

RIDGEFIELD OLD TIMERS ASSOCIATION



24TH ANNUAL DINNER
OCTOBER 17, 2015

A message from the president

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people and local businesses for sponsoring this program as well as those contributing to our Silent Auction. Without your help this program and this evening would not be possible.

Congratulations to tonight's honorees and their families; including our two, four-year scholarship winners from the Ridgefield High School graduating class of 2015; Kathryn Middlebrook and Mark Liguori. Kathryn and Mark are our 45th and 46th scholarship winners. This year we awarded a 1 year scholarship to two more outstanding students, Elizabeth Browne and Cavan Briody.

We are delighted to have our annual dinner in Ridgefield at St. Mary Parish. The past few years have been some of the most successful dinners in more than a decade. Thank you to St. Mary Parish for being a wonderful host and for allowing us to use their hall.

The purpose of this dinner is to honor Ridgefielders for their past accomplishment on the athletic field and classroom along with honoring Ridgefielders who have dedicated countless hours for the benefit of our town. This dinner also helps us to raise money to fund our scholarships. We are one of the few organizations which give our scholarship recipients a check for all four years of their undergraduate studies.

I would like to thank the members of the Ridgefield Old Timers Association for their continued hard work; Darla Shaw, Terry Hughes, John Pierandri, and Jake Kara for putting together all the biographies for this program; Gregg Hutchings for organizing the ads for this program and Mark Lionetti who took on the task of organizing all the bios and adds and making sure of the program's completion. Thanks to Doug Clewell and Terry Hughes for handling our ticket sales, as well as the staff at the Ridgefield Town Clerks office for their continued help. I would like to thank Barry Finch for organizing our entertainment at tonight's banquet; The Senior Melodiers along with Walter Feltmate playing the piano. Thanks to John Pierandri and Mark Lionetti for heading our scholarship committee and picking this year's winners. New member Sarah Flanagan has helped in several of this past year endeavors. Last but by all means not least I would like to acknowledge Mannette Hutchings for running our silent auction as well as setting up this event. I would like to thank Ridgefield Prime for serving us a delicious dinner tonight, please support this exceptional local business.

I would like to make a plea to everyone reading this to consider becoming an active member of this organization. As I stated earlier we provide a wonderful scholarship to deserving RHS graduates and for this to continue we need your help. You can go on our website, Ridgefieldoldtimers.org, to see when our next meeting will take place or feel free to email me at Fitzfive@att.net.

Finally, as many of you know, we lost one of our most valuable members, Tom Belote, who passed away last month. Tom will be sorely missed not only by this organization but by the town of Ridgefield. Tom was a fountain of knowledge for our group and not only wrote many of the bios that appeared in the annual program, he was key to nominating many of our past honorees. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Jane and his entire family.

Thank you all for coming out tonight to support a great cause. I hope you enjoy the evening.

Mark Fitzgerald
President, ROTA

The 24th annual *Ridgefield Old Timers dinner*

Saturday, Oct. 17, 2015

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Who's in charge of the Old Timers?

The Officers

Mark Fitzgerald, chairman; Gregg Hutchings, secretary;
Mark Lionetti, treasurer.

2015 Committees

Awards Dinner Committee, Mark Fitzgerald, Gregg Hutchings, Mark Lionetti,
Pat Ligos, Doug Clewell, Terry Hughes, George Hanlon, Rick Rowella.

Program and Biographies, Gregg Hutchings, John Pierandri, Barry Finch, Jack
O'Keefe, Darla Shaw. **Silent Auction**, Manette Hutchings, Sarah Flanagan,
Andree Fitzgerald. **Scholarship Committee**, Reed Whipple, John Pierandri,
Mark Fitzgerald.

Former Chairmen

Paul Baker, James Belote, Tom Belote, George Hanlon, Frank Lancaster Sr.,
Rudy Marconi, Andy Montanari Sr., Jay Montanari, John Pierandri.

Civic Award: Liz and Steven Goldstone

Two extraordinary philanthropists

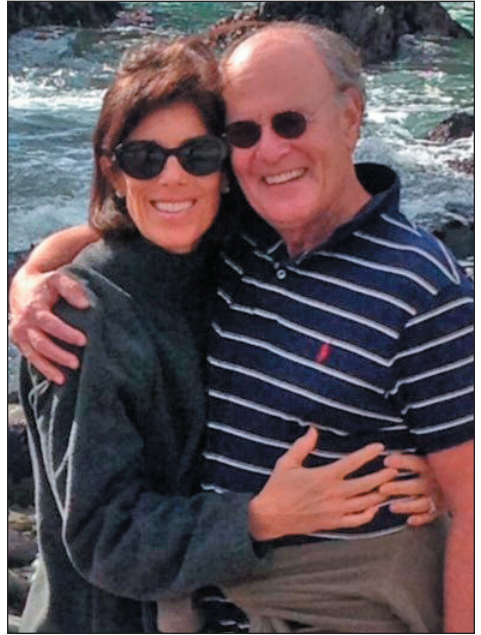
Liz and Steven Goldstone have called Ridgefield, CT their home for over 22 years.

