, she learned that her suburban area had virtually no centers to support victims of domestic violence.

"People don't want to look at domestic violence because they don't want to admit that it exists," she said. To those who think abuse doesn't occur in exclusive neighborhoods, she replies, "Phooey."

Upscale women, she contends, often have a difficult time leaving their abusers because they're dependent on an upper-class life style.

They will often say, "Where am I going to get this kind of money?" she said. "I don't want to leave the country club, I want my children to go to Harvard. How can I exist in a little garden apartment?" She calls the domestic violence dynamic "a cult of one."

The batterer, who typically has grown up in an abusive household, she said, "is intent to control another human being, and the means to it, first and foremost, is mind control." Claiming to be the only one who truly loves her, an abusive husband often isolates his wife from friends and family members ....Tactics include alternating indulgences with threats and beatings, and enforcing trivial demands to develop a habit of compliance in an atmosphere of anxiety and hopelessness.

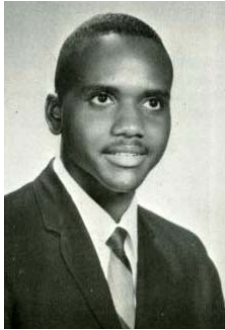
...The official response to domestic violence cases is often, "When she's ready, she'll leave," said Mrs. Ortner, adding "in a casket?" As for batterers, she continued, they always say: "You made me do it. If you had just done what I asked you to do, this never would have happened. Everything is your fault." According to Mrs. Ortner, "Customarily, when there are children and he begins to molest or abuse the children, that's when this woman will get motivated, not to save herself, but to save the children."

Although she doesn't keep statistics on her "clients," as she calls the women she helps, she estimates that "95 percent of my stories are success stories," meaning that the women have left their abusive husbands and remade a life for themselves and their children. In 1999, the New Jersey Senate and General Assembly passed a joint resolution saluting the *Unity Group's* work.

## ALUMNI PROFILES

### WHS 1967 KOMOZI WOODARD

*Community Activist,  
Professor, and Author*



Komozi Woodard was born Kenneth Woodard at Beth Israel Hospital in July 1949. Before college, he was educated in Newark at 18th Avenue School, Cleveland School, Waverly Avenue

School, West Kinney Jr. High, and ultimately Weequahic High School. At Weequahic, Komozi Woodard joined his uncle Edwin Woodard, a football champion, and his cousin, Maureen Woodard.

In 1965, Ken was selected by Weequahic teachers for the Princeton Cooperative Schools Program (PCSP). Through that enrichment program he was educated at Princeton University and Andover Academic in the summers of 1965 and 1966. This PCSP was the prototype for Upward Bound programs throughout the country.

Always interested in politics, Ken ran for the president of the Orange & Brown Association but lost to Herman Rosenfeld, who he is still friends with today. It was in high school that Woodard first heard about the heroic leader, Fannie Lou Hamer in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

At Weequahic, Woodard joined a number of political organizations, including a high school chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). SDS organized against the draft in the War in Vietnam

and SNCC organized against racial terrorism and for civil rights.

Through Newark's SNCC office in 1968, Woodard organized a SNCC liberation school to teach African American history in the summer of 1968. That summer, he also assisted Nikki Giovanni in a poetry workshop in New Jersey. While he was an undergraduate, Woodard began teaching a lecture course in Sociology, "*Perspectives on Race*" at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA.

In 1968 and 1969, Woodard worked with many Newark youths to found the Chad School. Around the same time, another Weequahic alum Cliff Carter founded the Black Youth Organization (BYO). Woodard also organized the statewide Congress of African Students in Pennsylvania, with branches from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh.

By 1969, Woodard was renamed Komozi Woodard as he worked with Amiri Baraka to build several black power groups: the *Committee for a Unified Newark*, the *Congress of African People*, the *African Liberation Support Committee*, the *Black Women's United Front* and the *National Black Political Assembly*. Newark became a leading center for black power politics during those years.

After graduating from Dickinson College, Woodard edited two newspapers during that period: *Black Newark* and *Unity & Struggle*, one local and one international. He directed an urban renewal planning agency, the Project Area Committee, in the early 1970s and the controversial Kawaida Towers project that was halted by mob violence.

In addition to housing development, Woodard also directed economic development in the Congress of African People. After editing a magazine in Manhattan, Woodard returned to teaching in 1984 when a Weequahic alum, Phil Yourish, hired him as a history teacher at Independence High School and as the editor of "*Children's Express*."

By 1985 Komozi Woodard was the Managing Editor of *Children's Express*, an international program for youth journalism, headquartered in Manhattan. At the same time, Woodard was attending Rutgers University-Newark pursuing a Master's in the Art of Teaching degree in history.

By 1986, Woodard was awarded a fellowship to study history at the University of Pennsylvania. He began teaching college at Rutgers University and then was awarded a post-doctorial fellowship at Northwestern University in Urban Policy & Public Policy as well as in African American Studies.

Since Northwestern is located in Evanston, a suburb of Chicago, Woodard began working in Chicago's Algebra Project with Bob Moses of civil rights and SNCC lore. And he assisted Bob in writing the history of the Mississippi Movement and in preparing the television movie, "*Freedom Song*." Since then Woodard has worked on such documentaries as "*Eyes on the Prize*" and "*America's War on Poverty*."

Today Komozi Woodard is a professor of American History, Public Policy and Africana Studies at Sarah Lawrence College and a professor of Urban Studies at Eugene Lang College of the New School University. He has published numerous articles and five books, including *A Nation Within a Nation*, *Freedom North* and *Groundwork*. He also put together the microfilm documentary, *The Black Power Movement, Part 1, Amiri Baraka from Black Arts to Black Radicalism*.

In addition to a Black Power documentary, "*NewArk Rising*" (Tambua Productions), Woodard is currently working on three books: one with Jeanne Theoharis, *The Jim Crow North*; a second with Jeanne Theoharis and Dayo Gore, *Women in the Black Revolt: Want to Start a Revolution?* and a third with Mary Dillard on *Black Liberation, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*.



## ALUMNI PROFILES

### WHS June 1944 MURIEL FOX

#### *Co-Founder of the National Organization for Women*



Born and raised in Newark, Muriel Fox has had a distinguished career as a public relations executive and a co-founder of the National Organization of Women (NOW).

Currently, Muriel is the Honorary Board Chair of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund (now called Legal Momentum). She served as Board Chair of NOW from 1971 to 1973, and as a member of the NOW National Board from 1966 until 1974. She headed NOW's public relations during its first two years, beginning before the founding conference in October, 1966, and was the communicator who first introduced the new women's movement to the media of the world.

A former executive vice president of Carl Byoir & Associates - one of America's three largest public relations firms, Muriel was on Business Week Magazine's list of 100 Top Corporate Women and described in June 1976 as the *"top-ranking woman in public relations."*

In 1991 the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund created the Muriel Fox Award for Communications Leadership Toward a Just Society. The first winner of the "Foxy" was Muriel Fox herself. In 1996 the Fund surprised her with an "Our Hero" award "For a Lifetime of Dedication to the Cause of Women's Equality."

She also was the first recipient of New York State NOW's Eleanor Roosevelt Leadership Award in 1985; and that same year Barnard College selected her to receive its Distinguished Alumna Award. She is listed in "Who's Who in America," "Who's Who in the World" and "Foremost Women of the Twentieth Century."

Moreover, Muriel was the first public relations executive to win the Achievement Award of American Women in Radio & Television, and first woman to receive the "Business Leader of the Year" Award from Americans for Democratic Action. She received the Matrix Award from New York Women in Communications and the Woman of Accomplishment Award from the Wings Club.

