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Jericho High School Alumni Hall of Fame

April 2015

A number of your former teachers attended the 25th annual Jericho High School Alumni Hall of Fame induction ceremony at the Jericho Public Library on April 16, 2014, and the dinner beforehand at the Milleridge Inn. We thought you'd like to see their photos, and so we muscled our way in to intrude upon intimate conversations between people who hadn't seen each other for thirty, forty years, barking "Can I take your photo?!" in a menacing tone of voice. Compliance couldn't have been better!



(Left) Among the first guests to arrive for the preceremony dinner at the Milleridge Inn are inductee Ken McLaughlin from the class of 1969 and his sister, Debi McLaughlin Cionek ('72). Ken, an award-winning journalist and editor for the San Jose Mercury News, flew in from California; Debi, meanwhile, retires this June after thirty-seven years of teaching in upstate New York.

(Above) Their parents, Harry and Norma McLaughlin, still live in the family home in Oakwood. To make a great evening even better, it happened to be Mrs. McLaughlin's birthday.



Phys ed instructor and coach Mr. Tony DiNome was one of the original members of the Alumni Hall of Fame Committee, along with Mr. Bob Hoffman, math teacher Mr. Lou Boroson, and language instructor Mr. Ken Larkin. With him is Pat Liptak, who videotapes every Hall of Fame ceremony.



Inductee Bonnie Schneider from the class of 1987, with (above) sister Karyn Schneider Gantwarg and (right) with her mom, is an on-air personality on the Weather Channel, a meteorologist, and an author. She lives and works in Atlanta.



Mary Moran and Nick Maraventano, members of the Hall of Fame Selection Committee, are teachers at the high school. From 2006 to 2014, Nick emceed the ceremonies with humor and style. For the first time in ten years, he got to enjoy the festivities from the audience.



Each inductee is presented by a standout JHS senior, and they meet for the first time at the dinner. The class of 1982's Glenn Stoller (l.), an ophthalmologist, surgeon, researcher, and inventor, chats with Steve Zheng from the class of '15. The very nice bartender in back has worked at the Milleridge since it opened, and she regaled us with stories about former regular customer George Washington. Who knew that the Father of Our Country had such a filthy mouth?!



Above: Joan Baiman Rosenberg ('71, at right) is not only a member of the Hall of Fame and on the Selection Committee but also is principal of the high school. With her is her mom, Mrs. Bernice Baiman, who preceded her on the committee and who was also on the Jericho Board of Education for many years. Mr. Howard Jankowitz, her colleague on both the BoE and the Selection Committee, also attended the dinner.

Below: Joan with JHS teacher Mary Moran and Jeff Ratner, a former principal in the district. All three sit on the Selection Committee.



The man who started it all, Hall of Famer founder Mr. Robert Hoffman, with retired teacher Barbara Murphy, who emceed the ceremonies from 1995 until 2005.



Our first inductee from the 1990s, Steve Noviello (1992), met his presenter, senior Kendra Kirby, and also reunited with former JHS principal Mr. Mathew Mandery (l.). Coincidentally, Steve was a student presenter at the very first induction ceremony, in 1992.



That's Steve Noviello, an Emmy Award-winning TV consumer reporter for FOX 4 News in Dallas-Fort Worth, poses with his parents, Frank and Roe Noviello. Mom, incidentally, is a former Rockette!



FDNY firefighter Louis Nicolosi (JHS '84), a first responder on 9/11, brought his entourage, including his adorable daughter Nanci (front row, second from left) and his mom, Virginia (front, second from right). That's Louis standing behind Mrs. Nicolosi.



Ken McLaughlin with senior Amanda Damon, who would be presenting him later at the ceremony and also escorting him around the high school the next morning, when all five inductees returned to JHS to talk with students.



If they're nervous, they sure don't look it. School administrator Brian Cummings and teacher Meredith Hynes were stepping into Nick Maraventano's sizable shoes—one apiece—as the ceremony's emcees.



Above: Mary Vitale (in white jacket) is the MVP of the Alumni Hall of Fame Committee. Barbara Krieger of the board of education poses with Mary Moran, while Dr. Glenn Stoller continues his conversation with JHS senior Steve Zheng.



