

# ALUMNI HOMECOMING

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2004, 9:30 AM

### TOUR of High School, Buffet BRUNCH, NEIGHBORHOOD PARADE, & FOOTBALL GAME

*Call us and let us know if you are coming, but come anyway even if you forget to call. A special invitation to the class of 1964, which will be celebrating its 40th reunion on Saturday evening, to join us at the high school in the morning*

### *On How To Come Home To WEEQUAHIC*

By Phil Yourish, Class of 1964

**On Saturday, October 9th** get up early and take a journey back to the old neighborhood. Bring your family and show them where you grew up. Drive on the memorable streets of Weequahic - Hawthorne, Clinton Place, Lyons, Grumman, Keer and Elizabeth to name a few. Stop to see the houses you once lived in. Ride by the schools you attended as a kid - Peshine, Bragaw, Hawthorne, Maple, Chancellor, Clinton Place Jr. High, and others. Locate the synagogues and churches where you worshipped. Were you born at the Beth? Stop by and take a look at their magnificent wall of history. And don't forget to take a stroll through Weequahic Park. The grandstand is gone but you can meander on the state-of-the-art running track which winds around the scenic lake. You'll want to get your camera out and snap a few photos.

**Then head towards Chancellor Avenue.** Smell the ancient aromas of some of your favorite eating places - Syd's, Hot Dog Haven, Bunny Hop, and the Indian Pizzeria. It's getting close to 9:30 AM. Park your car in the Chancellor playground and enter Weequahic through the front doors. Take a step back in time and join us for a tour of the famous high school on the hill. It really hasn't changed that much in 72 years. See the WPA murals in the lobby. Walk the hallowed halls (the tile floors are still the same). Sit on the wooden seats in the auditorium. Visit the office and if you listen carefully you might be able to hear the voices of our venerable leaders - Herzberg, Bernstein, Weingast, Epstein, Barrett and others. Browse through old yearbooks. Search for your locker. See if you can find your homeroom. Did you know that Weequahic had an elevator? It's still in use. Can you find the air raid shelter sign on the first floor? Play an imaginary game of hoops or kickball in the gyms. And where is that fabled swimming pool that has become so much a part of Weequahic lore?

**Break bread with us.** Join us for a buffet brunch in the cafeteria. Mingle with classmates and alumni from many different years. And don't forget to buy a memento. We will have hats, sweatshirts, t-shirts, pennants, tote bags, and alumni lapel pins for sale.

**Following the tour,** get ready for a grand parade through the neighborhood. Listen to the beat of the award-winning Weequahic band and to the rhythmic voices of the cheerleaders. Then head for the big rock monument. Sit with other alumni in the bleachers at Untermann Field for an exciting football clash between Weequahic and Hanover Park. Allow the memories of your youth to flow forth. Savor them -

*It DOESN'T GET MUCH BETTER THAN THIS!*  
*SEE YOU ON OCTOBER 9TH*

## Words of Appreciation from Faith Howard

former Alumni Association Co-President  
and a member of the class of 1982

I've been involved with the alumni association since it started in 1997. Concluding four years as the Co-President of the alumni association has been very difficult. Wearing two hats, as Co-President and Event's Chairperson, has been very trying and at times overwhelming. I hope and pray that I have served you well - as I continue to serve on the Board of Trustees, but now with only the hat of Event's Chairperson.

We started from a thought in the head of our other Co-President Harold Braff and transformed into this huge organization of Weequahic graduates. We met in Harold's office over pizza trying to figure out how to get this off the ground. We dug deep and succeeded with great force and determination. Our meetings were small consisting of Harold, Sheldon Bross, Kim Gaddy, Phil Yourish, Yvonne Causbey, and myself. Then little by little we began to grow. Now we have 4 officers and 16 trustees. Our database and membership have grown tremendously and new alumni are still signing up. Our organization has reached new



Faith with 2004 WHS Scholarship recipient  
Tamara Johnson at the Bergen Street Festival

heights and we continue to get bigger and better each day.

I am so proud to have been on the ground floor of developing such an outstanding organization. Many people ask me about how we got so organized and can they start an alumni association for their alma mater. I tell them it began with a thought, determination, reliable people, faith, trust, and good leadership.

In the beginning, we had no money or sponsors. We put up all the funds for events and mailings. There were so many late nights and long hard days. I even had my daughter working during that time selling merchandise at festivals, walking in parades, putting up flyers, doing massive mailings

and going door-to-door in the Weequahic area to spread the word about our alumni association. I have worked hard and played hard building bonds that will last a lifetime - agreeing and disagreeing, loving and laughing with my Board members.

To my second half, Harold, who will never let you say a word in a meeting, I adore you. You have been very supportive not only to me but also my family. And I thank you for that. To Sheldon (Mr. Handsome), you voted me back on the Board even though I wanted to quit! "I luv ya." You are always there supporting us. You are our lifeline.

To my "sista" and friend Yvonne you have been my right hand from beginning to end. God bless and I still need your help on events (smile). Adilah, we've worked on many Boards and you always have been there for me and you've never let me down. Thank You. Phil, what can I say except that there's no one else to fight with (smile). Keep up the good work.

To my daughters Tenisha and Justine who worked with me on many events, thank you for your love and your understanding of my work in the community and for your willingness to share me with my high school and my work in Essex County. Your mother loves you always. Remember, what you put into life, you get back.

## THE ALUMNI JUGGERNAUT

By Phil Yourish, 1964

Do you ever get the wanderlust? Have you ever felt the need to break loose from the confines of the everyday routine and depart from the familiar and comfortable patterns of our conventional lives? Do you ever get that urge to seek new challenges, to discover new dimensions about yourself, to experiment with different paradigms, to explore new places, to encounter different people, to just be more adventurous?