She has lectured frequently throughout the world on such topics as Communications, Family Trends, the Women's Movement, and "Moving Women Up the Corporate Ladder."

In 1948 Muriel graduated with a B.A. degree from Barnard College, where she was summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. In 1955, she married Dr. Shepard G. Aronson and they have three children, Eric, Rolf, and Lisa. Today, she resides in Tappan, New York, and is president of the Rockland Center for the Arts.

**WHS 1985 Grad**  
**Marjorie Barnes,**  
**Keynote Speaker at**  
**Weequahic's 2004**  
**Graduation**



*Ed. Note: Almost 20 years ago, Marjorie Barnes graduated from Weequahic High School with many unanswered questions about her future. Today she is an Associate Professor of writing at Union County College and a member of the WHS Alumni Association's Board of Trustees. Her inspiring presentation to the graduating students was unique, creative, and expressive. She began with a song that she composed called "My Blues Ain't Over Yet" and concluded with excerpts from the poem, "For My People," by Margaret Walker. In between, she shared her life story and sent a powerful message to the students about seeking success despite the obstacles they will encounter in their lives.*

...It gives me great pleasure to be here this morning to share some words of inspiration to the Class of 2004 as they move from high school into the "real" world and the world of higher education. If I would have been told 20 years ago that I would be the keynote speaker at Weequahic's 100th Commencement, I would not have believed it.

Twenty years ago, I was a junior at Weequahic, and I had no desire whatsoever to go to college. In fact, everything in my life assured me that I wouldn't. My test scores said that I was reading on a 4th grade level, so I was put in remedial classes. Secondly, neither my parents nor any of my 11 siblings had gone to college, so I had no reason to think I would end up there. The only real hope I saw for my future was for me to either

keep my job at Pathmark or join the military. And those seemed like good choices to me.

But luckily for me I had an English teacher at Weequahic named Ms. Phifer who believed in me, and she didn't allow my test scores to define who I was or what she expected of me. That year in 1984, Ms. Phifer taught me a lot of things, but the most important thing she taught me was to love poetry. At the beginning of every week, without fail, Ms. Phifer would give her students a poem to memorize, and by the end of the week she expected us to stand in front of the classroom to recite it.

At FIRST, some of us resisted with endless complaints. The thought of reciting poetry in front of our peers was embarrassing and humiliating. But that didn't stop Ms. Phifer from giving us a poem each week. And some times we did well, and some times we didn't. So to build our self-esteem she began by giving us small poems like the poem "*Invictus*," and then she moved on to longer poems, like Robert Frost's poem "*Stopping By the Woods On a Snowy Evening*," and the poem "*If*" by Rudyard Kipling.

But one week she challenged us by giving us a poem by Margaret Walker entitled, "*For My People*". This poem was 10 stanzas long and it took well over 5 minutes to recite, and even longer to memorize. Well, when it was my turn to recite the poem, I went to the front of the classroom, closed my eyes (which of course Ms. Phifer told me to open), and did the best I could. At the end of my recitation Ms. Phifer gave me a note to deliver to Ms. Findley, and she told me not to read the note, and to wait for Ms. Findley's response. So I walked down the hall to Ms. Findley's 9th grade English class and I gave her the note and waited for a response. Ms. Findley read the note, smiled and then looked up at me and said, "Margie, will you recite "*For My People*"?"

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Of course, I was totally embarrassed and I could not believe Ms. Phifer and Ms. Findley were putting me on the spot like this. It took me a minute to pull myself together but I finally recited the poem. And then Ms. Findley sent me to Mrs. Sutton's English class, and so-on and so-on. I don't know how many classes I visited that day, but what I do remember is the look of pride I saw on Ms. Phifer's face when I returned to her classroom.

And now here it is some 20 years later and I can still recite from memory, most of the words to the poem, "*For My People*." But I won't do it now. But the point of my story is two-fold: 1.) Never let your fear paralyze you. It's okay to be afraid. It's a natural response to a difficult or challenging situation. And 2.) When you do feel the fear. DO

it anyway. And that's my message to the Class of 2004: "*Feel the fear, and do it anyway.*" This is my challenge to you. And this has been the mantra that has helped me in my personal life and in my academic and professional lives: *Feel the fear, and do it anyway.*"

But the challenges in my life didn't end in Ms. Phifer's class. The following year, I applied to Stockton College in South Jersey and I did this for two reasons: 1.) I wanted to get away from my family and 2.) I wanted to become a high school English teacher. You see I wanted to emulate the wonderful teachers I had at Weequahic. My goal at Stockton was to get my certification to teach English, and then return to Newark to teach at Weequahic. So in the summer of 1985, I became the first person in my family to attend college.

And I loved my college years at Stockton. But again I was faced with many challenges and fears. What if I failed my classes? What if I wasn't good enough to compete academically with the other students? What if I got homesick and missed my family and friends in Newark? Could I really survive 4 years of college in the Pine Barrens of South Jersey? These were some of the questions that plagued me the most.

You see, Stockton College was the exact opposite of the environment I was familiar with. Stockton was a predominately white institution, and in 1985, four thousand students attended Stockton. And of the four thousand students, only five hundred of the students were African-American, and most of us were from Newark, East Orange, Plainfield and Camden. And here I was a city girl surrounded by 16 hundred acres of forest. I was not happy.

But I did my best not to allow my unhappiness and my fears of the unfamiliar to paralyze me and cause me to fail. And this wasn't an easy thing to do because I really didn't have the support of my family. As I mentioned earlier, I was the first in my family to attend college so my family couldn't really identify with the challenges and fears that I faced. However, I did have another family, and that family was the faculty and staff at Weequahic High School.

During my first two years at Stockton, I made endless collect calls to Ms. Foster, Ms. Williams, Ms. White, and Ms. Phifer. And since they had attended college they would often give me advice to help me navigate my way through the Halls of Academia. I never really had an opportunity to thank them, so today I'd like to say "*Thank you*" for putting up with me and all those late night phone calls. "*Thank you*" for helping me face my fears and move beyond them.



But it wasn't just the late night phone calls that helped, the faculty and staff at Weequahic also helped me in 1988 when I wanted to study in Liberia, West Africa. At the time, Stockton only had an overseas program in England, but I didn't want to go to England. I wanted to go to Africa. And I wanted to do this because at Stockton I was learning a lot about my African culture and heritage and I wanted to experience that cultural heritage first-hand. But Stockton didn't have an overseas program to Africa, so I had to work hard and write letters to colleges and universities in Africa asking them about their curricula.

And I finally found an overseas program that I liked and that accepted me - the *Semester in Liberia Program*. But I was unable to go to Liberia in the Spring of 1988 because I did not have the financial resources to cover my tuition and personal expenses.

Of course I was disappointed and I wanted to give up. I was so embarrassed because I had told my family and friends that I was going to spend six months in Liberia. And now, because of finances, I couldn't go. Some of my friends tried to encourage me to go to England since it would be cheaper and since Stockton already had a program in place. But I was determined to go to Liberia. So I came home for Christmas that year feeling disappointed and defeated. And I had a very long talk with Ms. Williams.

Then in the Spring of 1989 I was finally able to go to Liberia. The loans and financial aid I received covered my tuition. And Ms. Williams took up a collection from the teachers and staff at Weequahic and raised the money to cover my personal expenses while I was in Liberia. (Again, thank you Weequahic). I can not tell you how wonderful it was to spend six months in Liberia. While I was there I took classes in African and World Literature and I also volunteered my time and taught 5th grade English at a nearby school.

