

CENTRAL ISLIP SPORTS



HALL OF FAME

INDUCTION CEREMONY

September 9, 2017

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Central Islip Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony 2017

Welcome Tom Black

Breakfast

Induction Ceremony

Inductees into the Central Islip Hall of Fame 2017

Stan Benton

Tommy Costello

Carolyn DiResta

Tom Horan

Eddie Larkin

Bill Lennon

Jack Menechino

Chuck McAuley

Ed McGuire

Pete O'Leary

Joie Skipwith

Bob Stallworth

Garnett Thompson

Noel Walker

Varsity Lacrosse Team

St. John of God Roller Hockey

Closing Remarks



Stanley Benton 1980

Stanley E. Benton attended Central Islip High School from 1976-1980.

His contributions to the Central Islip basketball program were huge. After successful seasons on the junior high, freshman, and junior varsity teams, Stan was ready to leave his mark on CI Varsity basketball, and leave it he did.

Stanley, known to CI hoop fans as Doc, (probably due to his basketball idol Julius 'Doctor J' Erving) made his first appearance on the Varsity team in his junior year '78-79. Stan didn't think he was starting that first game, but when the starting center didn't show up, Stan was placed in the starting line-up and never let that spot go. After a solid year with a league championship and a county championship, Stanly and his team were ready for even more success in his senior year. On a personal level, Stanly averaged a double- double (points and rebounds), and he was named to the All-League, All County, and honorable mention All Long Island teams. Even more important to Stanly was the team's success. CI won another league championship and along the way had a 19-9 game winning streak.

Stanley started his college career at the University of Buffalo, but he quickly decided Long Island's more moderate climate was more to his liking and he transferred to LIU Southampton. After sitting out his transfer year, Stanly suited up for the 1982-83 season. Among Stanley's may glittering college highlights included winning a conference title as a freshman, being named Big Apple Conference player of the week four times, averaging double-double in 1983-84, and making the ALL BIG APPLE CONFERENCE teams in the 1984 and 1985 seasons. Finally, Stanley is a proud member of the LIU-Southampton 1000-point club.

Stanley stayed in the game for a time as an assistant coach at Southampton for three years.

Stanley's connection to Central Islip was never further away than his basketball jersey number, #14 worn by Stan to honor another of his childhood idols, Central Islip's own Mike Tice who wore that number at CI High.

When asked about Stanley, his high school coach, Ben Morselli, called him "A complete player. He played every phase of the game well" Coach Morselli, ever the teacher, also shared a spelling lesson in reference to Stanley E. 'Doc' Benton. "What does this spell.. .. L-E A-D-E-R." Well we all know what it spells and we congratulate Stanley Benton, a true team leader and a well deserving inductee to the Central Islip Hall of Fame.



Tommy Costello 1994

The wit, wisdom and basketball acumen of our next Honoree has made him one of the best liked and respected coaches to mentors to pace and grace courtside for the Musketeers. “The Cos” is truly one of a kind! Tom began his career in Central Islip on September 6, 1962 when he and his buddy and teammate (Ithaca College and Westbury High School) coach Ben Morselli, drove out to begin work. He never looked back and in the process over the next 32 years he left a fond, positive and indelible mark on the hearts and minds of a host of players, students, teachers and fellow coaches.

In his student days Tommy was a three-sport letterman at Westbury High School playing soccer, basketball and baseball. At Ithaca, Tommy played soccer for 4 years.

Tom had a number of coaching assignments over the years at Central Islip; 9th grade wrestling, 9th grade basketball (2 years), 9th grade soccer (2 years) and assistant varsity gymnastics (1 year). Tommy states he “faked that one!” Tom also found time to coach “round ball” at Stony Brook University from 1972-1974. We can assure you however to each and every position he brought a dedication, winning spirit and concern for his student athletes.

It was on the “hardwood” that his star shone brightest. He worked his way up through the ranks; 9th grade basketball (3 years), JV (3years), Assistant Varsity (2 years) and finally to Varsity Basketball Coach (2years). He was assistant to his pal Ben, when CI won the Suffolk County AA Championship in 1988-1989. Tom followed up with a couple of highly successful years later at the helm. Unfortunately, illness curtailed his coaching career shortly thereafter.

Tom retired in 1994 after a long and successful career as a P.E. Instructor, Attendance Teacher and Coach. He and his wife Barbara live in Hampton Bays. He has two children. Son, Tom Jr. an attorney and a daughter Leigh, an Insurance Representative. He has a granddaughter Melissa who is currently a sophomore at Oswego State.

Tom and Barbara’s favorite shared pastimes of sailing and golf have been curtailed as of late due to Tom’s illness. He remains an avid reader and tv sports fan. His lifelong compatriot, Ben Morselli summed it up this way- “You couldn’t find a better, more supportive, stronger friend than Tommy.”