When I ask these questions, I always find it strange that it's me doing the asking. Since I'm mostly involved in intensive, time-consuming work situations, I usually don't have much time for this kind of introspection. However, every once in a while, I have my "moments" where I am able to hear those inner voices and transcend the "ordinary" to do something very "unlikely."

My first "moment" happened in 1975 when I journeyed across America for 6 months with my dog Beaujangles in a Volvo and a pop-up tent camper. A trip that was an odd mixture of Kerouac's "On The Road," Steinbeck's "Travels With Charley," William Least Heat-Moon's "Blue Highways," and Prigig's, "Zen and the Art of



"Motorcycle Maintenance" - all required reading for such an endeavor.

12 years later the lure of the road called to me again as I made another 6-month jaunt across the country with the same dog, but this time in a van camper. In the early 90's, I had the fascinating opportunity to spend five months traveling in Nepal, India and Thailand and soon afterwards took an amazing bus trip through Mexico and Central America to Nicaragua. But since then it's been "back to work" and a more sedate existence.

For the past few years, I have been feeling a longing for the road once again. However, the alumni association has kept me inspired and busy

in my position as Executive Director. But now with my 40th Reunion only a month away, it feels like the time to create another "moment" in my life. I have a new dog "Lady Red," a small Winnebago camper, and I'm eager to get moving.

So this winter, from December to March, I will be RV-ing from coast to coast, *in the warm weather states only*, and I'll be setting up a mobile alumni office in my camper. With the assistance of advanced technology, I will be able to carry out most of my alumni association responsibilities using a notebook computer, wireless Internet access, and a cellular telephone. The next newsletter will be completed as I travel. At home, Board member Vivian Simons will cover the local tasks.

Moreover, this trek is being planned as an "Alumni Tour." I'm hoping to visit many alumni along the way and organize some get-togethers. I will also be carrying newsletters and merchandise to sell. My only limitation in terms of distance may be the upwardly spiraling gasoline prices.

During the past three years, I have met many alumni from all generations electronically, so I'm excited at the possibility of meeting you in person, taking some snapshots, and hearing your Weequahic yarns. If you would like a visit from a traveling man and his dog, please contact me so that arrangements can be made.



# Happy Birthday HAL BRAFF 70 Years Young

By Phil Yourish, 1964



**Hal and Elaine Braff**

*For Hal Braff, his Weequahic years represented the best time of his young life. In his early 60's, he began to wonder about how many other alumni had the same positive feelings about growing up in the Weequahic section of Newark and attending the "high school on the hill" as he did. Soon this idea was transformed into action, in the indomitable Hal Braff style, and the Weequahic High School Alumni Association came into being. On August 24th, Hal celebrated the milestone of his 70th birthday and this tribute is for him.*

When it comes to energy and endurance, Hal Braff has most of us beat. He may now be 70, but if you are around him on a daily basis, you wouldn't know it. His demeanor glows with youthfulness. His mind is sharp, curious, and inquisitive. His nature is full of spirit, passion, and generosity. His age belies the bounce in his step and the dash in his personality. For us younger guys, it's just hard to keep up.

As when he was 7 and 17, Hal still generates that effervescent enthusiasm about life. For him, life is an never-ending adventure. Every moment is an opportunity abound with amazing possibilities and each day has the potential for something new and remarkable. He is a visionary - bursting with wonderful ideas - and he has the gift for bringing them to fruition. He is a leader - a "we can" and "let's get it done" kind of guy - who has the unique ability to inspire others to join him in making magic.

Hal is definitely a "people" person. He genuinely cares about the individuals he meets. He greets family, friends and strangers

with hugs and kisses that runneth over with friendship, compassion and love. If you are fortunate to be in his presence for more than a minute, he will regale you with stories that are humorous, upbeat, sad and meaningful.

He has an abundance of interests ranging from opera to baseball and enjoys talking about all of them. And lurking latent within him since his debut in Weequahic High School's 1952 version of "Junior Miss" is the performer. Whether it's in the courtroom, instructing young lawyers, presiding over a meeting, speaking to a group, Hal has a penchant for the spotlight - and excels at it.

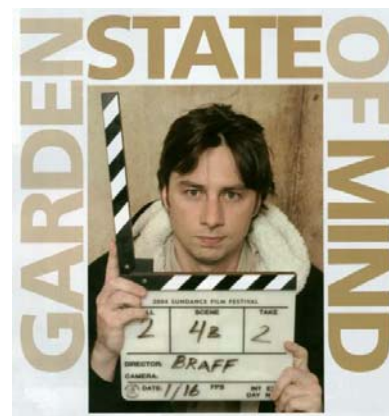
Between family, work and volunteer endeavors, he is in constant motion. He is like a marathon runner who never reaches the finish line. The 24-hour day is inadequate in providing him with ample time to accomplish all of his day-to-day tasks. Yet, with all that he does, he creates the space to focus on the important matters in his life: *his wife Elaine; his children Adam, Josh, Shoshanah, and Zach; his step-children Jennifer and Jessica; his seven grandchildren; his mother-in-law, Bea Farbman; his profession as a lawyer and mediator; his volunteerism as the national vice-president of the American Inns of Court; his teaching as an adjunct professor at Rutgers University School of Law and Beijing University in China; his work with his wife Elaine (a therapist in South Orange) as master teachers of PAIRS - a marriage education course; his favorite high school English teacher, Marie O'Connor; the WHS Alumni Association; and the METS.*

On his 70th birthday, we salute Hal for bringing together more than 72 years of alumni - from all corners of this country - to reconnect with each other - to relive their growing-up years - and most importantly to "give back" to our current Weequahic students so that they can have the opportunity of a higher education and a better life.

## *The Next Generation*

Hal has a "merged" family of six, his three sons and a daughter and Elaine's two daughters, and they are creating some excitement of their own.