And don't think I wasn't worried about traveling to Africa. Aside from worrying about my health and culture shock, I worried most about the 19 hour plane ride to Liberia. Many of you may not remember this but in December 1988, PAN AM Flight 103 exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland. Months later, it was deemed a terrorist attack. However, several students on that plane were returning home to the U.S. from their overseas program. The news shook me to the core. What if my flight was sabotaged next? What if my trip overseas was canceled? What would I do then? Again, fear took hold of me. However, I did not allow my anxiety to interfere with my dream of

## ***"Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway"***



**Marjorie Barnes in 1985**

traveling to Liberia. I boarded the plane to Liberia in January 1989 and I spent six of the best months of my life in Africa.

I made a lot of friends while I was in Liberia. And in spite of their civil war that began 5 months after I left, I remained in touch with my roommates. In fact, during the Summer of 2000, I returned to Liberia to visit my college roommate, and to see how the country had changed now that their 8 year civil war had ended.

And to this day, I have never regretted getting on that plane in 1989 and going to Liberia because my time there was time well spent. And I was able to accomplish my dream because I stayed focused on my goal and moved beyond my fears.

Over the past 14 years since I graduated from Stockton College I have continued to *"Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway."* This mantra got me through some of the most difficult situations in college. This mantra took me to West Africa. This mantra took me to graduate school at Temple University where I was the only Black student at the University studying linguistics. You see my dream was to get my master's in linguistics and then return to Liberia to do my doctoral research on Liberian English.

Yes. *"Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway."* This mantra landed me my first full-time teaching job at Union County College where I was ONLY 24 years old and the YOUNGEST member on the faculty.

So I am telling ALL these stories TO YOU, the graduating class of 2004 because when you leave Weequahic High School today and you go into corporate America or the world of Academia, you will be faced with a lot of challenges. There will be times when you are filled with doubt, and you will look for alternative ways to silence the voices that tell you that you're not good enough or you're not smart enough. And sometimes the voices will come from inside of you, and sometimes the voices will come from people that you know and love. Well I'm here to tell you that THE BEST way to silence those voices is to *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*. Say it with me. *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*.

Remember those VOICES are ONLY the voices of fear and you can move beyond that fear. You HAVE TO move beyond that fear. You have to *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*. Because on the other side of that fear are blessings and rewards that you can not even imagine. Everything that you ever hoped for. All of your dreams are on the other side of that fear.

\* So when you go into corporate America, and you get your 1st real job, but you're afraid to ask your boss for a promotion or a raise, you need to do what? *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*.

\* And when you land that perfect job, but you get laid off due to cutbacks and you feel like giving up, you need to do what? *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*.

\* When your college professor gives you a failing grade on your first paper OR you fail your first test and you're too afraid to pick up a pen and write again OR you're too afraid to open that book and study for the next test, you need to do what? *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*.

\* When you're sitting alone in your dorm and you are afraid of your new surroundings and you're too afraid to go outside of your comfort zone and meet people who are different from you, you need to do what? *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*.

That's right: *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*. That's my challenge to you. And my HOPE for the graduating class of 2004 is that you will go on to greater things in life, breaking down barriers and overcoming whatever obstacles you may encounter in your life. I hope you will learn to NOT let your fear paralyze you. I hope you will learn that it's okay to *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*. I hope you will learn that as long as you *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*, NOTHING can stand in the way of your dreams and aspirations.

# WHS Jan. 1953 Grad Billy "Doc" Pollak, A Pitching Machine Since 1947

By Sarah Rothschild & Tom Luicci,  
Star-Ledger Staff

He is known as "The Old Man" or "The Grandfather," and when he takes the mound, the jokes flow - but only from those who haven't faced him. They figure, at 69, he might be older than the dirt in the infield. Maybe he pitched at Stonehenge.

*And then they try to hit him.*

William "Doc" Pollak has been fooling batters for more than 50 years with his wily array of off-speed pitches. In late August, in a 13-0 victory against the Basking Ridge Diamond-backs in the U.S. Over 30 League at Livingston High School, he won his 1,000th pitching victory of his organized baseball career.

"He's a freak of nature," said Jim White, 37, of the Morris Braves, who has played against Pollak for 20 years. "There's no way a 69-year-old man should be able to do what he does." The milestone is, of course, unofficial. But Pollak, whose tenure on the pitching mound began at *Weequahic High School* in Newark more than a half-century ago, recently calculated he had collected close to 1,000 victories - from his first in high school, in 1947, to Upsala College (*where he won his first 19 starts*), the Air Force, the Essex County League and his more recent teams.

A medical miracle, Pollak usually pitches twice a week during the season. He currently plays in two hardball leagues; he also pitches for the Dodgers team in the Over 30 League. "What keeps me going? I just love going out and competing," Pollak said. "The other part is insanity. I don't identify with people in my age group." His longevity and fervor, variety of pitches and mound presence continue to stupefy teammates and opponents - especially in a league in which many of the batters are former high school and college players.

Pollak can't blow his pitches past batters anymore. His fastball couldn't get a speeding ticket on the interstate. But he



outsmarts hitters by mixing the low-60s mph pitch with a curve ball, slider and changeup. "I'm half his age and I can't do half the things he does," said Carmine Capriglione, the Dodgers second baseman. "When you watch this guy pitch, you're like, 'This guy is going to get killed,' and then nobody hits him."

Even Tom Seaver has heard about Pollak. Seaver, the Mets' Hall of Fame pitcher, said the milestone is impressive "no matter where you reach it." To put Pollak's achievement in perspective, Cy Young, the winningest pitcher in major league history, had 511 victories. Pollak, who estimates his losses at 250, has never missed a season, and his rubber arm hasn't shown signs of letting him down. He says his right arm never aches, never tires. The secret? "I don't sleep on my right side," he says, joking.

Mostly, Pollak attributes his longevity to his devotion to running. He has run in nine marathons, including Boston and New York (his best time was 4 hours, 7 minutes in the Yonkers Marathon), and played basketball and ice hockey in winters until recently, when back problems stopped him.

In between starts, the Livingston resident is a practicing dentist in Milburn. Pollak makes pitching sound simple: He said he avoids throwing the ball over the middle of the plate and uses the outside corner. "He's very deceiving because of his age," said Lenny Capellan, 38, who struck out in his first at-bat against Pollak when Pollak won No. 999. "You think you're going to hit him, but he

finds the corners. His fastball still has pop. He's very artful." The key to hitting him? "You want to sit back," said Frank Gatto, the Braves right fielder. "If you're too overanxious, you won't hit him."

Most who have played with the (Newark) and East Orange native have their "Doc" story. Joe Kropa, now a baseball coach at Roselle Catholic High School, remembers being a brash 19-year-old in his second game in the Essex County League when he faced Pollak. "We'll get this guy out in two innings," Kropa recalls saying, "and by the ninth inning he's pitching a three-hitter. It kind of humbled me. I learned." Craig Haselman, third baseman for the Dodgers, fell victim to Pollak's off-speed pitches for many years as a member of the Metuchen Yankees. "I got a double off him," Haselman recalled, "and the next time up he threw near my chin. He'd back you up."

Decades ago, Pollak also caught the eyes of major league teams. Several clubs offered him tryouts, he said, but he accepted only one - from his beloved Yankees. He spent a week working out with the team in 1957 and pitched batting practice one day. "I went out there and asked Frank Crosetti what to do, and he said, 'Just throw hard.' So I did," Pollak said. "I went through the whole lineup - Mantle, Bauer, Berra, Moose Skowron. They didn't get a hit off me. The next day in the *New York Times*, two-thirds of Arthur Daley's story was about me throwing a no-hitter against the Yankees. The rest was about Richardson" - Yankees second baseman Bobby Richardson.