Liz grew up in Greenwich, CT and received her B.S. in nursing from Columbia University. She is a registered dietician and has an M.S. in Nutrition from N.Y.U. Steve grew up in New Rochelle, NY and received his B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and his law degree from N.Y.U. He was a partner in the Wall Street law firm of Davis Polk and Wardwell for many years until he joined RJR Nabisco as Chairman and C.E.O. He is currently Chairman of ConAgra Foods, one of the largest producers of packaged food products in North America.

Just as soon as they arrived in town, Liz and Steve became actively involved in the community, Steve as a trustee of The Aldrich Museum and Liz as a volunteer on many committees related to their children's schools and activities. Once their children got a little older their philanthropic interests began to gravitate towards projects and organizations in town where they could make a meaningful impact. They not only contributed financially, but also actively got involved, rolling up their sleeves to organize, design, execute and promote the causes they supported.

Their first large philanthropic endeavor in Ridgefield was Founders Hall, a joint venture with the Couri Family. With over 3,200 members, Founders Hall is a beautiful place that has become a center for life-long learning, fitness and fun for Ridgefielders over 60 years of age. Ask any member and he or she will tell you how much Founders Hall has enriched life in Ridgefield. It has become an aspirational model for other towns in Connecticut and elsewhere.

Steve's love of baseball got him interested in improving the old high school field and led to the creation of a beautiful new complex, Governor's Park. With new landscaping, brick walls and walkways,



Liz and Steven Goldstone

covered stands and a full service snack bar, the park is recognized as one of the premier baseball fields in Connecticut.

Liz's healthcare background led her to align with Danbury Hospital and fund a program to promote a patient-centered culture and help families and caregivers navigate the complexities involved when a family member becomes ill. In September, The Goldstone Caregiver Center will be open at Danbury Hospital. Liz has been instrumental in the design of the center. This is the first Caregiver Center in the State of Connecticut and should help caregivers identify and access resources to navigate next steps for care programs. As an officer and member of the Board of Directors of the Lounsbury House, Liz has been actively involved in creating a strategic vision, designing its renovation and raising the necessary funds to improve the interiors and add an exterior garden.

In the Danbury area, they have partnered with the Housatonic chapter of Habitat for Humanity to sponsor eight homes and thereby assist hard-working families live out the dream of home ownership. They have also been an early and primary sponsor of TBICO, an organization that is devoted to helping women learn the skills necessary to get meaningful jobs in a competitive market place.

Back in Ridgefield, Liz and Steve have been instrumental in bringing organizations together to create worthwhile projects. Recently they worked with The Ridgefield Parks and Recreation Department, The Board of Education and Ability Beyond to create the Spray Bay Water Park, which provides a platform to operate a job skills training program for students with developmental disabilities. Parks and Recreation pays the participants, as they would any other employee, and the Board of Education provides mentors/job coaches, so students are able to build marketable job skills. The operational hours that

aren't covered by the students, are filled with individuals through Ability Beyond, another program that serves individuals with developmental disabilities. Liz and Steve also recently pulled together a group of four families to assist with the startup costs associated with Rides for Ridgefield, an alliance that provides transportation for Ridgefield seniors and disabled residents.

Liz and Steve are supporters of the annual financial campaigns of many of the terrific non-profit organizations in town and have been principal supporters of the important capital campaigns of Ridgefield's major organizations such as The Aldrich, The Ridgefield Boys & Girls Club, The Ridgefield Library, The Ridgefield RVNA and, most recently, The Lounsbury House.

The Goldstones have enjoyed raising their family in Ridgefield and are appreciative of the many good friends they have made here over the years. They feel very fortunate to be involved in such a wonderful community.

Congratulations to

Don Innamorato



***EVERYTHING
MATTERS***

The RHS Football Team thanks The Ridgefield Old Timers
for 20+ years of commitment to our athletic community.



Bob Cox: Dynamic classes and respect for students

Distinguished Educator: Robert Cox

The teacher they remember

When almost any student who has attended Ridgefield High School, in the last 35 years, is asked about their high school memories, they recall Mr. Bob Cox. They remember his name, his dynamic classes, his powerful sense of humor, the care and respect he had for students, and his tremendous knowledge base. How could you not remember this amazingly talented man?

Mr. Cox taught all levels of English classes at Ridgefield High School for 31 years. The majority of this time he also acted at the English Dept. head, was the advisor to Lodestar (the literary publication), and gave memorable graduation speeches. When asked what he was most proud of during his tenure, Mr. Cox replied, "Working with Kathy Wassall to constantly improve the writing component of our curriculum."

Since providing the best education to Ridgefield students has always been a priority in Mr. Cox's life, he went on to serve four years on the Board of Education after retirement. There were some very tough financial issues to deal with during his term, but Mr. Cox felt that the contributions he made were very worthwhile.

Mr. Cox is officially retired, but not really. He went to Israel to teach for four years at the Ben-Gurion University, taught as an adjunct at Fairfield University for five years, is continually a permanent sub for the young English teachers who go on maternity leave, tutors numerous students, and runs a home school program for a small group of students.

Mr. Cox is a product of St. John's School in Stamford, St. Francis College in Pennsylvania and Stony Brook University on Long Island.

He has written extensively and loves to blog on a variety of topics. Some day he truly needs to write a book on how to be a master English teacher, along with Kathy Wassall, of course.