**Zach Braff**, 29, is the star of NBC's popular comedy, "**SCRUBS**," for the past three years, and is the writer, director and leading man in the new hit movie "**Garden State**," which received a three-star rating from the Star-Ledger when it opened this past summer.



**Joshua Braff**, 36, is publishing his first novel this month entitled "*The Unthinkable Thoughts of Jacob Green*," a coming-of-age tale about a Jersey youngster. It is already reaping praise for its dark humor. **Adam Braff**, 39, writes for television and movies. He and Zach are putting final touches on the film "*Andrew Henry's Meadow*," an adaptation of Doris Burn's 1965 children's book and a Braff family favorite, which is scheduled to be released next summer. **Shoshanah Braff**, 33, is a promising clothing designer. **Jessica Kirson**, 34, is a standup comedian who appeared on the NBC reality show, "*Last Comic Standing*." Her sister **Jennifer Gelman**, 38, is the owner of *The Gift Solution*, a unique gift store in Livingston..



**Josh, Adam, Zach and Shoshanah**



**Jessica and Jennifer**

***This year we awarded 22 college scholarships from 16 scholarship funds totaling \$25,500. All of the money raised comes from our alumni. We thank you for your contributions. The funds are named in honor or in memory of former faculty, alumni, and family members. Since 1997, we have raised nearly \$150,000.***

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## **the voices of some of our 2004 scholarship recipients**

**Enoch Affram** - At the age of sixteen, I came to the United States from West Africa, Ghana. While in Ghana, I attended one of the best schools in the district where I earned certificates and won competitions for my great art work. With the guidance of my art teacher, I developed many artistic skills in drawing and painting. Since I have lived in two different countries and experienced two different cultures, I am able to relate and work in diverse settings...I feel fortunate when I think of the advantages that I have had in life. Especially to be born in a family that emphasizes the importance of education, which I deeply appreciate.

**Malcolm Anthony** - College used to be a joke to me. I had always figured that once I graduated from high school, I would land a steady job, start a family, and be on with my life. However, I took a look at my father. He had not been able to attend college and he struggled to take care of my brother and me. That is not how I wanted to live. I then began to consider an education after high school. I was born to be a writer. I was never much of an athlete. I can fix things and I am good at video games, but my true calling is writing.

**Medinah Collier** - Since I was 14 years old I have always wanted to pursue a career in fashion. ...Being a fashion designer is one of my biggest dreams. (At) Weequahic, I participated in many extracurricular activities including the marching band and mixed chorus. In my junior year, I was on the newspaper staff and became editor of entertainment. I was also inducted into the National Honor Society...I have been dancing for ten years and it has become an essential part of my life...My exposure to art made me perceptive, creative, spontaneous, expressive, energetic and vigorous.

**Kenya Ingram** - I am a woman with many dreams and goals...My mother is my inspiration and my role model. She inspires me to love and help others. She has taught me that there is always someone less fortunate than I am. She has also encouraged me to study hard and to excel in everything I do...In giving back to my community, doing services such as mentoring the youth at my neighborhood elementary school, working in soup kitchens, collecting food, coats and clothing to give

to the homeless and anyone who is needy, is quite fulfilling for me.

**Tamara Johnson** - My goals are to become a teacher and then to give back to my community. I am the oldest of eight children. So in my house I take on a lot of responsibilities. I help my mother as much as I can because she does not have anyone she can count on to be there for her when she needs some extra help. I am thankful for my mother because I have someone who cares about my future. Even though my mother does not have a lot of money to just spend on me, she does her best with each and every one of her eight children. My mother knows I want to go to college so she is trying her best to make this one wish come true.

**Hamilton Marks, Jr.** - I started to realize my educational goals when I came to the United States of America as a freshman...I was given many opportunities that I would have never been given in my country. One of those opportunities was to attend high school at no cost. It was then I realized that my educational goals were to engage myself in hard work and graduate high school with honors.

**Taimer Singleton** - My reasons for wanting to pursue a higher education are quite unique. I have always been fascinated with business, law and music. As a child, I often pondered to myself on how I could merge all of my interests into a positive long lasting career... I'm going to be one of the best influences on students for years to come since I will show them an example of someone who is goal-oriented, well educated, courteous, respectful, and humble.

**Bisola Taiwo** - My uncle died at the age of 36, three years ago of heart disease. He was a journalist who fought to topple the then oppressive military regime in Nigeria. He was fearless and relentless in his mission. He was one of the journalists who lost his job due to his blatant disregard of censorship rules. Uncle Freddy, as he was affectionately known, started living with my family when my grandparents died. He was studying journalism in college at the time. I was young and inquisitive; I was always curious about what he was learning at school. He saw my interest in learning and took it upon himself to help me cultivate it. As I grew up I went to him for answers to every puzzling question...He became my teacher and mentor. He told me about what he envisioned the future of the country to be...I was awed by his boldness and his will to go against

such a powerful government. I was fortunate to have such a wonderful person in my life even if for a short time. He has impacted my life in a plethora of ways. He had such an admirable character; he was straightforward with his words and his deeds. I want to be like him, to be fearless and bold, to use my knowledge to fight for what is right.

**Itea Wesley** - My personal life has not been very easy. I lost my mother when I was three, and my father a year later. My maternal grandmother, who was raising me, died from cancer when I was 14. Through everything that happened, I have sometimes become sidetracked, but I have not let these obstacles get in the way of my goals. I have overcome these challenges and am focused and looking forward to doing well in the bright future ahead of me. Since I can remember, I have always wanted to attend college and receive a degree in the major of my choice...College is not a word that floats around the hallways of my school, but that's OK because it floats in and through me.

**April McNeil** - To understand who "April McNeil" really is, you must be able to relate to why I have so many things that I want to make out of myself. I am a young African-American woman who is all about pursuing her studies and furthering her education to better herself...I have been through a lot to get this far, and I know that in the future I will strive to maintain the goals that I have set for myself...My plan for the future is to become a successful cardiologist and surgeon.