We are very proud and pleased to welcome a fine athlete, teacher, coach and indeed a truly good guy to the CI Sports Hall of Fame! Welcome COS!



Carolyn DiResta 1982

“If you can dream it, do it.” This is a motto of our 2017 inductee, Carolyn DiResta. Carolyn dreamed and it became a reality.

Always sports-minded, in the mid-70’s she became one of the initial girls to play in our Central Islip Baseball Little League. Not a small accomplishment, indeed. Two further sports ensued, as well. It was next the varsity girl’s tennis team her freshman through junior years at our high school where she competed at first singles during the latter two. Playing soccer for us at the junior and senior high school level enabled her to afterward perform admirably for many years with the formidable Hicksville Americans. But, not before deciding to play for the Boy’s SOCCER team in her senior year! Again, one of the first girls on Long Island to EVER accomplish that. She started at defense, midfield and forward. Dream it.

After having played two seasons at Suffolk Community College, our 1982 CI graduate kept on kicking it on the “pitch”. She has played in Portugal as a member of the women’s metro-select soccer team and, what’s more, she won a three-on-three National Tournament at Disneyworld. Where Dreams Come True. Carolyn, it most certainly has. Welcome.



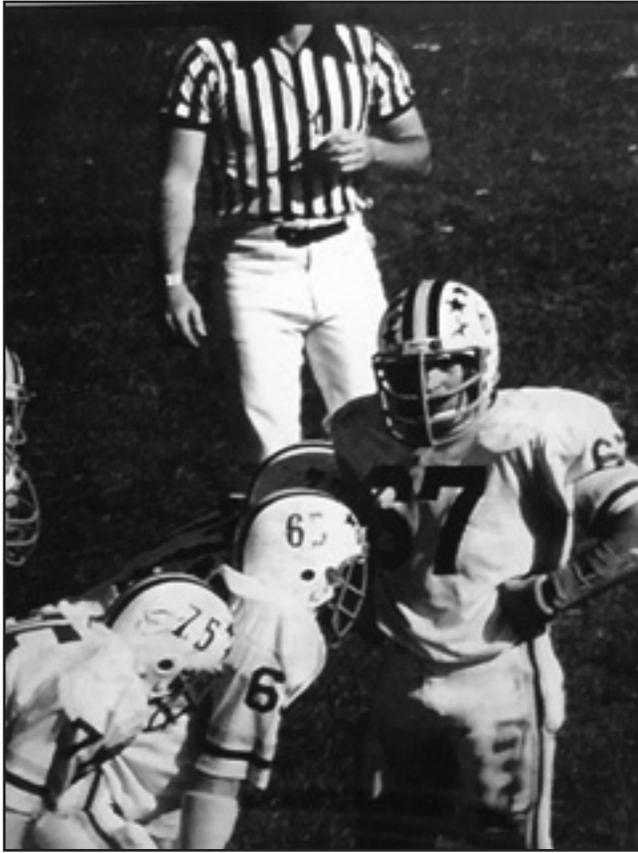
Tom Horan 1972

His Central Islip Little League Baseball coach of the CI Lions in the Major Division, (ages 10-12) said that watching Tom pitch was not dissimilar to seeing, “a man throwing against boys.” There was truly no other way to describe it. That year, Tom took the CI Moose travel team to the N.Y. State Championship where he struck out 21 consecutive batters in a seven inning game; bringing the championship to Central Islip in a 7-0 victory.

That team was coached by CI Sports Hall of Famer and former coach John DiClemente and Tom was voted Athlete of The Year in his division. Five years later it was time for Central Islip High School,

Lettering in football and baseball, Tom played on the varsity in both sports. He started on the gridiron all three years where we won a league championship (7-0-1) and was honored as an all-league baseball player during his junior and senior years, (1971-72). Tom continued playing on the diamond at Suffolk Community College and then at Florida Tech university.

Still an active member in the Central Islip Fire Department, now for 40 years, he was an active participant when the Hoboes won the N.Y. State Tournament in 1978. Yet, his community service hadn't stopped there. Tom managed in the CI Little League for 23 years. Married for 24 years to his sweetheart, the late Edie Johnson, they produced three terrific children: Kerry, Tom Jr, and Christine; all graduates of Central Islip High School. Just like their fine dad who joins his little league tournament coach in The Hall. Thanks, Tom, for your service. Welcome to The Hall.