When asked about his philosophy of education, Mr. Cox replied, "I believe in teaching in a problem solution mode and

frame my assignments to meet this need. Throughout a student's life they will need to be able to think critically to solve their own problems and the world's problems. When you teach in a manner that is open ended and has direct application, students want to learn and can even have fun doing so."

Sports Award: Don Innamorato, Class of 1979

'New kid' became a four-sport star

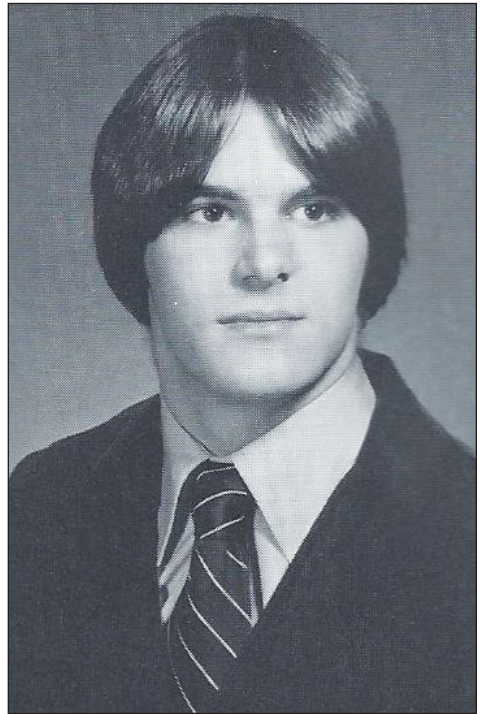
A transplant from New Jersey in 1976 Don Innamorato became at home in Ridgefield in the athletic arena almost immediately. For many teenagers moving to a new town and being "the new kid" could be an unhappy event. Don never showed any ill effect from the move, not in the classroom or on the athletic field or mat.

In the fall of 1976 Don (known to his friends back then as Donnie) was a starter on the JV football team and saw enough action on the varsity squad on special team and as a cornerback to earn a varsity letter. In the winter he was at the top of his weight class on the RHS varsity wrestling team. If two sports were not enough Don ran outdoor track as well.

Don's junior and senior years were exceptional. He was a two year starter at cornerback on varsity football, earning first team All-FCIAC honors both years. He led the team in interceptions both years as well. His senior year he was honored by his teammates when he was elected captain of the team.

Some of Don's teammates on those teams were former honorees, Paul Bossidy ('78) and Mike Harris ('78) as well as Dennis Dombrowski ('79), Tony Madigan ('79), Paul Corbani ('79) and Steve ('78) and Mike ('80) Scalzo.

On the wrestling mat Don improved each year, winning his weight class his senior year and being placed on the All-FCIAC team. The same can be said for the track. Don ran several events but he excelled at the 300 intermediate hurdles. Once again

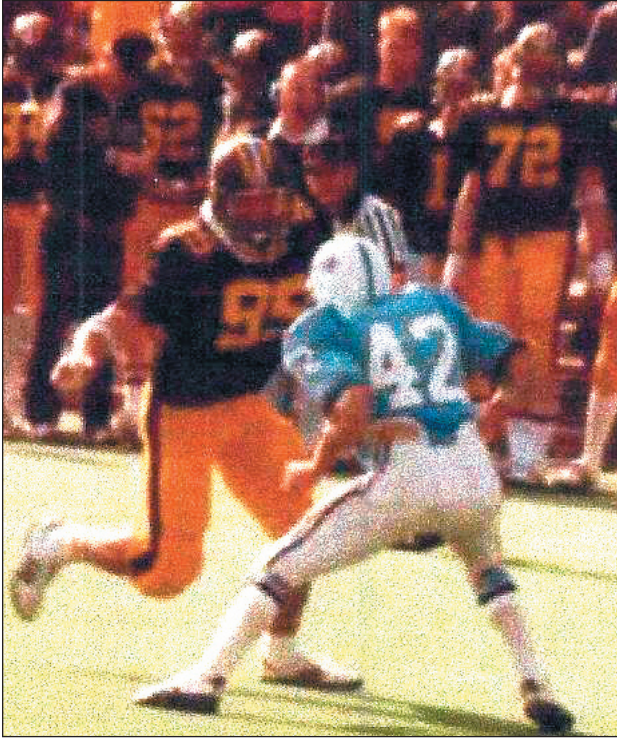


Don Innamorato

by his senior year he won the event and earned his 4th All-FCIAC honor.

While Don was performing at a high level athletically he was also keeping the same high standards in the classroom. He maintained a high enough GPA to earn acceptance to Columbia University, the Ivy League school located in New York City. Don was a member of the varsity

Continued on next page



Don Innamorato playing at Columbia.

football team at Columbia. Although they did not win a lot of games back then his college experience on and off the football field help mold the man he is today.

After graduating from Columbia in 1983, Don went on to get his law degree from Villanova Law School in 1986.

After graduation he took a job with the prestigious firm of Reed Smith LLP, where he still is today. An employment litigation firm has Don representing clients from all over the country. He is the Editor-In-Chief of The Labor Lawyer and Co-Chairs the Ethics Committee of the New Jersey Bar Association.

Don currently resides in Voorhees, NJ and has a wife, Laura, and 3 children, Anthony (16), Gabby (13) and Michael (11).