**Stephanie Wilson** - When I attended middle school, I was able to have the greatest English teacher of all time, Mr. Ramos. None of my high school English teachers have had such a great impact on my life like he did...For more than three years, he was my mentor. He always wanted me to strive for the best and to believe in myself. He was the first teacher to understand what I was going through in life. And even to this day, he still takes time to talk to me.

**Shaunte Johnson** - My grandmother was and still is everything to me...The last thing I remember her telling me before she died was "*all I want to do is see you graduate high school and college.*" She died and it felt like she took a piece of me with her. I went into a deep depression after that. One day I started doing something that I never did on my own. I started writing. Any pains, emotions or stresses that I was feeling I wrote down. Slowly, I started feeling better. I felt comfort in writing. It was like talking to someone you trusted. I came out of the depression. Now I am on my way to graduating from high school and moving on to college. People say that my grandmother would be proud of me, but I know that she is proud of me because I feel her with me every step of the way.

#### ACADEMIC/PERFORMING ARTS FUND

**TAIMER SINGLETON**  
Virginia State University



**MEDINAH COLLIER**  
Montclair State University

#### BRENDA IRIS BARNES MEMORIAL FUND



**JUSTIN DICKERSON**  
University of Maryland

#### MAXINE BOATWRIGHT MEMORIAL FUND



**TAHRI MARSHALL**  
Florida Memorial College

#### MOREY BOBROW MEMORIAL FUND



**NANA YEBOAH**  
Essex County College

#### CLASS OF 1963 FUND



**TAMARA JOHNSON**  
Fairleigh Dickinson  
University

#### COLLEGE WOMAN'S CLUB FUND



**KENYA INGRAM**  
Montclair State  
University

**BISOLA TAIWO**  
Colgate University



## **2004 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS**

#### MIRIAM HAMPLE MEMORIAL FUND



**SHAUNTE JOHNSON**  
Montclair State University

#### READA & THEODORE JELLINEK FUND



**MALCOLM ANTHONY**  
William Paterson University

#### DONALD & PHYLLIS KALFUS FUND



**FABYAN MANLEY**  
Kean University

#### HANNAH LITZKY MEMORIAL FUND



**SHONTA GRACE.**  
Bloomfield College

#### EDWIN McLUCAS FUND



**HAMILTON MARKS, JR.**  
Kean University

#### MARIE O'CONNOR FUND



**STEPHANIE WILSON**  
Bloomfield College

#### CAROLYN PARM MEMORIAL FUND



**IESHA WILLIAMS**  
William Paterson University

#### LEO PEARL MEMORIAL FUND



**AUDREY ROBERTS**  
Shaw University, NC

#### SADIE ROUS MEMORIAL FUND



**NICOLE SUNWABE**  
Fayetteville State  
University, NC

#### WEEQUAHIC HS ALUMNI FUND



**ENOCH AFFRAM**  
Bloomfield College



**QUISHAWN DIXON**  
Ramapo College



**ITEA WESLEY**  
Bethune Cookman  
College, FL.



**FELICIA NASH**  
Fairleigh Dickinson  
University



**APRIL McNEIL**  
Lincoln University, PA



**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*.

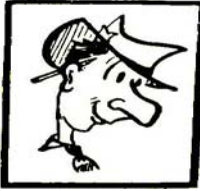
\* And when you land that perfect job, but you get laid off due to cutbacks and you feel like giving up, you need to do what? *Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway*.

\* 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.





## WALDO WINCHESTER

*This popular column from the Calumet first appeared in 1950. Please let us know about how our alumni have distinguished themselves in their lives after Weequahic.*

### **Get well wishes and a speedy recovery to ADILAH QUDDUS,**

**1971**, and her Mom, daughters and granddaughters who sustained injuries in an automobile accident this summer. Adilah is on the Board of Trustees of the WHS Alumni Association and was its former secretary



**LES FEIN**, WHS Legendary Basketball Coach; **SWEDE MASIN**, one of Weequahic's greatest athletes from the late 30's, and **SID DORFMAN**, the Star-Ledger's Award-Winning Sports Columnist, were inducted into the JCC MetroWest Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.



**Jean-Rae Turner, 1938**, and Richard T. Coles, who have authored pictorial books on the history of Newark, have also completed books on Hillside, Elizabeth and Springfield. In the near future, Jean-Rae may be putting together a book on her memories of growing up in Weequahic.

**Marshall Kasen, 1961**, a forensic CPA, financial advisor and a partner in the firm of Kasen & Barkan of Coral Gables, Florida and New York City, has been named of counsel to the international consulting firm of Arcaya & Associates (*Ignacio Arcaya is the former Ambassador to the United States and the former Acting President of Venezuela*). Marshall specializes in defense-oriented forensic accounting and related matters, primarily in complex criminal and civil litigation, in addition to his responsibilities as managing partner of his firm. He also was named acting chief financial officer and member of the board of directors of BankVision Software, an international software organization.

**Leatrice Friedman Minzter, Jan. 1952**, informs us that "Alive, Well and Happy" was the theme of the 70th birthday party for the Cameos and Seabees of the WHS graduation class of January 1952 which took place on Sunday, July 25th on a perfect summer day at the home of Avis Dresdner Weeks. The two groups of girls and boys, respectively, were for the most part graduates of Chancellor Avenue School, class of January 1948 and have maintained friendships for 60 years or more.



L-R: Natalie Confield Tublitz, Avis Dresdner Weeks, Paula Katz Klupper, Leatrice Friedman Minzter, Paula Tischler Goldfein, Marcia Kahan Rosenthal, Barbara Smith Tripp, Lois Levine Fink, & Joann Rosen Friedman



L-R: Bernie Rosenthal (spouse), Bob Gold, Ron Orbach, Norman Hinkes, Ray Drake (friend, WHS grad), Irv Tripp (spouse), Marty Friedman (WHS grad and spouse).