The low player salaries of that era, coupled with the maximum \$4,000 signing bonus the Yankees would pay, weren't enough to lure Pollak away from dental school. Today Pollak said he has no plans to retire soon - unless his back, which sometimes pains him, causes too much discomfort. "As long as I can go out there and be respectable, I'll keep doing it," he said. "I love the game. I love competing. I love pitching. Why stop?"

His wife, Joanne, still attends many of his games. She insists he has stayed in good shape all these years so he can play baseball. "When the day comes when he can't play, I don't know if he'll have that drive," she said. Haselman doesn't think that day will ever come. "I hate to say it," he said, "but I think Doc will die on the mound. That would be the way for him to go."



**WHS 1952 Grad**  
**Naomi**  
**Sisselman Wilzig**  
**The Art of Passion**

*A millionaire grandmother prepares to show the world her unusual collection - erotic art and knickknacks gathered from around the world.*

By James Thorne, St. Petersburg, FL Times

*The sexual revolution didn't just pass Naomi Wilzig by, it missed her by a million miles.* As the daughter of Orthodox Jewish parents, marrying outside the faith was forbidden. When she finally found a nice Jewish man, she obligingly dropped out of teachers college to please him. Even after the wedding, she would not consummate the marriage without her parents' blessing.

*"I wasn't exposed to the outside world,"* the 69-year-old millionaire grandmother says. *"A kosher hotel in Miami Beach and a kosher hotel in the Catskills: That was my world."* That's why it's so hard to explain the statue of the grinning shoeshine boy with a 3-foot protuberance sitting in Wilzig's living room. As Miss Naomi, owner of the country's biggest private collection of erotic art, Wilzig is a connoisseur of flipped up petticoats, naughty knickknacks and various renderings of the male machinery. Wooden African fertility figurines, alternately smooth and slivery, jam cabinets in her 3,500-square-foot townhouse. Leda embraces her swan in dozens of different statues and paintings. Adam coddles Eve, satyrs satisfy nymphs, lords squire ladies and prostitutes pleasure for pay.

Wilzig herself can't explain how it all happened, how her winter getaway in Florida, the place to which she retreated from New Jersey's January gloom, became crammed with genitalia in all their artistic variety. *"It went from interest to hobby to compulsion,"* she says beside a shelf of wooden devil figures with male organs dangling down their thighs. *"Why did it take over my life? I almost can't tell you. It just happened."*

Not that she's blushing under her deep Florida tan, glasses and curly dark hair. Under the grandmotherly shell lurks an I've seen it all and you can't startle me anymore core.



She guides visitors through sitting rooms and bedrooms cluttered like Victorian parlors but with a naughtiness that would have left the old British queen gasping for her fainting couch. A hallway cabinet holds an arrangement of erotic corkscrews. *"This one is special because it has an erection. Finding that was a coup,"* Wilzig says. Or another display case: *"This cabinet is all fetish stuff,"* she says. Here you'll find a pierced Barbie and a Barbie who has something that belongs anatomically to Ken. Nearby on the wall is a plaster creation scene, a spoof of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling. *"God is a female and it's Eve who's created instead of Adam,"* Wilzig says.

In her cavernous living room, propped atop a glass-topped coffee table, is one of her most treasured possessions. It's white. It's smooth. It's fiberglass. It's cinematically familiar. It's a sculpture from the 1971 Stanley Kubrick classic, *A Clockwork Orange*. Wilzig bought it at auction in New York for \$3,000. Its value has risen to \$15,000. A rocking mechanism is hidden in its bottom, and Wilzig demonstrates how it works. Lowering it onto the carpet, she slaps the tip. Again. And again. It starts rocking up and down, just as it did for Alex, the protagonist in *A Clockwork Orange* played by actor Malcolm McDowell. *"It works better on a hard surface,"* she concludes.

When she was 18 years old, Naomi Sisselman - daughter of cemetery owner Jerome Sisselman and his strictly Orthodox Jewish wife, Lorraine - did the unthinkable. She eloped with a nearly penniless European refugee nine years her senior. Siegbert "Siggi" Wilzig was German, Jewish and an Auschwitz survivor. Naomi's parents had scorned the match. Naomi and Siggi found the only judge working on New Year's Eve 1953. They were joined in a civil ceremony in the judge's office - inside the Passaic County, New Jersey jail.

Naomi slipped home, the marriage still unconsummated, and begged her parents to consent. Nothing doing. Jerome and Lorraine were aghast. It took 2 1/2 months for her parents to give their formal blessing, and the couple had a Jewish wedding at the Little Hungary catering hall on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. The bride's and groom's families barely mingled. Wilzig said her family turned their noses up at the foreigners with the mangled English. "It wasn't very pleasant," she says.

But her husband was a shooting star in the business world. Within a few years his investment in Wilshire Oil Co. of Texas made him rich. He became president of the Trust Company of New Jersey and massively expanded it into the third largest commercial bank in the United States. Through it all Naomi Wilzig raised three children, dedicated herself to charity and Jewish causes and played the dutiful wife. Her husband was an effusive person who kept the limelight burning on himself, she says. She'd organize a grand dinner party, but Siggi got the applause. Siggi hobnobbed with Holocaust author Elie Wiesel and served American presidents on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

But his wife would make her own mark. After buying a winter home in Pasco, she began The Collection. That was 12 years ago. Already a confirmed antiques nut, Wilzig was asked by her eldest son to find a couple of risque pieces for his expensively furnished bachelor pad in New Jersey. She bought a brass statue suggesting that three's company and a panel of four explicit Japanese prints, among other pieces.

An obsession was born. Art deco jewelry, silver English card cases and Royal Worcester porcelain just didn't cut it anymore. It was all so tame. *"This was a form of my own liberation,"* Wilzig says. *"I would do what I liked regardless of what my husband said."* Siggi was so absorbed in his work he had little inkling of his wife's collection until it had ballooned to about 1,000 pieces. All were stashed in Land O'Lakes. Siggi's Florida trips rarely extended beyond hobnobbing with cronies at Miami's Fontainebleau hotel.

- Continued On Next Page -

## Naomi SisselmanWilzig

One day, with a mind to publishing a photo book of her collection, she brought a stack of photos to her husband in their three-story Georgian house in Clifton, N.J. Poker-faced, Siggie flipped through the photos, dropped them on the table and announced it was a stupid idea. The publisher will rip you off, his wife remembers him saying. Asian factories would knock off the pieces without compensation.

Wilzig tried the indirect approach. She carried from Florida one of her most tasteful pieces, a sinuously silver Art Deco statue of a nude female dancer. She arranged it on a pedestal in the family dining room. *"When I came home that night the statue was on the floor and flowers were back on the pedestal,"* she says. *"I decided not to inflict it on him anymore since he obviously didn't care for it."*

Siggie died last year at the age of 76. He didn't live to see the bronze casting of a trio active on a pool table, the pair of leather men in love and the Indian totem pole with exaggerated anatomy. To spare her husband embarrassment, the former Naomi Sisselman used to hide behind her maiden name whenever interviewed about erotica. She's now Wilzig again. She figures you can't shame the dead. The dealers who clamor to satisfy Wilzig's artistic whims know her as one of the top three or four private collectors in the world. She's a rare woman in an erotic art world that revolves around satisfying male desire.

From her gallery in San Francisco, risqué art broker Terry Arellano views Wilzig's collection as the cream of a frequently strange crop. Greek myth and the Bible provide much of the inspiration for Wilzig's collection. A good percentage would be seen as X-rated owing to its attention to clinical detail. But the collection contains relatively few novelty pieces of the lift-up-the-priest's-cassock-and-boing! variety. (Don't ask about the anatomical protruding toilet paper holder in one of her bathrooms.) *"I think it's exquisite. I've seen a lot of the collections around the world, and they can get pretty junky,"* Arellano says.

