

# FINGER LAKES TIMES

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## IMPACT PANEL: DON'T IGNORE SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSIONS

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GENEVA — Ray Ciancaglini modestly — almost uncomfortably — acknowledged the standing ovation he received Tuesday from a packed ballroom at Belhurst. Ciancaglini's foundation, The Second Impact, hosted the night's educational seminar on concussions.

The Geneva native and former middleweight boxer

would prefer that people remember his message instead of the messenger.

Meet Ray once and you realize that's a hard thing to do.

The Second Impact strives to educate athletes about concussion awareness. Ciancaglini is fighting Dementia Pugilistica and Parkinson's Syndrome, the result of his days in the boxing ring. His efforts with The Second Impact have

drawn national attention.

"In a career that spanned close to a decade — 1966 to '74 — I was never knocked out," Ciancaglini told the audience of about 250. "My only regret as a boxer was that I didn't defeat my toughest opponent. That opponent was a concussion."

The program included master of ceremonies Jason Feinberg, the chief medical

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Spencer Tulis / Finger Lakes Times

An educational seminar on concussions was held at Belhurst Tuesday. It was presented by Ray Ciancaglini (above) and his foundation, The Second Impact, and sponsored by the University of Rochester Medical Center's Center for Experiential Learning.

# IMPACT

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officer at Finger Lakes Health; Sen. Michael Nozzolio, R-54 of Fayette; Dr. Jeff Bazarian of the University of Rochester Medical Center, an emergency physician who runs a sports-concussion clinical research program; Jeff Bray, athletic trainer at Keuka College; and Tom Del Papa, physical therapist and outpatient coordinator for Finger Lakes Health.

The seminar centered on new technologies in concussion awareness and the role of high school and college educators in managing student-athletes with concussions.

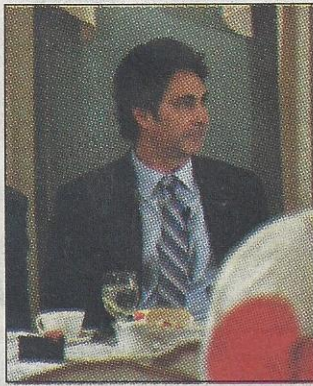
Nozzolio, who worked with Ciancaglini and sponsored the New York State Concussion Management Awareness Act, praised Ciancaglini's efforts: "It's a story about how one man can make a difference."

It solicited the night's first standing ovation for Ciancaglini.

"It's so heart-felt for me to see everyone here," Ciancaglini said afterward. "It's been so tough; I had to change a lot of mindsets and attitudes. I'm not going to give up."

"My resiliency and determination got me into trouble, and that's what's going to see this program through."

In his speech, Ciancaglini talked about his inspiration: Watching



Spencer Tulis / Finger Lakes Times

**Dr. Jeff Bazarian of the University of Rochester was the keynote speaker at an educational seminar on concussions Tuesday at Belhurst.**

world-champion boxer Carmen Basilio on a black-and-white television at his grandparents' restaurant when he was a youngster.

He then took the crowd through his boxing career, and to back-to-back fights within a week in which he received staggering punches to the head. Ciancaglini believes these two bouts were the source of his health concerns.

He went to numerous doctors and neurologists, but the technology of the time limited their evaluation. There also was peer pressure — veteran boxers telling him that his symptoms were part of the game and to "shake it off."

It led to a slippery slope of medications to dull the constant headaches and fatigue, and a stubborn mindset that told him to

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— **RAY  
CIANCAGLINI**

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ignore his symptoms and keep boxing.

"The consequences of my actions have so deeply affected my life," he said. "In telling my story, my goal was to educate athletes about the mistakes I made with the hope that no one will suffer the same fate as me."

Ciancaglini credited his wife Patti for supporting him and staying by his side and adamantly says he is not against kids competing in sports. If given a chance to live his life again, he said he would still pursue a boxing career. But the second time around he would treat his concussion symptoms immediately.

He concluded his speech with a poignant thought that summed up The Second Impact and his desire for athletes to take concussions seriously.

"I would not be here speaking to you if I had addressed my first concussion properly."

After Ciancaglini's speech, Bazarian, Bray and Del Papa talked about advances in diagnosing and treating concussions, especially in young athletes. Their talks were followed by a question-and-answer session with the audience.