When you're the official paparazzo, you don't get in many pictures. Thanks to Ken McLaughlin for these two snaps of Philip Bashe with Debi McLaughlin Cioneck—one incognito, one out ofognito.

Below: The 2015 inductees into the JHS Alumni Hall of Fame: Ken McLaughlin, Bonnie Schneider, Glenn Stoller, Louis Nicolosi, and Steve Noviello. That rectangular thing with frosting is a cake. They wanted me to take a photo of it by itself, but I refused, because when you shout, "That's it! More leg! Make love to the camera!" at a cake, you look crazy. Or so "they" claim.

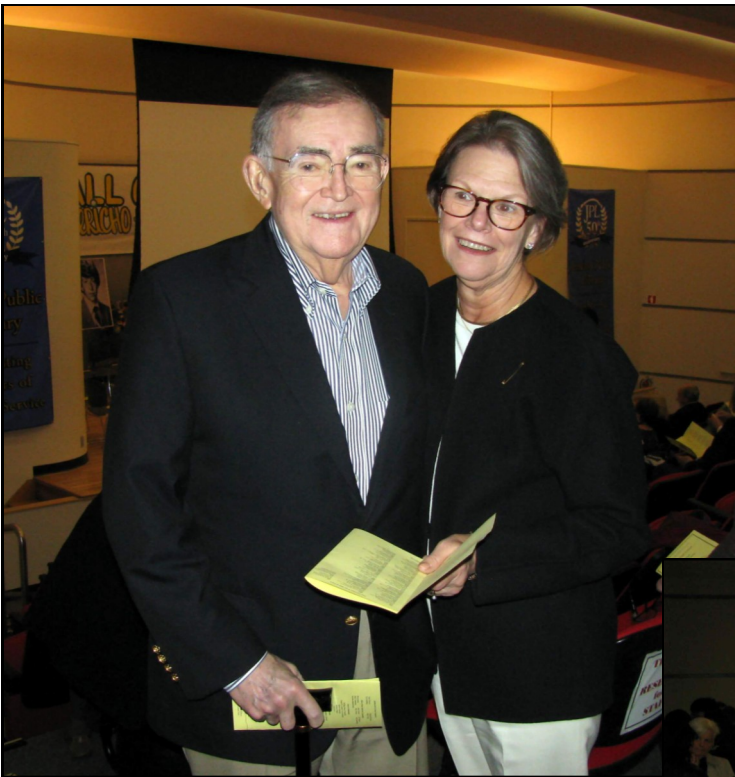




Lots of alumni, like the class of 1964's Marilyn Della Vecchia Profita, and members of the community come out for the induction ceremony, because it's always such fun, inspiring evening.



And because it was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Hall of Fame, past members were invited to take part. That's Cliff Forziat from the class of 1966, who was inducted in 2013.



Bonnie Schneider (center) with two of her classmates from 1987.

Lots of teachers come out for the induction ceremony. Above are Mr. Austin Lynch and Mrs. Nancy Lynch; and at right, looking great, are Mrs. Karen Schwartz and Ms. Phyllis Mandel.





First-time masters of ceremony Meredith Hynes and Brian Cummings already seem destined to take their places alongside other famous funny teams: Burns & Allen, Rowan & Martin, Sacco & Venzetti. Seriously, they were great together.



Induction into the Hall of Fame comes at a price: having to sit below a 2'x3' blowup of your high school yearbook photo, which usually serves as a museum exhibit of godawful hair-styles. This year, however, ranked low on the bad-hair score: no Oscar Gamble 'fros, perms gone haywire, or anything like that. It happens.



Longtime Jericho School District Superintendent Mr. Henry Grishman delivers opening remarks.

Bonnie Schneider, say hello to Bonnie Schneider.





(Inset) Senior Gregory Chestler introduces Bonnie Schneider. At Jericho, Bonnie was a talented actress who had the confidence to try out for the senior play when she was just fourteen and still in middle school. Guess what? She got the part.



(Inset) Senior Steve Zheng briefly recounts the background of Dr. Glenn Stoller, who attended with his wife, Elise, daughters Emma and Ava, son Jake, sister Laurie Birzon, and brother-in-law Peter Birzon. He is a partner in Ophthalmic Consultants of Long Island, an eye-care group consisting of more than thirty eye doctors and surgeons with eleven locations. Glenn specializes in medical and surgical diseases of the retina.