Eddie Larkin

1977

Even at an early age, it was clearly easy to spot just how focused Eddie could be. In the school yard at St. John of God, running on cement- and ruining dress shoes by the score- the game of “Keep-Away’ signified in what later days at Central Islip High School coaches and teammates would come to acknowledge. For the 45 minutes recess at St John of God, the otherwise always mild and cheerful Edward Larkin was, well, a terror. Just try to “take back” the woolen hat used as the instrument of the desires of fellow students from Eddie’s hands while he ran at full speed. Even the toughest nun would wish no part of it.

Linebacker would be the position of choice for Eddie at CI. NFL coach and former (CI Sports Hall of Fame Inductee/2013) Mike Tice recalls his co-captain as “intense” and a “closer.” Our Hall of Fame President Coach Tom Black has said succinctly, “Give me 11 Eddie Larkin’s on both sides of the ball and I’ll win.” As a matter of fact, so devoted to winning was Eddie that life-long classmate and football teammate Chris Carpluk insists that during the heat of action, he regarded as Eddie screamed over to the sideline and demand that a CI player be taken off the field because, “He’s killing us!” While that player was a friend, ‘leadership takes over. No hard feelings.

It has been said that you can’t go home again. Eddie Larkin has never left. He states proudly that he wouldn’t wish to live anywhere else. When he does leave however, it usually involves long motorcycle rides to Upstate New York or Eastern Long Island. Yet, he always returns to his beloved Central Islip- and, now, to another home: The Central Islip Sports Hall of Fame.

Bill Lennon

1964



The Great Musketeer Football squads on the early 60's produced some outstanding players and a number of members to our hall. Today we go back in time to honor an individual who was not always in the spotlight on those great teams but provided the heart, soul and back bone of the squad. His teammate remarked "He was a guy who you wanted on your team in any sport". Of course, we are speaking of Bill Lennon.

Bill grew up?

Bill was a three-sport letterman for the Musketeers. Football (3 years) Including All-League honors his junior and senior years teaming up with Rich Specht to form one of the most fearsome defensive tackle tandems in Suffolk County History. He was an outstanding heavyweight wrestler for 3 years, finishing 2nd in the league for two years and on the baseball diamond he started for 3 years as a hard hitting first baseman earning All-league honors his final season.

After graduating, Bill attended the University of Connecticut where he played linebacker under Coach Lou Holtz until his athletic career was unfortunately was cut short by a very serious leg injury. Bill went on to graduate with a BS Degree in Economics. He then entered the work force first in the insurance industry and later started his own home construction business where he prospered for 29 years.

He and his wife Susanna (of 48 years) are retired and make their home in Mansfield, Connecticut. They have two daughters Stephanie, Shannon, (Husband David) and three grandchildren; twins Griffin and Owen (12) and Elise (8).

Susanna and Bill keep busy with travel to Florida and their summer home on Lake Balch in New Hampshire. Bill also enjoys woodworking and building fine furniture.

In looking back on his years in CI Bill stated, "We won a lot of games and took home some serious hardware, but the best thing about those times were the love, friendship and great memories of my teammates I will have with me forever. I will add this day to it!"



Jack Menechino

1957

The committee is “All Aboard” with an outstanding athlete of the 1950’s who is our next honoree. Jack Menechino moved to Central Islip with his family in 1950 and immediately began playing sports in the 7th grade. As a high school freshman, he started as a fullback on the varsity soccer team and continued in that position through his senior year. That final year the team had an outstanding 11-1 record, losing out on a county title only to Brentwood who finished 11-0-1.

Jack was also a standout on the “hardwood” playing JV basketball for 2 years and Varsity his junior and senior years. He started on the baseball diamond all four years of varsity ball and was named Team Captain in his senior year.

To further enhance his status as a fine all-round athlete Jack was on the varsity bowling team (1 year) and lettered in track for 2 years. Old teammates still recall to this day terrific performances turned in by our inductee in all areas of competition.

Jack was active in all aspects of high school life as a member of the junior prom committee; senior play committee, yearbook staff, glee club, varsity club and freshman class president. He also won the prestigious NYS Award for Outstanding Achievement in Industrial Arts.

At the same time (1958) he married his high school sweetheart, the former Pat McGuire, a loving union that has lasted for 59 years and produced five children and eight grandchildren! Their son Frank is a retired businessman; son John an attorney; daughter Sheila-office manager and paralegal; son Justin- works for CI School District and daughter Alicia-also a lawyer. Those accomplishments alone deserve fame status!

Jack worked as a locomotive engineer on the LIRR for over 25 years- Always on time and on track! He also found time to play soccer for the LIRR team in a semi-pro league. In retirement, he has remained active, employing his woodworking talents to make projects for the family and maintain and improve his beautiful historic home in Islip. Jack most recently remodeled his entire kitchen, handcrafting all new oak cabinets. Perhaps we can get a discount on some work around our homes! Jack and Pat also spend a good deal of their time enjoying their country home in the Catskills.