The Ridgefield Wrestling Booster Club
Congratulates

Don Innamorato

Congratulations Don
for your recognition by the
Ridgefield Old Timers

Special Award: Billy Craig

A passion for keeping Ridgefield great

If you could turn back the clock 65 years and strolled down Main Street in Ridgefield one of the few storefronts that would still look familiar would be Craig's Fine Jewelry. A family owned business for three generations the Craig family is synonymous with the town of Ridgefield. Craig's Fine Jewelry opened its doors in 1950 and has been on historic Main Street ever since.

This year's honoree for our Special Award is Billy Craig, owner of the family business. Billy follows in the footsteps of his grandmother Helen and his parents, Norman and Elsie, who were previously honored by the Ridgefield Old Timers. Billy has been a supporter of the town of Ridgefield in many different areas and it is obvious he has a passion for keeping Ridgefield a great place to live and work.

In 1975 he graduated from the Gemological School of America and brought that knowledge to jewelry store. Working alongside his parents he helped run the business, before eventually taking it over.

Billy immediately became involved in the local community organizations. He became a member of the Chamber of Commerce and served as president from



Billy Craig: A family affair

1976-1978. He was a founding member, board member and president of Downtown Ridgefield, Inc. He was also a founder of one of Ridgefield's most beloved weekends, the Holiday Stroll. Also, he was a founder, asked by the First Selectman, of Welcome to Ridgefield, an organization to beautify and enhance Ridgefield.

Although Billy has worked hard to improve the community of Ridgefield, chairing a local golf tournament for Aquathon Ridgefield raising over a 1 million dollars for this cause. His charitable efforts also reach outside of town. He has been involved with such charities as Cystic Fibrosis, Women's Center of Greater Danbury and Hanahoe Memorial Children's Clinic of Danbury.

He has been awarded the 2015 Westchester and Fairfield Counties Business Journals' Family Owned Business of the Year, 2015 Centurion Jewelry Shows Outstanding Retail Partner of the Year and was the Women's Center of Greater Danbury Man of the Year.

We are very pleased to honor Billy Craig for all his charitable work and passion for our community. The town of Ridgefield would not be the same without Billy and the entire Craig family and employees.

Sports Award: Richard Dingee, Class of 1965

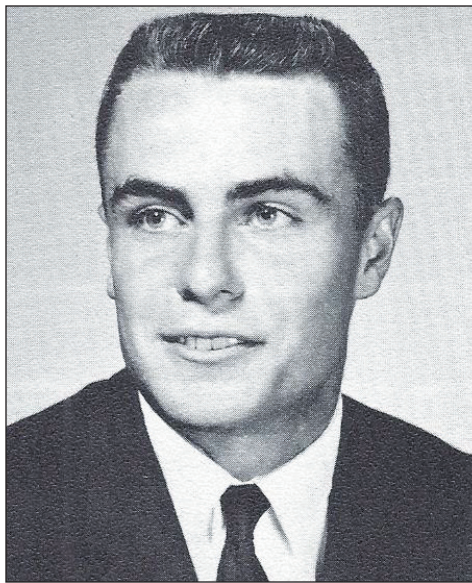
His focus was on the team

“Dick” Dingee is being honored by ROTA at a banquet is being honored for his outstanding athleticism in baseball and football, both in middle school and high school. (He is being honored along with his niece, Karen Dingee Leibowitz.)

Mr. Dingee was born in Ridgefield and lived most of his life here. Athletics and staying healthy has always been an important part of his life. He first remembers playing farm league and Little League baseball. Dick played third base and outfield, but was particularly known for his ability to bat. Later on he coached Little League baseball.

When Dick was in sixth grade he was proud to play on the very first Red Raider’s Football Team. “Unfortunately, I broke my leg during practice the day before the first game and was out for the rest of the year,” Dick remembers. “However, I was still on the roster for the very first team.”

Dick also remembers that in seventh



Dick Dingee



**The Ridgefield Home Run
Booster Club**

Congratulates

Dick Dingee

On Your Recognition by

Ridgefield Old Timers

grade his Pop Warner Team was invited to play in the Orange Bowl in Miami. He remembers this as being a tremendous thrill, but also remembers how outclassed his team was in so many ways,

“We had only played together for a year, never played on a special turf, played in tacky uniforms, and had overweight players who had to spend time in the steam room.”

In spite of all this, every player on this Miami trip, remembers this event as one of the highlights of their lives.

In Ridgefield High School (class of 1965) Dick played varsity high school baseball for three years and Babe Ruth Ball. When he was a junior he won the Western Connecticut Batting Championship for his .475 batting average. He was also part of a championship Babe Ruth team.

Dick also considers a highlight of his life hitting four home runs in a row. He is very humble and thinks of himself as just

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Dingee with the slide

Continued from page 10

another player.

Dick was also an outstanding Ridgefield High School Varsity Football player, playing guard. He attributes much of his success to his following coaches; George Folosa, Peter Yanity, and Bill Anthony. Primo Polverari also was a great influence in Dick's athletic career. Dick also can't say enough about the support that he received from his father who owned an electrical business and was not an athlete himself.