Peshine Avenue School June 1959 Graduating Class



Medinah Collier, 2004 Academic / Performing Arts Scholarship recipient, with Dave Horwitz, class of 1945



Who are these kids from the late 40's???



# 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."*

## *from the voices of our alumni, faculty and friends*

### **JEFF GOLDEN, 1963, NEW JERSEY**

Regarding Fred Decter's article "*You Ruined My Day*" in the Weequahic Alumni Calumet ... He at least "walked back in the house" before he read the Calumet; I read the whole darn thing before I left the mailbox!

My sister, Gloria, phoned this evening. I asked her if she had received it, she didn't even know it exists. We spent the next half hour talking about other Calumet articles - the one about Grumman Avenue (where we lived at #128 until 1953), Chancellor Avenue (the neighborhood we moved to (Schley Street) and where we lived until each of us married and moved), the last two shuls in Newark (she knew both of them), and others.

So here is a check for Gloria's membership. I wonder how many other Weequahic grads don't know about the alumni association and would enjoy jogging their memories with the Calumet. I'll have to bring a copy with me next time I visit cousins in Florida.

### **HERB SCHON(WETTER), 1950, NEW MEXICO**

Received the Spring-Summer issue with the rugelach article. Wow! A full page. Ken Coleman is envious. I've heard from a few WHS classmates who want some gift tins. I told them and you can pass it along to any other Maple or Weequahic grads visiting the Sante Fe area to call me at (505) 466-2955 and they can come by for a nosh..but no gift tins!

Every issue of the Alumni Calumet stirs up memories, mostly fond. Most interesting, for me and others, is how the neighborhood bonds are so tight. The last couple of years, I'd visit with Len Karp (June 1949) and his wife Dot as they escaped the summer heat in Arizona to come here and play tennis. And in

New York, I'd run with Dan Rosen who lived around the corner. His father was the Henry from the Sweet Shop. Must've been a great business because Dan went to Newark Academy.

Then there was the time in the 70's when we were walking on Orchard Street and I was wearing a WHS track singlet and some guy nursing a bottle in the doorway yells out, "*Hey Weequahic, me too.*" Hoping to see my classmates Neil Feins and Sid Handler at my son's wedding in October. Neil and I met on line the first day of Kindergarten at Maple in 1937.

Some classmates send anti-Republican jokes (I laugh). Others send anti-Democrat jokes (I wince). But I miss them equally. My wife gets tired of hearing the same stories whenever we meet old classmates. But what does she know?

### **CHARLOTTE HEMSATH PRICKETT, 1953, MARYLAND**

I would like to tell you how much I appreciate that you send the Calumet first class mail. The postal service on newsletters sent other than first class is terrible. My friend and I are supposed to get monthly newsletters from the local Senior Center at my address. Sometimes we get one of the newsletters, sometimes we get one whole one and one torn up. The newsletters, although mailed at the same time, never arrive together, I look forward to reading the Calumet and am happy you choose to send it in such a manner that it arrives promptly and in one piece.

### **JACK RUDOWSKY, 1949, FLORIDA**

I have had an interesting period of time since I graduated from Weequahic in 1949. My first major employment opportunity was at Newark's Bamberger's Department Store in

advertising. Next came my boyhood dream. I was signed to play baseball, as a catcher, with the St. Louis Browns of the American League in 1951. That team moved to Baltimore and became the Orioles. Unfortunately, as it happens to many young athletes, a knee injury cut short my professional baseball career.

The next major happening for me was a two-year hitch in the Army as a medical corpsman from 1952 to 1954. During the Korean War, I did manage to play baseball for the Army and was put into Special Services for a period of months. I played against professional ball players like Don Newcombe of the Dodgers and Bobby Brown of the Yankees.

In 1954, after being discharged from the service, I married Shirley Adler of Elizabeth, a graduate of Battin High School. The marriage lasted for 46 years until Shirley's death in 2000, which was one year after we both attended the 50th reunion of the class of 1949 in Livingston. From 1954 to 2000, Shirley and I had three daughters, Beth, Ronnie and Susan. All three girls passed away (in 1958, 1966 and 1982) from a genetic disease called dysautonomia.

My business life consisted of being a partner in the S&M Food Products Company of Newark until 1963 when I went into the insurance business and continued again in Florida until retirement in 1999. My wife and I had a home built in Spring Hill, Florida in 1990. After Shirley's death in 2000, I met and married Rochelle Spencer in 2003 and moved to Tampa, Florida to start a new life with five stepchildren and eleven grandchildren.

As a Florida resident during the past 13 years, I have renewed friendships with three other Weequahic classmates - Jack Birnholz, his wife Shirley Sarasohn Birnholz, and Don Chinky - all of whom live in Florida.

*Nye, Conklin, Goodwin, Porter, Shepard, Lehigh, Wilbur, Parkview, Schuyler, Dewey, Schley, Bock, Seymour, Eckert, Weequahic, Hawthorne, Chancellor, Lyons, Bergen, Fabyan, Osborne, Clinton Place, Hobson, Summit, Maple, Goodwin, Keer,*

***Visit the old neighborhood @ [www.weequahicalumni.org](http://www.weequahicalumni.org)***

*Bock, Vasser, Yates, Mapes, Grumman, Leslie, Hansbury, Shaw, Wainwright, Seymour, Chadwick, Wolcott, Homestead Park, Stengel, Badger, Watson, Peshine, Hunterdon, Willoughby, Bayview, Renner, Bragaw, Wyndmoor, Fields, Crescent, Huntington, Aldine*

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.