So today, he’s mount in to the cabin, he’s got the throttle in his hand, he’s steamin’ and rollin’; next stop Central Islip and the Sports Hall of Fame!

Chuck McAuley

1996



Our next honoree brings an International Flavor to the Hall. He has coached and mentored basketball around Long Island, the U.S. and the world. He has walked the courts in Sweden, France, Puerto Rico and Aruba. He has worked with noted success at the secondary, college and professional levels, always with dedication, compassion, grace and a constant sense of humor. He is widely recognized as the “Foreign Ambassador of Basketball” in Aruba.

Chuck was a product of Crafton High School in Pittsburg Pennsylvania where he played football and baseball. On graduation, he attended Muskingum College lettering in football and wrestling and received a BS Degree in 1958. He coached for 3 years at the high school level at several schools in Pennsylvania. Chuck began his college coaching

career at Washington & Jefferson College in Pennsylvania (1960-63) where he was an assistant in football and basketball and head tennis coach. In 1963, he led W&J to the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference Basketball Championship.

1964-1970 found him at Connetquot High School with 4 years as assistant football coach and 2 years as head basketball coach making the county playoffs in 1966, losing to Tom Reilly and Tom Black. In 1967, he joined the college ranks again as an assistant under Frank Layden (2 years) and later Dick Berd (2 years) at Dowling College. Next step up the ladder were three terrific years at St. John’s University. As assistant to Frank Mulzoff. During that period, the “Johnnie’s” became the fourth college ever to win 1,000 games. They received NIT bids in 71-71, made appearances in the New Mexico Christmas Tournament 1972, won the Vanderbilt Christmas Tournament in 1971 and the Madison Square-Garden Christmas Tournament in 1973, in addition to an NCAA Bid. He also found time to assist with the Swedish Olympic Team in 1971. Quite a run!

In 1974 and 1975 Chuck became Bellport High School’s first football coach going 0-6 in year one but squaring the record at 4-4 next year. He became Athletic Director at Connetquot HS from 1976-1981. During that same period, he also coached along with Frank Mulzoff for the Long Island Ducks of the Eastern Basketball League in the old Com-mack Arena and later in the USBL.

In 1983 Chuck was back at courtside coaching with Herb Brown in Puerto Rico. From there he found his way to Central Islip as an energetic, effective, and popular Athletic Director from 1984- 88. Chuck states his fondest and proudest memory of this time was receiving the H.S. Yearbook’s Dedication in 1985. In this same time frame he ran summer basketball camps for West Islip and summer camps in France for 3 years along with Dick Berg, Frank Mulzoff and Jim Colcough. A real All-Star line up!

Chuck wasn’t done yet... in 1989 he was back at Connetquot Junior High School as football coach for a 9-year tour. Retiring in 1996, he capped this remarkable coaching odyssey by working part-time with young basketball players in Aruba from 1997- to present.

We wonder if they will need a basketball program later on down the road on Mars. They’ll be looking for Chuck!

Now with some spare time, Chuck relaxes with Jill, his loving companion of many years sharing time between Long Island, Florida, and of course, Aruba. He feels he is “in the twilight of a mediocre career,” but keeps his competitive edge by “shooting” raps with John Shaughnessy in Aruba.

In closing, Chuck states he has been privileged to work throughout his life with many great coaches, some of whom we’ve mentioned, and blessed to have had the opportunity to positively influence in some small way the lives of so many young people as part of a game he truly loves. Well done Chuck and welcome to the Hall.



Ed McGuire 1965

Our next inductee has deep roots in CI. His mom and dad were lifelong residents and he grew up on St. John's Avenue with his two brothers, Joe and Jim and where his grandparents, aunt, uncle and cousins also lived. Family was always paramount. Ed attended St. John of God's Parochial School (Grades 1-8, Now Our Lady of Providence). He played on St. John's basketball team coached by John Abbenante and played little league on the old McGowan Field.

Ed went to CIHS (now Reed School)

in the fall of 1961 and went on to a four-year career on the gridiron which saw him become one of the bedrocks on teams that were perhaps the best in the history of Musketeers football. He lettered in the winning teams of 1962, 63 and 64 (undefeated span of 39 games).

He was voted team co-captain, along with Tommy Black and Bennie King, in his senior year when CI won the Rutgers Championship as the top squad in Suffolk County. Ed starred at offensive guard and middle linebacker as a "Hammer" on both sides of the ball. However, Ed characteristically credits his teammates and his coaches (Goldstein, Abbenante, Sullins and Williams) for their dedication, innovation and teamwork in bringing about a winning spirit and tradition for the Purple & Gold!