When Wilzig travels around the world she doesn't take normal vacations. She goes on excursions in pursuit of elusive erotica. As befitting a shame-filled subculture, sellers tend to be secretive. At flea markets in European capitals such as Paris and Amsterdam, Wilzig, comfortable only in English, had a hard time smoking out the naughty stuff. She

considered pantomiming interest with descriptive hand gestures. Then her friend hit on a solution. He wrote out a cardboard sign in French saying, *"I am buying erotic art."* Wilzig hung it by a string around her neck. The glum Gustavs and Guys behind the Parisian stalls lit up. *"They came flying out of their booths and beckoned me in,"* she says.

A couple of years ago, Wilzig quit playing tennis so that her aging knees couldn't compromise her search for erotica. *"It was more important for me to be mobile to get through the antique malls,"* she says. It's a question you've wanted to ask. Does all this hanky-panky have the intended effect on Wilzig? She says no. But on many of her visitors, it does. Couples touring her collection make excuses to leave early. But don't call her collection pornography. *"Erotic art shows talent, artistry, beauty, purposeful construction,"* Wilzig says. *"Pornography delivers one message: 'Let's have sex.'"*

An example of purposeful construction adorns the wall beside her bed. It's a representation in pewter of acrobats copulating in a fleshy pyramid. *"Can you see how perfectly it's done?"* she says, unscrewing the lamp shade beside her bed, sending a stream of light onto the pewter. The sculptor neglected no detail. *"Can you see?"*

She wants a lot more people to see. She's months away from opening a 12,000 - square-foot World Erotic Art Museum in a vintage limestone building on South Beach's Washington Avenue in Miami Beach. The city's zoning board consented in May. The board agreed the collection wasn't obscene, but kids under 18 will need parental escort.

It's symbolic of Wilzig's evolution from traditional housewife to artistic free thinker that she'll display these items a couple of miles from the old Fontainebleau, the haunt of her late husband. Money left by Siggie is bankrolling the museum. What began as her liberation is now the world's to share.

Her children have certainly grown more tolerant. Belgian daughter-in-law Karin gave her a foot-long phallus encrusted with Swarovski crystals. It towers on the coffee table beside its *Clockwork Orange* cousin. *"It's hidden away here. Unless I invite people back, the world doesn't see it,"* Wilzig says with a sweep of her hand over the gallery her living room has become. *"I want it all out."*



# Peter Malmgren

## 33 years in Chimayo, New Mexico



I came to the Spanish village of Chimayo, tucked into the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of Northern New Mexico in the winter of 1971 in an old but elegant school bus. The year before I was sitting in yet another graduate seminar in

Anthropology at the New School in New York, plotting my escape. I sketched the interior of a remodeled bus a la Ken Kesey, then later put the plan into action. I had had several uneventful years in school in London and New York trying to avoid the war and figuring out a place for myself in academia. It was not to be. My mind was set on a new life, I knew not where. My odyssey took me from rural New Jersey through Canada, then on to the west coast, and finally into New Mexico.

That year was one of discovery. Friends and I played music on the streets of Montreal, in a biker bar in Sioux St. Marie, Michigan and made our way across Canada and the western states. Life on the road was an eye opener. We discovered a whole sub-culture of gypsies and readily joined their ranks. We lived for a spell at Mayday, a political commune in Los Angeles, made up of left-wing lawyers from the eastern states who welcomed us in.

The balmy Xmas weather of L.A. lulled us into a false sense of security which was quickly smashed when we hit a blizzard in Arizona. We had to use the Coleman heater to thaw out the oil pan each morning to get going. Several hitch hikers sought refuge on our floor. We may have saved a few lives on that trip. The bus was like a giant refrigerator and the trusty potbelly stove could barely keep up. When I finally limped into this place called Chimayo I was glad to meet an old friend, Esta Diamond, and recuperate in her wonderful old adobe home.

In the years that followed I developed skills as a carpenter and plasterer, did a year's stint in the oil fields as a roughneck, and saved enough to buy a hunk of semi-arid land. I met Lucy during those early years. She had left her home in Cambridge to come and nurse her dying mother who lived in a 17<sup>th</sup> century hacienda, Los Luceros. We met through Esta, our mutual friend and have been together through all these years.

There weren't many white folks in Chimayo in 1972, and those early settlers clung together for friendship and security. We formed a woodworking cooperative, where I gained the skills I use to this day in my cabinet business. We were all back-to-the-land people, busy with gardens, house building, and generally reveling in the rural lifestyle. The old school bus managed to serve a new and wonderful function during these years. It provided shelter for young families who were building their homes and didn't want to rent while they were doing it. I can still remember seeing **diapers** hanging from the windows, and chickens scurrying in and out.

One of the reasons that I left Anthropology was that I could never get past the feeling of intrusiveness that I felt "*studying*" a people. It took me over twenty years to feel comfortable enough in Chimayo to begin poking my nose into its history. The person who got me started and broke down the barriers is my beloved friend, Amada Trujillo. I spent many cozy afternoons at her kitchen table, nibbling on fresh tortillas and hearing her stories. She's 95 now and reduced to living in an old age home but the light of her spirit is still burning. Amada opened up a whole world to me, a world of hard work, simple pleasures, strong family ties, and deep spiritual values. Amada, like so many of her contemporaries, misses the simpler times when doors were left open and everyone had time for each other.

Lucy and I began our first oral history project in Trampas, New Mexico, fifteen miles up the mountain. Her uncle, John Collier Jr. had photographed village life there in 1941 as part of the Farm Security Administration under Roosevelt. We wanted to take John's work back to the village and use the images to stimulate memories. We worked for a year and produced a short video that was included in a major retrospective of the FSA photographers at the Fine Arts Museum in Santa Fe. We packed St. Francis auditorium with mountain people of all generations who had come to celebrate their history. It was a memorable day all round. We had found our calling and made some good friends in the bargain.

We later turned our attention to Chimayo. I started collecting archival images from museum collections, then augmented them by going door to door and finding pictures that had never been seen. It grew into a wonderful collection and formed the backbone of the newly created Chimayo History Museum that sprung up soon after. The first public viewing of the pictures was very personal. This was Chimayo history at its finest and the families came out to study the images and marvel at this glimpse back in time.



Peter & Phil Yourish In Chaymao

The Hispanics of Northern New Mexico have come to realize that they are a racial stew, Spanish, Indio, Mexican, Moor and Jew. The Jewish connection is, of course, of particular interest to me. The reasoning goes like this: the Jews left Spain in 1492, and were subsequently driven out of Mexico by a later Inquisition, forming some of the earliest groups to venture into the unknown reaches of the North. They came with Onate in 1598 and settled in villages like mine all over New Mexico.

Historians have discovered unmistakable remnants of Jewish life: Jewish stars half-hidden on gravestones, accounts of candles on Friday night, twisted bread, an aversion to pork, and others that have survived seventeen generations in secret. I interviewed a woman whose grandmother lived in Chimayo, close to the world famous shrine of Santuario, the church of miracles. When she died they cleared out the basement and found a menorah!

In more recent years my attention has turned to Los Alamos, the nuclear city that is located nearby. Los Alamos is the economic engine that keeps our valley alive. It has been both a lifesaver and a life taker. I set out to interview the workers of Los Alamos, the ones who helped build the place in the early years and find out just how they felt about their long years of dedicated work. I took three years, went to towns and villages all over the Espanola Valley to take the pulse of the workforce.