# 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.



**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."*

## In Loving Memory

### Dorothy Rowe Scott, 1938



Dorothy Elizabeth Rowe Scott passed away in February 2004 at age 83.

She was born on October 14, 1920 in Newark, NJ and graduated from Weequahic High School in 1938 and from Duke University in 1942. She worked for the Prudential Insurance Company of Newark for 40 years and at the time of her retirement in 1982 was the Director of Purchasing and Food Services.

Mrs. Scott was active in many organizations: The Newark Museum, the Newark Public Library; the NJ Historical Society; a life member of Soroptimist International Association (AAUW - a women's organization); life-member and president (Essex County branch) of the American Association of University Women; 10 years on the NJ State Board; director of the Weequahic High School Adult School; and a board member and tutor for the Literacy Volunteers of America.

A year prior to her passing, she was instrumental in having the Essex County branch of the American Association of University Women establish a scholarship fund at Weequahic High School with a \$6,000 contribution. She was also an active participant on her high school's class reunion committee.

With her late husband Andrew (also a Weequahic alumnus), she traveled extensively and attended many international conferences of both the AAUW and Soroptimists.

Mrs. Scott epitomized what we all might strive for in our lives - a good friend, an interesting and concerned citizen, and a kind and caring individual.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Jean Hirsch Linn, 1944**

**Lillian Sinclair Forgang, 1944**

**Kim Byrd-Bergman, 1976**

# Restoring Weequahic's Murals

By Judi Schwartz Ayre, Jan. 1962



As a teenager in the early 60's attending Weequahic High School, I never hesitated to stop to admire the expansive mural in the lobby of the school on my way to classes. But it was only after high school that I began to learn more about the painter, the mural entitled "*History of the Enlightenment of Man*" painted in 1939, and about the WPA arts program.

The painter of the mural, Michael Lenson, (1903-1971), was born in Galich, Russia. Between 1920 and 1930, he attended schools in New York, and Paris and London, after winning the prestigious Chaloner Paris Prize, having as colleagues and roommates such notable artists as Gregorio Prestopino and Louis Guglielmi. After moving to New Jersey, he qualified for the FAP (Federal Arts Project) where he perfected his mural painting skills. His design was chosen for the mural at the Essex Mountain Sanatorium in 1936 in Verona. That 75' x 16' mural, "*The History of New Jersey*" which took two years to paint, was destroyed when the TB sanatorium was torn down.

Michael Lenson soon became the Assistant State Supervisor in charge of the Mural and Easel Division, responsible for murals, furniture design, lithographs, paintings and prints. Under his direction, fifteen murals in public buildings were painted in the State of New Jersey, and five created by him. He is best known for his New Jersey WPA "*Social Realism*" murals painted over a seven-year period, which included enormous murals for the New Jersey Pavilion of the 1939 World's Fair.

In addition to the mural at Weequahic High School, there were four other extant murals painted by Lenson; an 8-panel mural entitled "*The History of Newark*" at the Newark City Hall, in 1941, and those at 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue ("*The Four Freedoms*") and Charleton Street ("*Lincoln and Douglas*") schools in Newark. He won the Federal Arts Project competition for "*Mining*" which can be seen at the Mount Hope, West Virginia Post Office.

During the WPA era and after, Lenson continued his easel painting and went on to work as an artist with many exhibits, as Director of the Newark School of Industrial Arts and teaching positions at Rutgers University, Montclair Art Museum, and Fairleigh Dickinson University. He maintained a studio in Nutley where he painted daily until his death at the age of 68.

I returned to Weequahic in October 2003 for an alumni tour. I didn't recognize the building; it was very much like the inside of any school built around that time. The focal points for me, my beloved library and cafeteria had been renovated and moved. I located my old homeroom, chatted with people I re-encountered from years ago, met some new alumni, ate a little, and then went to see "*the mural*."

It was impressive as it had been many years before, a wonderful painting for a school to have in its lobby. I noticed details I had overlooked years before on the way to a class or to lunch. I also observed that although being in remarkable condition considering its lobby location, it was dirty, with thick dust hanging near the ceiling and with some tears and graffiti.

I have been in touch with the artist's son, Barry Lenson, who was especially concerned over "*large darkened areas over the radiators especially on the final panel to the right of the main doors*." As soon as we get more detailed information on the cleaning and restoration of the mural, we will be reaching out for your help in preserving this very tangible part of Weequahic's heritage.

It would be a tribute to Weequahic High School and the artist if the mural could be cleaned and restored to its original beauty and then be maintained as a valuable part of Weequahic's history and the history of New Jersey, as well as an excellent example of Depression-era social realism art.

Resources:  
[www.seraphingallery.com/bio\\_lenson](http://www.seraphingallery.com/bio_lenson)  
[www.michaellenson.org](http://www.michaellenson.org)  
[www.wpamurals.com](http://www.wpamurals.com)  
[www.massreview.org/4403/mlenson\\_interview](http://www.massreview.org/4403/mlenson_interview)  
[www.artnet.com](http://www.artnet.com)  
 "Real & Surreal, Michael Lenson." Monograph, Janet Marques

## WHS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

279 Chancellor Avenue  
 Newark, NJ 07112  
 (973) 923-3133

[whs@weequahicalumni.org](mailto:whs@weequahicalumni.org)

[www.weequahicalumni.org](http://www.weequahicalumni.org)

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## *In Loving Memory*

### HOWARD TEPP, 1965,

of Richard and the Young Lions  
passes away before his legendary  
N.J. garage band stages an unlikely  
comeback after nearly 40 years

Excerpts from an article by  
Jay Lustig, Star-Ledger Staff



4th grade picture from  
Peshine Avenue School

In 1966, a songwriter and producer named Larry Brown walked into the *Indian Pizzeria* in Newark. Some teenagers were leaning against the jukebox, singing along, and Brown spotted a

potential star. "I don't know what song - it might have been a Rolling Stones song," says Brown, a Newark native who now lives in Nashville, and is known as L. Russell Brown. "But I went, 'Wow, what an interesting voice this kid had.' There was a rasp to it, and a power, and a fury."