After graduating from Central Islip High School, Ed attended four years at Eastern Kentucky University and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics. He started his professional career as a computer programmer for Sperry Rand Corp and later joined the New York Times. Over a ten-year period at the NY Times, he held a number of computer systems development and senior management positions. He later started a computer software consulting business and over a twenty-year period he developed proprietary computer software that has been used by many banking, financial services and telecommunications firms. Ed is now semi-retired and continues to provide technical consulting services.

Ed and his CI high school sweetheart, Joyce Wilmont, recently celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Joyce and Ed are the proud parents of four children. Ed Jr., a USMA/ West Point graduate and lacrosse player, is a Regional Sales Director for a major computer software security firm, Sean is a manager for a large Long Island irrigation company, Brian is a manager with an international mining/tunneling company and Kimberly, a Johnson & Wales graduate, runs her own hospitality consulting services firm. Joyce and Ed have six wonderful grandchildren (Jared, Kelsey, Ryder, Luciana, Kai and Matthew) who keep them Very Busy to say the least. What a terrific parenting and family resume! In his spare time, Ed is an avid fisherman and travels frequently to Florida and Aruba.

We are indeed proud to welcome this Central Islip Champion to the Sports Hall of Fame.

Pete O'Leary

1962

For only the second time in the history of the Hall the committee has chosen a native son who by fate and faith grew up in CI, but attended a catholic high school, thus depriving the Musketeers of a truly exceptional athlete. The O'Leary family, headed by George and Peggy moved to Central Islip in September 1957.

Pete is the oldest of eight children which includes George and Terry, current members of the CI Hall of Fame.

A 1958 graduate of St. John of God Elementary School, Pete attended Seton Hall HS (Sept 1958-Jun_e 1962) in Patchogue where he excelled in three varsity sports; football, basketball and baseball. Seton Hall HS was a member of the Nassau-Suffolk Catholic School League and during his scholastic athletic career, Pete attained several All-Star recognitions including All-League Baseball in his sophomore, junior and senior years, a League MVP in his junior and senior years All League Football and Basketball in his junior and senior years. In baseball, Pete's batting averages in his 3 years of Varsity completion was

.424, .514 and .484 which resulted in a special tryout in the Polo Grounds with the New York Mets in June of 1962. Other major league teams expressed interest were the Boston Red Sox, the New York Yankees, and the Kansas City Athletics.

Opting to attend college, Pete played football and basketball for Farmingdale College and basketball for LIU/Southampton College. He is the recipient of an Associate's Degree in Police Science and a Bachelor Degree in Criminal Justice and Sociology. Drafted into the US Army and stationed in Berlin, Germany, Pete played football for the Berlin Brigade team in the USAREUR league and basketball on the battalion level. Immediately after his military service, Pete became a member of the Suffolk County Police Department in January of 1968 and retired from the same in August of 2003. During his police career, Pete participated on the department's softball and basketball teams garnering MVP and All-Tournament honors several times with the softball team while participating in league and national level Police Tournaments. Pete also played 4 years for the legendary County Sports softball team, a member of the Men's ASA Major Open League and Men's USSA Majors, traveling all over the country participating in National Invitational Tournaments. On more than one occasion, Pete was awarded All-Tournament status and on another occasion placed second in a National Home Run hitting contest in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Besides his participation in sports, Pete spent 36 years with the Suffolk County Police Department spending the last 17 years as the President of the Detectives Association. After retirement in August of 2003, Pete was elected to the Suffolk County Legislature and remained in same until January of 2006. Currently, Pete is employed with the Town of Brookhaven for the last 8 years and serves as its Commissioner of Public Safety. Sadly, in March of 2015 Pete's wife of 47 years, Carol, passed away leaving behind four married children, Brian (Debbie), Jennifer (Michael), Kevin (Elizabeth), and Peter (Aimee) and seven grandchildren: Ellen, Kate, Michael, Lauren, Lexie, Emma and Colin. Now at age 73, Pete is looking forward to full retirement in the near future to spend more quality time with his family, continue his passion for golf, and hopefully complete his "Bucket List". Hopefully, being a member of the Central Islip Hall of Fame was on that list! Well done and welcome Pete.





Bob Stallworth 1974

TEAM PLAYER, SHARP SHOOTER, KIND, HUMBLE, SPIRITED, RESILIENT ... are just a few words to describe Robert 'Bob' Stallworth.

Bob was born in a small town in Alabama but headed to big city New York in aspiration of a sports career. He was excited to play on the big stage of New York City, where basketball stars seem to be created and developed. During his middle school days, his family relocated to Central Islip where he spent most of his time mastering his craft, especially his ball handling skills while playing the summers in the well reknown Rucker league.