Of the 150 people I sat down and spoke with at length, about half said that Los Alamos was good for them and their families. The other half said the job security and the pay wasn't worth the terrible cost, the cancers, the berylliosis, the chemical illnesses. Again I collected old photos and put them together into a traveled exhibit called "*Los Alamos Revisited*" that traveled around the state. The interviews are poignant, powerful, and cry out for exposure. The stories need to be told to a larger audience and so we look for opportunities to do just that.

So life has become an interesting variety of activities. The woodwork is a rather isolating kind of work. The oral history put me back in touch with people, brings me back to life. When I'm sitting down with an elder in their home and hearing stories of the past, I feel honored to be there. And my respectful attention and interest is a small gift that I bring in return. It's really a win-win situation. But there's always that sense that the clock is ticking and our window of opportunity is shrinking. We do what we can with the time that we have.

I extend a welcome to old friends, like Phil Yourish, who visited recently and inspired my writing. Come and spend some time, but don't be surprised if I put you to work, here in the land of enchantment!

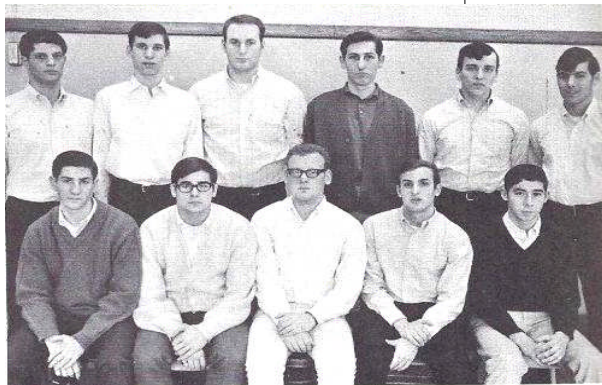
*Note: Peter's aunt was the late Elizabeth Birnbaum, a popular foreign languages' teacher at WHS, and his sister Gail Malmgreen is a 1960 WHS grad.*



# 1968 KINGS CLUB GATHERING

By Bill Jacobowitz, 1968

The weekend of May 18-20 was a special one for ten 1968 Weequahic High School graduates. The Kings Club held its first reunion. The Kings met weekly at the YMHA on Chancellor Ave. throughout our high school years.



We ran dances, played basketball against teams from other centers and were involved in charitable activities. One of my favorite recollections was when we had a father-son softball game and got destroyed by our over-the-hill fathers.

On May 18, we got together as a group for the first time in more than forty years. Members **Bob Feinberg, Steve Fischbein, Jim Wolf, Mike Wigdor, Sandy Greenberg, Stuart Guterman, Harry Rosengart, Steve Schwartz, Jeff Rudin** and myself spent the weekend talking about the good old days in Newark.

On Friday night we had dinner at Irving's Deli in Livingston. After dinner we went to my home to play poker as we had done on many Friday nights in the 1960's. My wife Dalia (Weequahic 1965-68) recognized everyone immediately.

Saturday morning, Alumni Association Director, Phil Yourish, hosted us on a tour of the high school. We were struck by how much many things have not changed, such as the auditorium and hallways. The new basketball arena is amazing. Untermann Field also looks great. After we left the high school, we

drove through the old neighborhood. It appears that the houses have gotten much smaller over the years.

We had lunch in Union at the Huck Finn Diner (formally the Peter Pan when we were kids), and had a visit from fellow '68 graduate Marcia Hellring Tabakin, who amazingly still looks the same after forty plus years.

The guys returned to my house after lunch and Ilana Segall Tenenbaum (my sister-in-law and also a '68 Weequahic grad) dropped by to say hello. The rest of the weekend was spent reminiscing and laughing a lot. Even though some of us have added a few pounds and lost a couple of hairs, the Kings were back. We won't wait another forty years to get together again.

The only downside of the reunion was that **Mel Narol** was not there. Mel, who was an integral part of the Kings, passed away more than ten years ago. Mel was a prominent attorney who was President-Elect of the New Jersey Bar Association when he passed away.



The guys decided to start a scholarship fund in his name to be used for future Weequahic grads who have an interest in law related areas. So far we have raised close to a thousand dollars.

Anyone who would like to make a contribution to the fund can send a check made out to: WHSAA to the Weequahic High School Alumni Association, P.O. Box 494, Newark, N.J. 07101 and please write *Narol Scholarship Fund* on the notation line.

## ALUMNI PROFILES

WHS Jan. 1956  
**Richie Roberts**

### *From Foes To Friends and Now On To Fame*

By William Kleinknecht, Star-Ledger



Richie Roberts is a respected attorney in Essex County, but four decades in courtrooms have hardly made him famous. He knows what it is to schlep to work every day, scrape up alimony or make a mortgage payment.

He could easily have gone through life without so much as 15 minutes of fame. But the Newark native is now living a fantasy. He lunches with Russell Crowe and Denzel Washington. He sits on a movie set with his name printed on the back of his chair, giving tips to Hollywood director Ridley Scott.

Roberts' prosecution three decades ago of the legendary Harlem heroin kingpin Frank Lucas is the subject of a major motion picture being filmed in New York City, and suddenly the world is a lot bigger than the Essex County Courthouse.

"This is so unreal, it's surreal," Roberts said recently as he sat in a hallway at the courthouse. "I'm just a regular guy from Newark. Why five Academy Award winners would want to make a movie about me is beyond my comprehension." Hollywood was attracted to the story because of the drama behind Roberts' pursuit of the larger-than-life organized crime figure, but also because an unlikely friendship sprouted between the two men after Lucas began cooperating with authorities.

In the movie, to be titled "American Gangster," Washington plays Lucas, whose criminal reign in Upper Manhattan, with occasional forays into North Jersey, ran from the 1940s to the 1970s. And Crowe is playing young Richie Roberts, a former Weequahic High School football

player who was both a detective and attorney in the Essex County Prosecutor's Office before going into private practice. True to his reputation, Crowe has put intense preparation into the role, seeking to match Roberts' manner of speaking and his body language. He even requested tape recordings of Roberts.

Roberts said he was summoned in June to a rambling estate in Nyack, N.Y., that was once owned by the late actress Helen Hayes. Crowe is renting the property during his stay in the New York area, and it was there that he began his observation of Roberts. Sitting on a terrace overlooking the Hudson River or wandering around downtown Nyack, the two men chatted over two days, and Roberts said he had the distinct feeling of being studied. "He wanted to know what kind of pants I wore in those days, what kind of belt," Roberts said. "He saw a Star of David I wear around my neck. They made an exact duplicate if it. He got into my Judaism. He wanted to know why I felt the way I did and what it meant to me." Roberts said he found the scrutiny unsettling.

"It's a very, very strange feeling," he said. "I'm not one to talk about myself and the past. It makes you very introspective when you look back at your life and you think of all the things you did wrong and could have done better. It's very disconcerting." Roberts said he has come away with great admiration for Crowe, and not only because of his dedication to his art. Last week, Roberts said, Crowe gave every member of the cast a hooded sweatshirt with the words "American Gangster" on the front and "Weequahic High School" on the sleeve. "He said he put Weequahic High School on it because he knew it would mean something to me," Roberts said. "He's a good guy. He really is."

In an interview at the Essex County Courthouse, Lucas, now in his 70s and in a wheelchair, said Washington has also been doing his homework. He said the two men have met several times, and the actor quickly picked up Lucas' Southern accent.

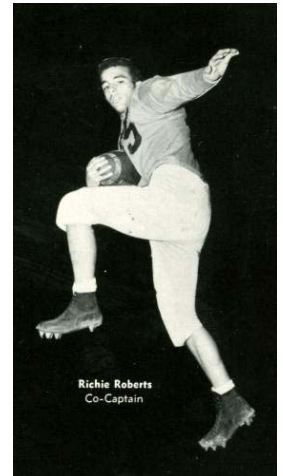
"Mr. Washington is a great man," Lucas said. "He's got it down. He is Frank Lucas."