The singer's name was Howard Tepp, but he would soon change it to Richard Tepp and front the band, *Richard & the Young Lions*. The band released a howling debut single, "Open Up Your Door," that was a regional smash in markets across the country, including Detroit, Cleveland and Seattle.

But further success was elusive, and by the end of 1967, the band had broken up. Garage-rock aficionados never forgot about them, though. "They defined garage-rock," says Steven Van Zandt, the Bruce Springsteen collaborator and "Sopranos" actor who hosts the nationally syndicated "Underground Garage" radio show and who recently presented a garage-rock festival at Randall's Island in New York.

"(Tepp) had a great attitude in his voice, and they had a fuzztone bass, which is a garage-rock move. It was just sort of that basic, simple music that we used to call rock 'n' roll dance music. It was the kind of music that made people get on the dance floor and go berserk." In 1998, "Open Up Your Door" achieved the ultimate garage-rock honor, being selected for an expanded CD reissue of the seminal 1972 garage-rock compilation,

Richard Tepp (below left) and (below right in front) with members of the Young Lions



"Nuggets." The song "was everything I liked about that particular era of music," says "Nuggets" producer Lenny Kaye, who is best known as a member of Patti Smith's backing band. "It was driving, rocking, elemental, and full of the things that all the 'Nuggets' bands have, which is desire. You can feel these people seeing the gold ring, and grasping for it, and actually snagging it."

Tepp, who died on June 17 of leukemia, at the age of 57, had other bands after the Young Lions broke up. But he never made as big a splash as he did the first time around. "What he wanted out of life was to play again," says Lynne Taylor, who lived with Tepp in the upstate New York town of Tannersville for the last 24 years of his life. "He always felt like he came so close."

Tepp supported himself primarily with bartending and, later in his life, disability checks. He suffered from a number of ailments, including psoriatic arthritis, Parkinson's Disease, and the blood disorder, polycythemia. "He never quit, no matter how many things they socked him with," says Taylor. "That's why it was so hard to see that he finally went."

Tepp's wish to reunite with the Young Lions was granted, improbably, in 2000. Band members got back in touch with each other, and decided to come out of musical retirement. The reunited band performed at clubs like *Maxwell's* in Hoboken and the *Village Underground* in New York.

Shortly before Tepp died, the group, which released three singles but no album in the '60s, finished its first full-length album, with Van Zandt handling much of the production work. The album is dominated by new

originals, but also includes remakes of "Open Up Your Door" and "You Can Make It" (the third of the band's '60s singles), and covers of some obscure garage-rock songs. It is not yet released and has no title, but Van Zandt plans to put it out on his own Renegade Nation label, with distribution by a larger record company.

The album will follow the recent release of a DVD documentary, "Out of Our Dens: The Richard and the Young Lions Story." James Hannon of Scotch Plains, who designed the band's Web site ([www.richardandtheyounglions.com](http://www.richardandtheyounglions.com)), co-directed the low budget film.

The Richard & the Young Lions story began almost 40 years ago, when Tepp was a student at Newark's Weequahic High School (1965 grad). He joined a band called the *Emeralds*, which soon changed its name to the *Original Kounts*.

Tepp was still in this band - also featuring guitarists Bob Freedman and Marc Lees, drummer Norm Cohen, bassist Ricky Rackin and keyboardist Jerry Raff - when Brown discovered him...Brown, whose future successes would include co-writing "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree," thought "Richard" was more rocking than "Howard," and asked him to change his name. Remembering that he had met Tepp on Lyons Avenue, he came up with the idea of renaming the band the Young Lions.

In lieu of flowers, the family has set up a college trust fund for Richard's son Casey at Key Bank. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send your check to: Key Bank, PO Box 897, Tannersville, NY 12485 or call (518) 589-5900. Please attach a note that it is for the *Casey Tepp Trust Fund*



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Phone: (       ) \_\_\_\_\_ Business: (       ) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: (       ) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## *In Loving Memory*

### Alumni:

#### **Benjamin Powell III, 1987**

By Guy Sterling, Star-Ledger Staff



Benjamin Powell III passed away in July 2004 at age 35 as result of injuries sustained in an off-duty motorcycle accident in Jersey City.

Powell was a veteran investigator with the Essex County Prosecutor's Office.

He joined the prosecutors office in 1997 after serving as a state corrections officer and for six years as an officer with the East Orange Police Department. Before getting assigned to the homicide squad in 2000, he was an investigator in the juvenile, trial and narcotics sections of the prosecutor's office. Mr. Powell had recently completed a three-month course on the use of polygraphs and was expected to become the office's lead polygraph examiner. Paula Dow, Acting Essex County Prosecutor said, "He was a skilled investigator but, more significantly, he genuinely cared about the people of Essex County, from his roots in Newark to working his way up through the police ranks."

A graduate of Weequahic High School in Newark, Mr. Powell was a six-year veteran of the U.S. Army Infantry and had served in the Persian Gulf War in 1991. He was a member of the Essex County Prosecutor's Office PBA chapter, the NJ State Narcotics Officers Association and Lodge 29 of the Masons. Over the years, he received numerous awards for valor. In 1992, he was given a medal of honor in East Orange for chasing a suspect on South Orange and West End avenues without firing a shot even though the suspect was shooting at him.

Mr. Powell leaves a wife and son.

#### **Marvin Menkes, 1945**

Marvin Menkes, 75, of Richmond, Virginia, and formerly of Montclair and Newark, NJ passed away on May 31, 2003. Mr. Menkes owned Mailwell Service in Hillside for over 20 years and then became a sales representative for Westside Printing House in Verona for 10 years prior to retiring. In 1949, he graduated from Richmond University in Virginia.