Practice made perfection, as he mastered football, baseball and basketball in high school. The passion embedded in his heart was basketball, where he played small forward and averaged close to 30 points a game during his high school career.

Although he received a number of individual awards and recognition from All League, All County and MVP, if you ask Bob, even today, what his fondest memory is he would state "the sacrifices he made with his teammates to be great "on the 1973-74 team. Bob, the co-captain of the team, always believed that the team comes first and that success can only be achieved together. That was so true, as the team went undefeated throughout the entire season and won the County Championship. Bob was named Most Valuable Player for the tournament

After graduating high school, Bob received a basketball scholarship to Davis Elkins College in West Virginia. He also played basketball at Suffolk Community College and CW Post. Bob, who resides in Massachusetts, recently suffered a stroke but enjoys watching basketball games with his two daughters, Sophia, Marqueteria and his granddaughter Alyissha.

Although Bob is unable to play the game today, he continues to positively touch people everyday with his big smile sharing all the life lessons that basketball has taught him.

Joie Skipwith 1980



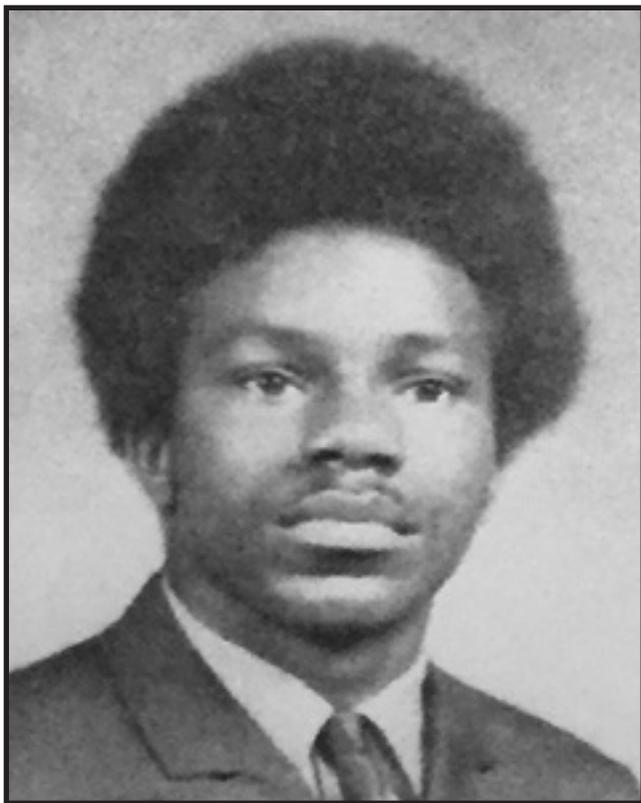
It is often said throughout the world of athletics that exceptional athletes are blessed with speed or size and sometimes both, two characteristics that cannot be taught. Joie Skipwith is one such athlete. Joie's speed transcended onto the basketball court and he credits his running ability to chasing his older brothers around when they were growing up.

Like most kids, he played several sports up through Jr. High but once he entered high school his mother had one house rule. He was to pick one sport. Luckily for Central Islip High School, he chose basketball and with hard work he truly mastered the game. If personal accolades and accomplishments are used to measure a player's importance to a team, then his are certainly worth mentioning.

In 1980, his Senior year, Joie not only earned AII League and All-County honors, but he was also selected to the All-Long Island Team Joie was the prototypical point guard, compiling a 19.5 game point average while his team won League III Championships in 1979 and again in their 1980 undefeated season.

Upon graduating from high school, he attended Suffolk Community College and played under Coach Joe Pellicane, who later became coach of St John's University Women's Basketball team.

A resident of Central Islip, Joie has five children and two stepchildren. Another important accomplishment in his life was when he became an ordained minister. in 2000. He currently serves St. Marks church right here in Central Islip I Congratulations to you Joie Skipwith, because you are now enshrined in the Central Islip Sports Hall of Fame