Each year, the Jericho Retirees Association makes a donation to a charitable organization associated with a member of the Hall of Fame. At left, Ms. Barbara Murphy announces the recipient of the 2015 Emil Voigt Memorial Award, named in honor of the late social studies teacher and longtime teachers union representative: the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund, a not-for-profit charity devoted to addressing the immediate and long-term needs of victims of terrorism, as well as to victims of natural disasters and other emergencies. Accepting the JRA award was the class of 1977's Edith Lutnick, cofounder, executive director, and president of the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund, which has distributed more than \$270 million to folks in need. Edie was inducted just last year.



(Inset) Amanda Damon, who writes for the school newspaper the Jerecho and will be attending the University of Pennsylvania in the fall, introduces Ken McLaughlin ('69). Ken has been a journalist and editor at the influential San Jose Mercury News for nearly thirty-five years. He reflected colorfully on some of his adventures, such as his time spent in Vietnam, and also lamented, all these years later, his decision in the summer of 1969 to forego something called the Woodstock Festival in favor of earning an extra \$20 parking cars at the Tam-O-Shanter Golf Club.

Well, there's always next time!

Oh, right ... there's not.



FDNY firefighter Louis Nicolosi ('84), presented by Emma Distler (inset), delivered a unique, thoughtful speech that was aimed primarily at the students in the audience. It was a meditation—almost a sermon, really—on finding meaning and fulfillment in life, and was extremely well received.



The evening's last inductee, and the 131st in the Hall of Fame's twenty-five-year history, was Steve Noviello, following an introduction from student Kendra Kirby (inset). He gave a moving and hilarious speech about the dichotomy of what it was like to grow up gay in Jericho in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Some days, he said, were terrific; others were terrible. Although Steve endured some ostracism, he was also president of the student council. Among the teachers who were most supportive of him, he said, were English teacher Estelle Stern Rankin and phys ed instructor Sy Faitell. He told a great story of how Mr. Faitell, after seeing Steve get picked last when choosing up sides in team sports one too many times, made him captain from then on, so that he got to do the picking. It was one of the best speeches ever heard at an induction ceremony, which is saying a lot.



A final round of applause, and the twenty-fifth Hall of Fame ceremony is in the books.



Steve Nicolosi with Mrs. Estelle Stern Rankin.



Bonnie Schneider with her former social studies teacher Mr. Nick Maraventano.

Mr. Robert and Mrs. Dolores (Poltorak) Hoffman, who celebrate their forty-fifth anniversary this year.





(Above) Olympic skating coach and Hall of Famer Bonni Retzkin from the class of 1978 dropped by; that's her with Mary Vitale.

(Below) Bonnie Schneider with her student presenter, Gregory Chestler.



How cool is this? Teacher Maureen Tracy is on the right, and in the middle is former secondary math teacher Carol Spielberger, currently the president of the Jericho Retirees Association. Recognize the woman on the left? She's Mrs. Carolyn Cirincion, who, it turns out, was the kindergarten teacher for four of this year's five inductees. Mrs. Cirincion taught at the George Jackson School during the 1959–60 academic year, so if you graduated JHS in 1972, you might have had her. Then she taught at the Robert Seaman School and then at Cantiaque Elementary, after it opened in 1962–63.



(Left) Teachers Karen Schwartz, Tony DiNome, and Phyllis Mandel at the post-ceremony reception.

(Below) Bob Hoffman and Austin Lynch.





The morning after the induction ceremony, the five honorees return to Jericho High School to enjoy an outdoor smoke, for old time's sake, with the students. Nah, that didn't happen. Bonnie Schneider took a few photos of her visit, which we've stolen from her personal website. (Shhhhh!) (Above) Here the meteorologist meets the students in a science class and (at right) poses with Kendra Kirby and Amanda Damon from the class of 2015.



Of this photo, Bonnie wrote on her website: "Last time I walked these halls, I thought I'd never be back ... but I'm glad I did."

(If you look really carefully, you can see your ghost—that's right: you!—still haunting the hallways, still cutting class, still about to duck into the bathroom to avoid detection for the next forty-five minutes.)