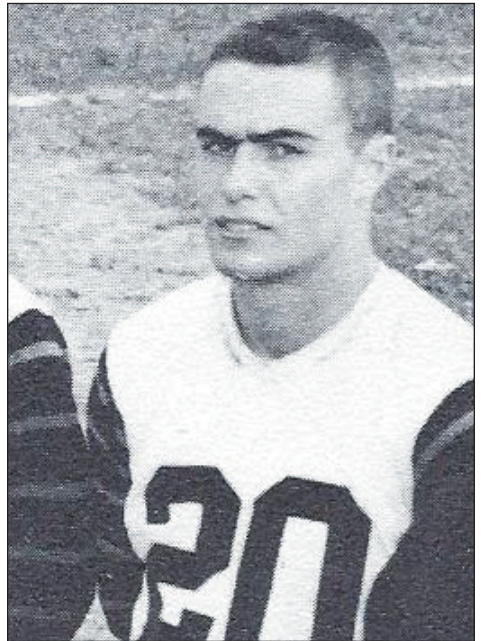
Dick went on to Springfield College, but was unable to continue in sports due to a leg injury. He did, however, get certified to teach physical education and was a physical education teacher in Newtown for several years. While in Newtown he also served as the middle school baseball coach.

Later on Dick decided to change his career path and became a Ridgefield fire-

fighter. This job was more to his liking. He retired recently as the assistant chief of the Ridgefield Fire Department.

Dick was a member of the first Red Raider team in Ridgefield and also on the first Townies' Baseball Team. He played with this six team Townies' group for many years and enjoyed the relationships that he developed during that time period. Today he continues to do a lot of walking and eats healthy. Dick wants to be active and fit and works hard at it.

As for the benefits of being an athlete Dick had the following to say, "When you are on a team you have to focus on the team and not on you as individual. You have to learn to work together for the best of the team. It is not about you, it is about the team."



Dick Dingee played guard

Sports Award: Susi Mang MacDonald, Class of 1988

In the first wave to top soccer players

Since its inception the Ridgefield High School girls' soccer program has been a consistent winner. There have been numerous all conference, all state and all American players who have come through this team. Susi (Mang) MacDonald was in the first wave of excellent players to lead the lady Tigers and start this winning tradition.

Susi's family moved to Ridgefield in 1977, when Susi was 7. Her parents, who are both from Germany and became US citizens while living in Ridgefield, moved the family from Pound Ridge to White Birch Road. In 1978, when Susi starting playing youth soccer for Mr. Al Mangals, she immediately fell in love with the sport. This fall sport turned into a year round activity for Susi, playing in leagues and teams throughout the winter and spring. (The Ridgefield/Wilton bound-



Susi Mang MacDonald

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Susi Mang MacDonald is #11 in the middle of the front row.



On the field, Susi Mang MacDonald is #11, far right.

ary split the family parcel. Susi's loyalties were all with Ridgefield soccer from her youth teams so it was an easy decision as to which high school to attend). Her old sister, Doris and younger brother Andreas also graduated from RHS.

Susi made an immediate impact on the RHS soccer team playing on the varsity squad from her freshmen year through her senior year. In the fall of 1986 and 1987 she was selected 1st team All FCIAC. In 1986 and 1987 she received All State honors and in 1987 also made the All New England team. Her teams were talented enough to win conference and state titles. Susi also served as captain of the team her senior year in 1987. Some of her teammates on these teams were past honorees Beth (Onrick) Gattey and, Nicole (Colinari) Twomey. Nicole along with Halle(Schied) Neeb, Lena Onyshkewych and Kellie Waites all made varsity as freshman and played four years together. Susi attribute a big part of her success along with her classmates to Joe Colaneri coach

the girls from age 11 until they reached the high school.

After graduating from RHS in 1988 Susi's soccer skills earned her athletic scholarship to the University of Rhode Island where she once again played all 4 years on the varsity team. She also was once again elected captain of the team her senior year. She graduated from URI in 1992 with a BA in Speech Communications.

Susi returned to the area and eventually married a fellow Ridgefielder Tom MacDonald, a previous ROTA athletic honoree. The couple lived in Danbury and started a family of their own. They now have four children, Timmy (15), Will (13), Allie (11) and Reece (8).

Susi and Tom have recently moved to Maine and they have been very busy keeping up with their children and all their activities. Tom has coached the boys and Susi has continued her love of soccer by coach her daughter's travel team for the past three years.

Posthumous Award: Stephanie Boles Kavanagh, Class of 1991

A record-breaking role model

The Old Timer's Association is awarding the Posthumous Award to an Outstanding Athlete, Stephanie Boles Kavanagh.

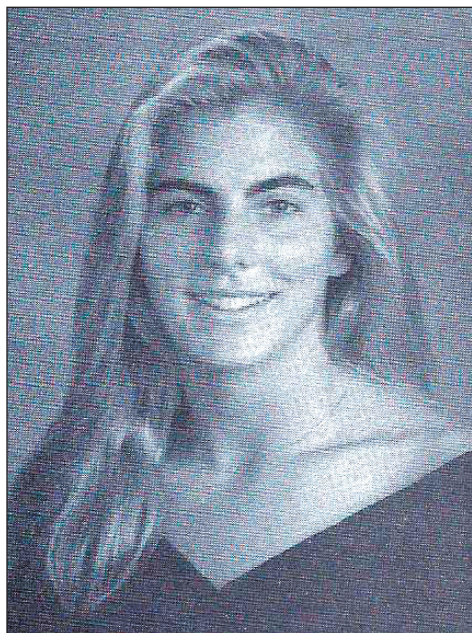
Ms. Kavanagh, a leader, a role model, a runner and a swimmer, broke numerous records throughout her career. She died of cancer in 2013 at age 40.