A veteran of the peacetime Army, Mr. Menkes was a former vice president of the Mens Club at Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in Short Hills, the former head of the United Jewish Appeal in Irvington and a member of the Presidents Club at the University of Richmond. Surviving is a daughter, Nancy Clayman; a son, Neal; sisters Harriet Alpert and Rita Weinstein; and five grandchildren. He is pre-deceased by his wife Lois Izenberg Menkes. They were high school sweethearts at Weequahic.

#### **David Pogash, 1935**

By Rudy Larini, Star-Ledger Staff



David Pogash, 86, of South Orange, died in July 2004 after a three-month battle with cancer. He spent his life in northern New Jersey, where he became a leader in the Jewish community. For more than 50 years, he and his oldest brother, the late Israel M. Pogash, were

partners at Pogash & Co., a certified public accounting firm with an office in downtown Newark. The firm eventually merged with KPMG, and Mr. Pogash moved his office to Short Hills.

As CPAs, the Pogash brothers possessed a unique talent for being able to ferret out financial irregularities in accounting ledgers. "I did a great deal of work with David, who was an outstanding forensic accountant," said John Gibbons, a former U.S. District Court judge who has returned to private practice. "Among the highest quality persons I ever knew," said attorney Frank Vecchione of Newark, who was Gibbons' law partner in the days when they teamed with the Pogash brothers.

Mr. Pogash served as president of the Young Men's Division of the United Jewish Appeal in 1948. During the 1960s, he was president of Jewish Family Services for northern New Jersey. For many years, he also helped with the accounting work at Temple B'nai Jeshurun. He served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1947, reaching the level of lieutenant.

The youngest of six children of Harry and Minnie Pogash, David Pogash grew up in Newark, went to Weequahic High School, attended Lafayette College, and graduated from New York University School of Business in 1939. In 1947, he married the former Doris Schwartz. Besides his wife, Mr. Pogash is survived by two sons, Jeffrey of West Orange, and Kenneth of Millington, and their wives, Miriam and Jocelyn; a sister, Augusta Krumholz of Springfield; and four grandchildren.

#### **Majorie Levine Bobker, 1936**

Marjorie Levine Bobker, 84 passed away on March 2, 2004. Mrs. Bobker worked for 40 years as an art dealer at the Marjorie Bobker Art Gallery in Monclair and South Orange. She was a member of the Crestmont Country Club in west orange and the Temple B'nai Jeshurun's women's Association. Born in Newark, she lived in West Orange for 35 years before moving to Verona 14 years ago. Surviving are daughters, Barbara Zins and Geri Lozauskas; a son, Dennis; sisters, Carol Levine Rothman and Rita levin Gaber; six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

### Faculty:

#### **Lawrence D. Schulman**



Lawrence D. Schulman, Ph.D., 80, of Union, died in August 2004. He was a history teacher at Weequahic High School and University High School, both in Newark, for more than 50 years before retiring. Dr.

Schulman also taught

political science, economics and government at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, Kean University in Union and Union County College in Cranford. He also was a librarian at the Union Township Library. Dr. Schulman earned a bachelor of science degree in education from New York University School of Education, a master's degree in political science from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. from New York University. Born in Newark, he lived in Union for 50 years. Surviving are Frances, his wife of 57 years; sons, Howard and Arthur; three grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

#### **Seymour B. Weiss**



Seymour B. Weiss of West Orange and Boynton Beach, Florida passed away on September 2, 2004. A teacher for 40 years in the Newark school system, Mr. Weiss was an industrial arts teacher for many years at

Weequahic High school before retiring. He earned a bachelor's degree from the former Newark State Teachers College and a masters degree from Rutgers University and completed doctoral course there. During world War II, he served in the Army. Surviving are his wife, Charlotte; a son, Michael; and a brother, William.

## REUNIONS

### 2004

#### October 2

##### **1938 - 66th**

Saturday, 11:30 AM, Essex House in West Orange, NJ. Contact Shirley Rabinowitz at (973) 736-2637.

#### October 2

##### **June 1954 - 50th**

Saturday, 7 PM, Headquarters Plaza Hotel in Morristown, NJ. Contact Sheila Dishell at sheiladishell@msn.com or Thelma & Herb Schnitzer at (973) 762-8992

#### October 9

##### **1964 - 40th**

Saturday, 7 PM, Marriott Hotel at Newark Liberty International Airport, Newark, NJ. Also Sunday morning brunch. Contact Wendy Kaufman Nowak at (908) 722-1874 / weequahic1964@aol.com. For class news, visit the 1964 web site at [www.angelfire.com/stars4/weequahic64](http://www.angelfire.com/stars4/weequahic64)

## 2005

#### May 15

##### **Jan. 1955 - 50th**

Sunday, 11:30 PM, Grand Summit Hotel. Contact Sam Weinstock at (973) 467-9332 / etobyw@aol.com or Bonnie Sher at (973) 992-2054

#### September 18

##### **1945 - 60th**

Sunday, 12:00 PM, Headquarters Plaza Hotel, Morristown, NJ. Contact Dave Horwitz, (973) 539-5158

#### September 24

##### **1960 - 45th**

Saturday, 7 PM, Woodbridge Sheraton Hotel, Woodbridge, NJ. Contact Harold Klein at (609) 655-3778 or Lois Blumenthal Gilbert (732) 462-4808

#### October 8

##### **1965 - 40th**

Saturday, 7 PM, Woodbridge Hilton Hotel, Woodbridge, NJ. Contact Dennis Estes at (732) 549-5600

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*HOUSTON TEXANS - Sunday, December 5 at 1 PM*

*SEATTLE SEAHAWKS - Sunday, December 19 at 1 PM*

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