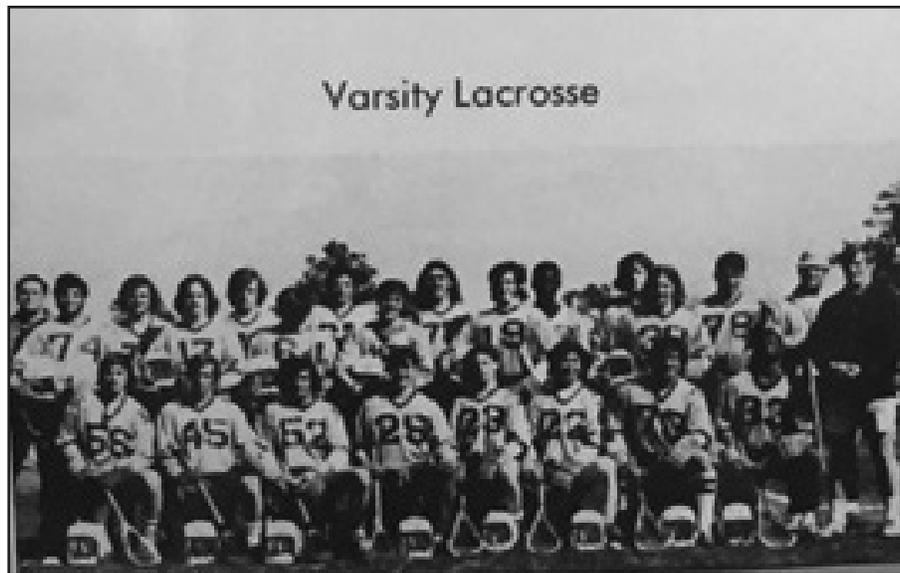


Noel Walker
1972

Noel Walker was born in Virginia before moving to New York. During his middle school years his mother relocated from Brooklyn to Central Islip. Noel played football and ran track. He excelled in football was co-captain his senior year and made All League and All County. Noel received a scholarship to the University at Albany to play football.

After leaving Albany he worked for the Long Island Railroad as an engineer. Noel married Linda Curry they had two boys Andre and Rasheed. Andre works for Merck as an Associate Director of Biologics External Manufacturing. Rasheed works for Chubb Insurance as a Technical Analyst. Noel now resides in Hartford, CT and is disabled.

Central Islip Varsity Lacrosse 1974



In 1971, Central Islip started a Lacrosse Team under the coaching staff of George O'Leary. By 1974, the team only lost one league game and, therefore, won the League Championship. They went on to play for the County Championship and lost in the final game to Wald Melville by a low scoring game. This accomplishment happened with a Central Islip team playing together for only three years. Coach O'Leary stated this was done with hard work and PRIDE, which Central Islip has always had.

St. John of God Roller Hockey



St. John of God Roller Hockey has been a staple in the Central Islip community since 1972. Tens of thousands of boys and girls ages 5 thru 17 from the Central Islip community and beyond cherish the memory of a sports program like no other. For five decades it has been a safe haven for our youth to gather from September to April, learn the great game of hockey, develop lifelong friendships and participate in charitable and community service activities.

The program is a not for profit. Everyone in the program is a volunteer. Coaches, referees and administrators do not get paid. Today we have about 400 players in our league consisting of 23 teams in 3 divisions (peewees 10 and under, juniors 11 to 13 and seniors 14 to 17). All the money raised thru registration, snack shack, golf outing, 5k run and merchandise sales is donated back in some form. The league gives annual donations to the church and supports families stricken with sudden illnesses and even death. Our Thanksgiving food drive produced 200 food baskets that were distributed thru the parish outreach to Central Islip's most needy families. last year's Christmas party attended by hundreds of Central Islip school aged children benefited from our toy drive. The John Theissen Children's Foundation, the Team Up for Community W20 Foundation and the New York Islanders are proud partners of St. John of God Roller Hockey.

The charitable and community service activities are a vital part of our league, but it is the high level of play that separates us from all other youth hockey leagues. From the age of 5 players are taught to play the game with the same set of rules as their NHL heroes (without the fighting). A full checking league beginning so young is unprecedented. We are proud of the successes of our current and former players who used our league as a stepping stone to their hockey careers. Former SJOG Roller hockey alumni play travel hockey, attend prep school, play college hockey and even professionally. One former player Pat Cannone, played in the Frozen Four Division I national championship at the University of Miami Ohio, was the AHL All-Star game MVP and now is a member of the Minnesota Wild organization. Robert Mastrosimone currently plays at Shattuck St. Mary's in Minnesota the #1 prep school in the country also attended by Sidney Crosby. Robert is projected to be drafted in the 2019 NHL Draft.

We are extremely proud of the recent successes of our players, but it is the rich history and evolution of the league that makes it so special. A parish priest and hockey fan Fr. John Mazaris began the program in the early 70's with a small number of boys enough to fill two teams. The games were played in the church parking lot with no boards or benches just some old telephone poles laid down and chain link fence. A roll of electrical tape

was used as a puck. Within two years the number of teams grew to four and Central Islip residents Tom Hayden, Chuck Bedard, Joe McDermott, Tom Reilly and Dennis Albano to name a few were responsible for growing the program during its infant stages. The success of the NHL New York Islanders in the early 80's created another enrollment boom for our league. It was during this period that the three divisions were formed, the league received a CYO designation and enrollment tripled with a nominal registration fee of about \$35. This was also one of the saddest times in league history as one of our players Kevin Devine lost his life to a tragic motorcycle accident. For the past 30 years we have honored Kevin's memory by naming the playoff MVP trophy the Kevin Devine Memorial.