Even as a preschool student, Stephanie's mother and father were amazed at their daughter's ability to run, hit a ball, kick, jump, and swim. She was better at athletics than any boy in the neighborhood and thrived on any sport to which she was introduced. In the beginning Stephanie focused on soccer and softball. She even held the record for the East Ridge Middle School 100 yard dash and broad jump.

While in middle school Ms. Kavanagh also discovered the Wilton Wahoo Swim Team and there she found her true claim to fame. During her years with the Wilton Wahoo, her team won the National Champions in their age group for three years. It was then that Ms. Kavanagh also discovered her talents in free style, as well as breaststroke.

Ms. Kavanagh continued her swimming career at Ridgefield High School, becoming the captain of the swim team. During her years on the team at the high school, Ms. Kavanagh distinguished herself in the following events:

- Held RHS pool records from 1987 to 1991 for breaststroke, freestyle and med-



Stephanie Boles Kavanagh

ley relays

- In 1987, qualified for the nationals in the junior division; breaststroke
- In 1987 was on the All State Swim Team
- In 1989 took second place in the FCIAC, first place in M Class Championships, and third place in the state open in swimming
- Was the 1989 Senior National Champion Finalist for the 200 meter breaststroke
- Was the 1990 Connecticut State Champion in three events, M. Class
- Held the 1990,

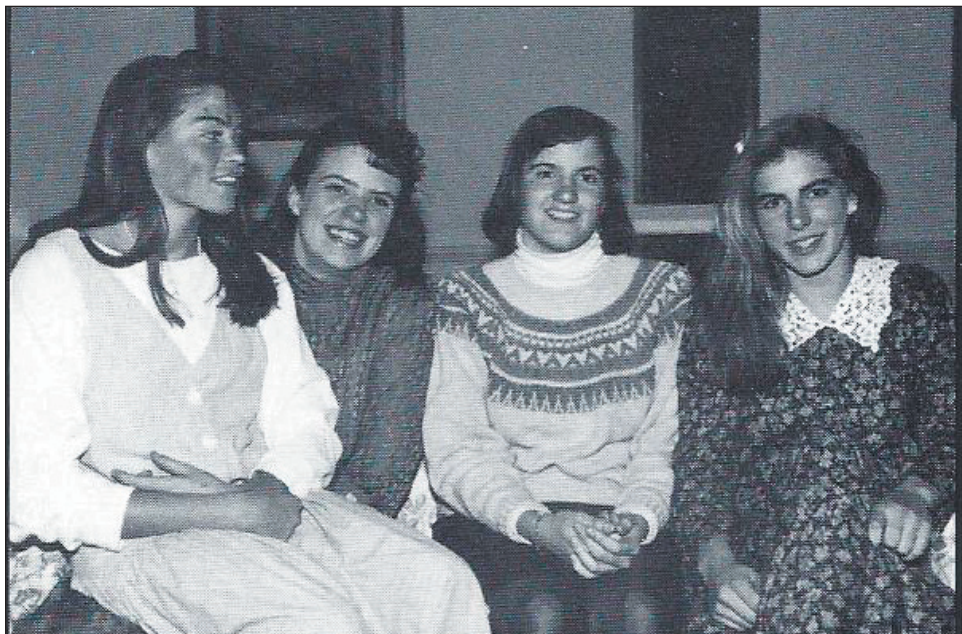
200 meter breaststroke record at Williams College

During her senior year, Ms. Kavanagh decided to go out for track at the end of swim season. She had never run track before. No one could believe when she qualified for the state championships after just recently joining the team.

When Ms. Kavanagh put her mind to something, she would succeed.

After graduating from Ridgefield High School in 1991, Ms. Kavanagh went to Bucknell University in Pennsylvania. Here she continued to break records with her swimming, get a degree in business, and met her future husband, Michael Kavanagh.

Before the arrival of her two children, Ms. Kavanagh again distinguished herself in a business career working for key corporations and taking on challenging leadership roles. Her training in athletics was



Stephanie Kavanagh, on far right, with swim team captains

certainly an aid when it came to dealing with tough issues in business.

When Stephanie passed, her parents were overwhelmed with the amount of people with which she had connected in so many ways. At her wake and funeral people repeatedly said that Stephanie was as beautiful on the inside as on the outside. People said that they would remember Ms. Kavanagh, not only as an exceptional athlete, mother and business woman, but also as an inspirational leader, a person to whom they could aspire to be like, and someone who could also be trusted to be a true friend.

**You don't have to be old
to be an Old Timer.**

All ages are welcome. Join today. For information, see Mark Fitzgerald or one of other other officers listed on page 3.