Lucas was a North Carolina native who came to New York penniless in 1946 and ended up as the right-hand man to Ellsworth "Bumpy" Johnson, the Harlem numbers kingpin who was the inspiration for the black godfather character in the "Shaft" movies of the 1970s. After Johnson's death in 1968, Lucas became the most powerful heroin dealer in Harlem. He bypassed the Mafia and linked directly with suppliers in Southeast Asia, sometimes smuggling heroin into the U.S. in the coffins of soldiers killed in Vietnam.

Roberts, who was an assistant county prosecutor and head of the Bureau of Narcotics in the mid-1970s, obtained an indictment of Lucas for his role in a Newark heroin ring headed by his brother, Vernon Lucas. As the trial got under way in Superior Court in Newark, Roberts learned that Frank Lucas had put a contract on his life.

But he said he believes the trial was a turning point for Lucas. After a woman testified about finding her son dead of a heroin overdose, Lucas summoned Roberts to his cell. There, he was in tears and told Roberts that he had never looked at his crimes in that way.

The trial ended with Lucas' conviction, and he became an informant helping authorities in Essex County and New York City arrest other drug dealers and crooked police officers. "He flipped to our side," Roberts said. "He made a lot of cases for us here and in New York. Our



*judges, as a result of his cooperation, cut his sentence."* Despite facing nearly 70 years in prison, Lucas was released in 1981 after serving just six years.

The film, which is scheduled for release late this year, has been a long time in the making. In 2000, Universal and Imagine, the Hollywood production company, purchased the rights to *"The Return of Superfly,"* a New York magazine piece about Lucas.

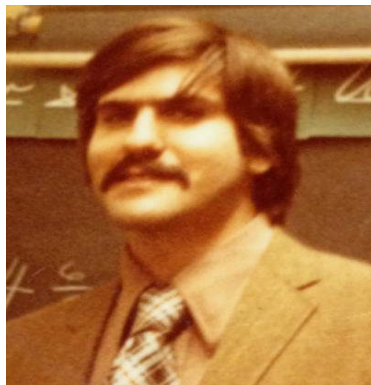
Steven Zaillian, who wrote the screenplays for *"Schindler's List"* and *"Gangs of New York,"* was hired to do the script, all but ensuring the film would be made. But the project hit some snags along the way. In 2004, after \$100 million had been spent and the movie was about to begin filming, Universal Studios pulled the plug, blaming director Antoine Fuqua for cost overruns. At the time, Washington was already cast as Lucas and Roberts was to be played by Benicio Del Toro. Then Del Toro was out, and Fuqua was replaced by Scott, whose credits include *"Black Hawk Down"* and the cult classic *"Blade Runner."*

Like Roberts, Lucas was paid an undisclosed sum for his life story, including details of his criminal organization, known as the *"Country Boys."* He will not discuss whether he personally killed anyone, although he boasted of at least one murder in the New York magazine article, and a defense attorney that he had a quarrel with in a Rikers Island visiting room in the 1970s was shot on a Manhattan street the same week.

Roberts said people have asked him how he could be friends with someone who almost certainly has blood on his hands. His answer, he said, is that Lucas is a changed man. *"What do we do, hate these people forever?"* Roberts said. *"Maybe some people do. I don't."*



**Bob Fishbein,**  
a 1964 WHS grad and  
Newark educator, writes  
about a remarkable woman  
who became his supervisor,  
mentor and good friend.



Below is the story of  
**Dorothy Gould**  
a 70-year Newark educator  
who turned 90-years old  
this year



In rare instances do you come across an individual who is so unique like Ms. Dorothy "Dot" Gould. Having spent 43 years as an educator in the Newark school system, Dot has continued to educate out of her home in Newark, for the past 27 years. She is indeed a Newark legend.

You see Ms. Gould is the best kept secret in Newark to most people and to a select number of lucky ones she remains a mentor, advisor, dedicated educator, surrogate mother, and a respected member of her community.

She lives by the statement "*you must be accountable, kids come as is, and don't ever mess with my kids.*" She has never stopped giving and is the poster model for every person that says, "*You must give back to your community.*" This giving brings so much joy to her life. It probably is the best medicine she could ever get on a daily basis.

Still a sought after as a speaker and consultant in the community, her phone rings constantly with questions, concerns, and a desire to get her to relate her fascinating memories of years gone by. Although her vision has diminished greatly, her brain gets more exercise than her body now as she repeats many of her experiences as if they just happened yesterday. Even at age 90, she is wonderful example of keeping the mind functioning at a consistently high level.

If awesome was a popular word in her day as it is today, she would epitomize that word. She indeed is a one of a kind and her mold will never be duplicated. She has positively affected tens of thousands of lives in the Newark community and it appears there is no end to this special gift that the good lord has brought us.

Dorothy is all about Newark. She attended Charlton Street School from kindergarten to grade eight and South Side High School through grade twelve. She graduated from Upsala College in East Orange with an undergraduate degree in English in 1943 and received her teaching certification the next year. She then became the first black teacher to teach at Cleveland Jr. High School at a salary of \$144 dollars a month

In the immediate years to follow, she received her Master's Degree in Mathematics from Montclair State College and a certification in Special Education in 1950. For the next six years, she taught at Montgomery Street School.

In 1956, she became "Title One Coordinator" at Wickloff Street School and two years later was appointed Principal at Alyea Street School for severely disturbed children. To complete the circle, Dot returned to Montgomery Street School as Principal in 1960, a position she held for 20 years.

It is here in this job that her skill level exploded. She amazed everyone, who knew the reputation of Montgomery as a very difficult school, by turning it into a

respectable educational setting within a short period of time. Students loved and appreciated her. Staff enjoyed working with her, knowing that her commitment was genuine in providing the best teachers and learning environment for the betterment of students with special needs.

In 1980 she became the Executive Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services for the Newark School System and her staff and schools learned why this woman was so held in such high esteem.

Today, if Dot was a candidate in line for Superintendent of Schools, she would have a problem with the P word. Politics had no place in Dorothy's vocabulary or in her makeup. There was no compromise and no questions if you were going to mess with kids' lives.

Before a packed house at the Robert Treat Hotel in 1986, Dot retired. Attendees included teachers, parents, friends, dignitaries from Newark and Trenton, and most important her family and extended family. The sign on the podium read 43 years of dedicated service and "*Kids come as is.*"

In addition to all of her local work, Dot has traveled internationally during her summers and loves to spend time helping others. But she has never shut down her engines.

Dot, who continues to live in Newark's Weequahic section on Keer Avenue, is the lone survivor of six siblings and her dear parents. Today she is medically supervised by Michalene Bowman, who Dot has known since infancy and who was a former Brownie and Girl Scout under Dot's leadership at the Friendly Neighborhood.

She has provided an incredible house setting for Dot and encourages her to function to her maximum abilities. Michalene is in awe of this unique opportunity to have a significant role at this time in Dot's life.

So, what about the 27 years after her retirement? She became a founding member and Treasurer emeritus of Saint Philips Academy in Newark, a private school, starting from one classroom in the Cathedral House to a new building on Central Avenue. The school has received national recognition.

(Continued on page 10)

She has served on the Board of Friendly Fuld Neighborhood House for over 50 years, is a lifetime member of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and was President of the North Jersey Alumnus chapter for 8 years. Moreover, she received a Newark Legends Tribute from NJPAC.