By the early 90's we were fortunate that a few of our volunteer coaches were also construction contractors. This one time church parking lot was now transformed into a hockey rink with plywood boards. The surface was seal coated and the electrical tape became obsolete and we began using a rubber puck with teflon nubs. The skates the players used also changed during the early 90's. The four wheel quads were no longer used and inline skates were introduced to our league. The speed of the game changed dramatically with the new boards, surface, puck and skates. We began the 90's with four peewee teams and ballooned to eight in a few short years. The New York Rangers Stanley Cup victory in 1994 once again brought hockey to the forefront in our area.

The attacks on September 11, 2001 of the World Trade Center had a significant effect on our league. FDNY fire-fighters Michael Otten and John Crisci were fathers of players in our league at the time of the attacks. We also mourned the loss of SJOG alumni and Central Islip resident FDNY firefighter Kevin Bracken. Kevin played in the late 70's and early 80's. The love and support shown to the Otten and Crisci families by both our players and their parents was very overwhelming.

We were very blessed to have supportive pastors over the past 44 years particularly Father Halpin and Father Granata. But In 2003 our league was brought to a new level by the announcement that Fr. Jim Kissane was the new pastor. He was a young energetic priest with a passion for people. He immediately immersed himself into the league and the Central Islip community. Fr. Jim had a vision and began a parish restoration fund, which included upgrading the hockey rink. All the plans were put into place. A \$125,000 rink restoration was in full swing thanks to the partnership of the New York Islanders who helped fund the project. However tragically before the project was complete Fr. Jim was stricken with pancreatic cancer. He was inexplicably taken from us at the young age of 44 in December of 2009. We vowed to carry on his plan and in September 2010 did exactly that. The ribbon cutting ceremony was carried by all the local media outlets. Newsday, News 12 and the New York Islanders themselves watched as the new rink was unveiled and named in Fr. Jim's memory. His legacy will be carried on for as long as our program exists.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Central Islip Sports Hall of Fame committee members for considering our program. We pride ourselves in being the best kept secret in town, but it certainly is nice to be recognized for the wonderful accomplishments I was able to share with you in this letter. I encourage you to Google Saint John of God Roller Hockey and read the various articles written about the program over the years. Also visit our website at sjoghockey.com.

My family has been Central Islip residents for the past 45 years and I truly believe in CI Pride.

Anthony Ceccarini
League Commissioner



Garnett Thompson 1998

* Perseverance: steadfastness in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

In 1986, Garnett's folks moved his family from Queens to Central Islip, so one could say Queens' loss was CI's gain because as the years went by it was easy to see that Garnett could flat out play basketball. Standing at 6' 9", this big man could not only score and grab rebounds like a power forward should, but also run up and down the court with the ball like a guard. Nicknamed "THE BIG TICKET" throughout his playing days in high school, college, and as a professional player in Lebanon} one would only have to You Tube game highlights to understand the moniker bestowed upon him by his teammates.

Garnett's road to success began as a forward while playing for Coach Mott and Coach Charlton as a Junior and Senior. He earned All-League and All-County honors as a Senior, while averaging 16 points and 12 rebounds per game, guiding his team to the playoffs. After high school, he headed to Farmingdale State University but something wasn't quite right.

He transferred to Suffolk Community College where he became a highly recruited and sought after JUCO player, so much so that he earned Player of The Year honors and was one of five players to make the All-America First Team. Hard work and tenacity led him to Providence College where he played for one season.

The stage was set for bigger things but at 23 and about to sign his first pro contract in Israel, Garnett suffered a serious knee injury which kept him from the court for two years. Over those two years he trained hard to rehab his knee and then finally, at 25 he signed his first professional contract.

Garnett has played in Poland, China, and the Middle East. He was also nationalized to play with the Lebanese National Team where he won a gold medal in the West Asia Basketball Association. Currently he is playing for a team in Lebanon in what may be his final season before retirement. For the moment, he is the assistant coach of a Division II, women's professional league team and if they win their league they will move up to the top division and he will be named their head coach!

Aside from basketball, Garnett is also involved in many business endeavors which include a non-alcoholic energy drink called IIC_ Thug". So, what does the future hold for Garnett Thompson? One can only guess that his perseverance will lead to future successes. For now, though, let's welcome Garnett Thompson, liThe BIG TICKET" back home, home to the Central Islip High School Sports Hall of Fame!