**The RHS Girls and Boys
Swim & Dive Team
honors the memory of an
exceptional athlete,
Swimmer
Stephanie Boles Kavanagh.**

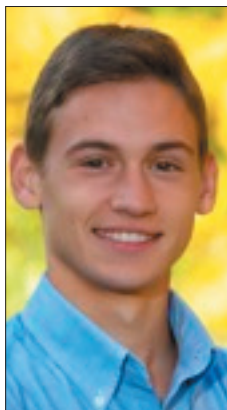
The ROTA Scholarship Winners

This year the Ridgefield Old Timers Association was able to give scholarships to four graduates from the Ridgefield High School class of 2015. Two students received a four-year \$1000 scholarship; while two students received a one-year \$500 scholarship. As is typical, all the applicants who applied were more than qualified to receive a scholarship and the committee had a difficult time choosing from all the outstanding students.

Our female winner of the four-year \$1000 scholarship is Kathryn Middlebrook. Kathryn is not only an outstanding student but also an exceptional athlete and overall well rounded person.

She was a four-year member of the RHS girls basketball and soccer teams and was elected captain of both teams her senior year. Along with being voted ALL-FCIAC in basketball, she was a FCIAC Scholar Athlete in both sports as well. She was an honor roll student all four years and a member of the National Honor Society. Kathryn is currently a freshman enrolled at Holy Cross in Worcester MA.

Our male winner of the four-year \$1000 scholarship is Mark Liguori. Mark was a standout member of both the RHS soccer and volleyball teams. He was also elected the captain of both of these squads.



Mark Liguori



Elizabeth Browne

During Mark's senior year, he voted All-FCIAC in soccer and volleyball. His volleyball team won the FCIAC twice and state champs both his junior and senior year. He was also an honor roll student all four years and a member of several clubs including Youth to Youth Club, promoting a substance abuse free lifestyle. Mark is a freshman at UConn in Storrs.

This year ROTA decided to give an additional \$1,000 to a deserving graduate of the class of 2015. However after reviewing the applications the committee decided to split the money in two and give two, one-time \$500 scholarships.

The two winners are Elizabeth Browne and Cavan Briody. Both are from families with a long history in Ridgefield and are exceptional students in their own right.

Cavan, who was a member of the basketball team

at RHS and is also active in the school and community clubs is currently attending Vanderbilt University in Tennessee. Elizabeth, who was active as a member and leader of the local girl scouts, is a freshman at Assumption College.

The entire Ridgefield Old Timers Association is glad to be able to assist these deserving young men and women in their bright futures. Congratulations to the students and their families!



Kathryn Middlebrook



Cavan Briody

Sports Award: Guy Welton, Class of 1983

A man of many goals

It is no wonder that Mr. Guy Welton is being honored for being Ridgefield's most outstanding soccer player during his time at Ridgefield High School. With career goals numbering 78, Mr. Welton made 38 of these while representing Ridgefield High School.

Mr. Welton was born in Wales and lived outside London until he moved to Ridgefield when he was in eighth grade.

From eighth grade up, he was on travel teams and a varsity starter. As a freshman at Ridgefield High School, he already received honorable mention for his outstanding soccer skills.

Mr. Welton feels that coming from Europe helped his soccer career. "When you come from Europe you start soccer, rugby or cricket when you begin to walk, if you are going to be an athlete. You also stay with that one sport and don't try and achieve in all three. You dedicate your whole life to this sport, sometimes practicing eight hours a day. Your passion for the sport is what keeps you going."

From his sophomore to senior year, Mr. Welton was all FCIAC. He was also All State, All

New England, and on the teams honored by Adidas, McDonald's and Parade.

During his senior year at Ridgefield High School, Mr. Welton was captain of the varsity soccer team. That year Ridgefield lost in the State LL finals to Staples by one point. The State LL finals were the most memorable of experiences for Mr. Welton as Ridgefield either lost or won most of these finals games in overtime or in the last few seconds. Fortunately, in the last game of his junior year, Mr. Welton made the winning goal for the state championship.

Mr. Welton feels very fortunate to have had Mr. Al Diniz, for a

coach while he was in high school. "Mr. Diniz was the best coach I ever had. He knew how to work with people with talent. He motivated us, he angered us, and he mentored us in the best way possible.

"Terry Hughes, two years ahead of me in school, also helped me to be the best player that I could be. I did, however, break Terry's record but we are still good friends."

After high school, Mr. Welton went on to play varsity soccer at Rollins College in



Guy Welton





Guy Welton is #9 in middle of top row and, opposite page, on the field.

Winter Park, Florida and from there to play for the Cosmos Farm team for two seasons.

Coming back home, Mr. Welton, played six seasons for the Ridgefield Kicks and spent two seasons with the Danbury Portuguese Club. He also played semi-professional soccer with teams out of New Haven and Stamford. He would have continued professional play except for injuries acquired after so many years of intense play.

Always a proponent of youth soccer, Mr. Welton coached both boys and girls, grade K to grade 8. He even coached his son, Tyler, and his daughter, Courtney, up through grade 8.

Tyler went on to play in the State LL championships in 2015 for Ridgefield High School and played club soccer at Elon University.

His daughter played soccer up through grade 10 and went on to star in basketball.

Today Mr. Welton is a recruitment and initiatives manager for American Express. "In my job, I still employ all that I learned in soccer," said Mr. Welton.

"To be truly successful you need to be committed, determined, hard-working, and passionate. I always tell people that what you put into something is what you are going to get out of it."

In memory of
Tom Belote
*who loved Ridgefield
 and its old timers.*

—Sally and Jack



The Ridgefield Old Timers expresses its appreciation to these kind contributors.