Her home has an open door policy just like her school offices were for visitors, representatives of neighborhood organizations, friends, and parents of children in the school. With her problem solving expertise, you would almost believe she could still run circles around many of our current school administrators.

For people like me who have been privileged to know her, work with her, and frequently seek advice from her, I continue to see her flourishing, thriving on the memories of people and events that have touched her life over the past 90 years. I make it a point to visit her on yearly trips to New Jersey and call her on the phone on a regular basis.

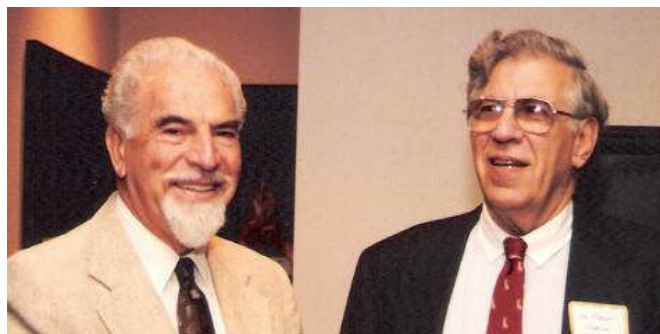
Sometimes I try to trick her and remind her of what she said to me when she interviewed me 43 years ago at Alyea Street School for a position at Montgomery. She remembers every word of what she said to me and it assures me that she hasn't lost a beat.

Michalene Bowman and I are exploring writing a book about her experiences and her lifetime of giving. If any of our alumni and friends have any stories and lasting memories about Dot, you may contact me, Bob Fishbein, by email at [da-fish801@aol.com](mailto:da-fish801@aol.com).

## Dr. Robert Gorlin, WHS 1940

### *World renowned oral pathologist*

By William Weiss, M.D., WHS 1939,  
Bob's very close friend for 70 years.



**Bill Weiss and Bob Gorlin**

How many of the survivors of the class of 1940 remember Bob Gorlin, the friendly, fun loving genius, who had mastered college level chemistry while still in grammar school?

Probably the most outstanding Weequahic graduate ever, in the field of sciences, Bob led a colorful, diversified life, eventually achieving worldwide acclaim in the field of genetics. He received multiple international degrees and honors and a legacy as a universal authority in the field of inaxillofacial genetic aberrations.

After graduation from Weequahic in 1940, Bob received his B.S. from Columbia and enlisted in the army in 1943 where his astronomical I.Q. was recognized and he was sent to study civil engineering at Texas A&M. Shortly before completion of those studies, anticipating a breakup of the engineering program, the army transferred him to St. Louis University Dental School where he received his dental degree. This improbable turn of fate, ended up in providing the field of dentistry with discoveries of almost countless genetic syndromes, voluminous scientific publications and revered teaching.

Following graduation from dental school, Bob trained in oral pathology at Columbia University. Then, as an adventurous interlude, he joined in the construction of the early warning system in Thule Greenland, where he set up dental facilities in the subzero region. With the advent of the Korean conflict, he was recalled into the service and chose to serve in the US Navy, mostly at Great Lakes Naval Station, where, in addition to dental duties, he was assigned to judicial duties, acting first as a defense attorney, then later as a prosecuting attorney in court martial cases.

Following his discharge from the navy, he did postgraduate studies at the University of Iowa where, in 1956, he earned his Master's degree in oral pathology. That year he joined the faculty of the University of Minnesota where he remained until his death in 2006, at which time he held the ranks of Regent Professor Emeritus of Oral Pathology and Genetics at the

School of Dentistry and Professor Emeritus of Pathology, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Otolaryngology and Dermatology at the School of Medicine



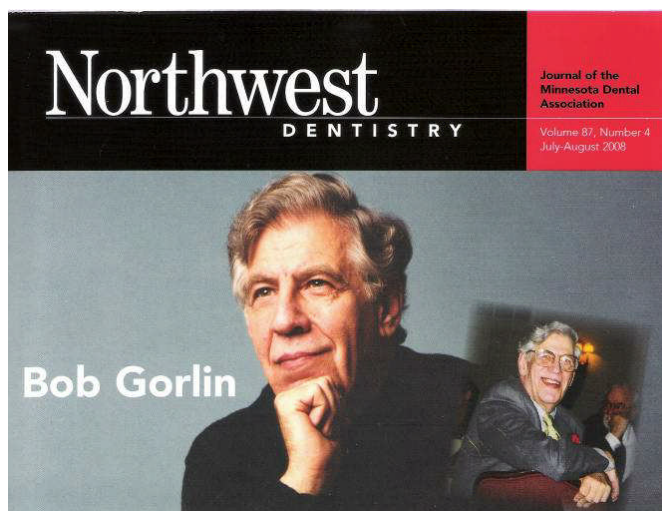
For 50 years, Bob was at the forefront of research in oral and maxillofacial pathology, genetic defects and syndromes, craniofacial disorders and hereditary hearing loss. Among the syndromes and diseases he identified were several that bear his name, including Gorlin's Cyst (calcifying odontogenic cyst) and Gorlin's Syndrome (nevroid basal cell carcinoma syndrome).

The author of more than 600 articles and 10 textbooks on genetics and oral pathology, Dr. Gorlin's "*Syndromes of the Head and Neck*," is considered the authoritative work in the field and is now in its fourth edition.

In a career spanning half a century, Dr. Robert J. Gorlin was credited with identifying more than 100 syndromes and pioneering research in a wide range of disciplines, from oral pathology and craniofacial genetics to otolaryngology and obstetrics. In addition to his achievements in the scientific field he has been acclaimed for his superb teaching ability, endearing patience, and delightful humor which made knowing him a special pleasure.

Equal to his outstanding academic achievements were his personal and familial relationships. After he returned from Greenland, he met Marilyn Alpern. They were married and raised a loving family, daughter Cathy who became an attorney and son Jed who became a physician and in 2004, contributed to Bob's work by identifying and cloning a gene responsible for several syndromes. They published the discovery together.

Bob was the consummate husband, father and grandfather of 5 grandchildren, all of whom shared his warmth, love and diverse teachings, as well as his delightful humor which was his hallmark.





# IRA DECTER'S, WHS 1967, 3-D DEPICTION of NEWARK and WEEQUAHIC



During the 1950's and 60's, I had the privilege of attending Chancellor Avenue School and continuing on to Weequahic High. As with my family before me, we lived and breathed everything Newark, and still do to this day. I see on the WHS alumni weekly newsletter that thousands of others from this area feel the same way.

My wife Joan has heard the same conversations about the old days in Newark every time we are together with friends and family; *"Don't you miss this, don't you wish we could still go here and how I wish I could eat at this place again."* She suggested I create a 3-D picture showing all aspects of the neighborhood. What a great idea!

After writing down my recollections, and sifting through the popular places from earlier years in the weekly WHS newsletter, I came up with what I believe to be a representative depiction of our neighborhood. It was not an easy task. I had to limit it to about 100 items. To accomplish this, I had to eliminate almost 250 items from my original compilation.

This limited edition picture was created by an artist exclusively for me in 3-D. It has two distinctive layers of items, making it a true three-dimensional representation. The finished product is double matted and framed with the traditional colors of Weequahic. It is a memorable keepsake that can be cherished for many years to come, and would also make a great gift.

Let's see how much you can remember from your days in the Weequahic section, the greatest neighborhood in the world to have grown up. How many places can you relate to?

I can be contacted directly to exhibit at reunions. I would donate a portion of the proceeds to either the reunion committees and/or the WHS Alumni Association. You can contact me at [ira@weequahicmemories.com](mailto:ira@weequahicmemories.com) and please visit my website at:

**[www.weequahicmemories.com](http://www.weequahicmemories.com)**