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Sports Award: Karen Dingee Leibowitz, Class of 1986

Amazing at soccer and track

Karen Dingee Leibowitz will be receiving one of two Ridgefield Old Timers' Athletic Awards being presented to members of the Dingee family this year. Karen is being honored along with her uncle Dick Dingee, who is receiving an award for football and baseball.

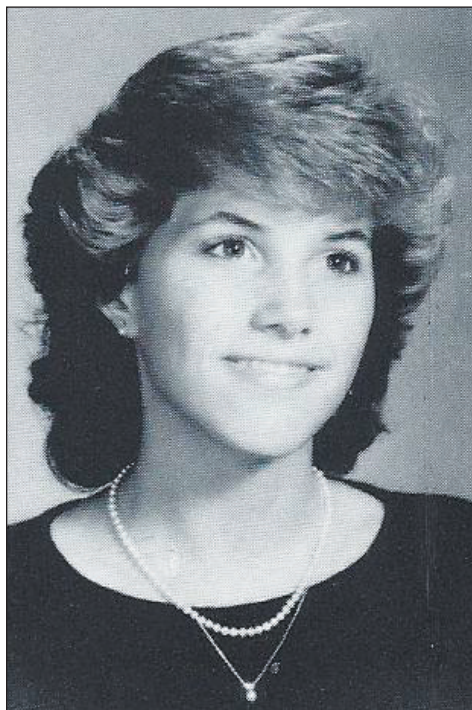
As a young girl, Karen began to excel while playing fast pitch softball with the Junior Rockettes. She was even a part of the team when they won the state championship. She credits her father for being the best coach ever and says, "The endless hours my dad spent working with me and my brothers really paid off."

As an athlete at Ridgefield High School, Karen was amazing. She competed in varsity soccer, indoor track and outdoor track for all four years, ending up as captain her senior year, in each sport. In soccer she was a sweeper and fullback and was named All County and All State Honorable Mention. Her strongest memory in soccer was of defending Ridgefield against Wilton's Kristine Lilly.

For indoor track, Karen was named both All County and All State and competed in hurdles, sprints, the long jump, the short and long relay, and you name it. She participated in every distance that she possibly could. In Karen's own words, "I won so many awards and broke so many records, I can't remember them all."

In outdoor track, Karen was also named to both All County and All State and participated in all of the events that have previously been mentioned for track above. Karen's success in Ridgefield High School sports took place during the years 1981-85. She attributes much of her success to the coaching of Rick Medve, her track coach, and Phil Santoro, her soccer coach. Karen says, "These two men saw more potential in me than I could see in myself and worked me way beyond where I thought I could ever achieve."

After graduation from Ridgefield High



Karen Dingee Leibowitz

School, Karen went on to the University of Connecticut where was the top scorer in Women's Rugby, playing half fly. She also took home a national championship award from the United States Tennis Association while in her 30's. It seems that there is no sport where Karen can't excel.

Karen would encourage students to get the best grades possible and to excel in athletics. She says, "with the winning combination of good grades and being an outstanding athlete, schools will be more than ready to come up with a good scholarship package. Through sports Karen believes you will also have new experiences that you would not have believed possible. She tells others, "you will be able to travel, develop new skills, and build

Continued on next page



friendships that last a lifetime through athletics. Also athletics are not only for when you are in school, but should last throughout your entire life."

Coaching her daughter in soccer was fun for Karen. However, she is glad that there is so much more now available for girls. She would have loved to play ice hockey like her brothers back in high school and college, but this was not an option for her.

That's Karen Dingee Leibowitz, #11, at top left with some of her championship team.



**The Ridgefield High School Cross Country and
Track Booster Club Congratulates**

**KAREN DINGEE LEIBOWITZ
RHS Class of 1986**

**For being recognized by the
Ridgefield Old Timers Association for her many
athletic achievements!**

Help the Old Timers help our students

Please make a contribution to our scholarship fund. Any amount is appreciated, and will assist deserving RHS graduates in the future.

Send your tax-deductible gift to:

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The three Ridgefield high schools



In 1882 governor Phineas C. Lounsbury donated the land and money to building a new Bailey Avenue grammar school (top). Soon, the premises became inadequate and townspeople donated land for the East Ridge School, opened in 1915. The town also voted to establish a Hamilton High School in the old building on Bailey Avenue. The school had no gym; town hall was used for basketball. The growth of the secondary enrollment made it necessary to move the high school to the



East Ridge School (middle) in 1926. The school was remodeled in 1925 and 1939 and additions built in 1957 and 1968. In 1955 the Veterans Park School was built as an elementary school. Grades K-3 were moved to there and later, and later schools meant all elementary grades could move out of East Ridge. By the late 1960s, East Ridge was overcrowded again and the current RHS (bottom) was opened in 1972.—Tom Belote





ALL SEASON COMFORT

**Congratulations and best wishes
to all of the ROTA 2015 awardees!**

The Ridgefield High School Athletic Advisory Council (AAC) is pleased to support the goals of The Ridgefield Old Timers in recognizing the achievements of Ridgefield High School student athletes.

The RHS AAC was organized in 1999 to encourage, promote and recognize educational and athletic achievement of student athletes at Ridgefield High School and the community at large.

A further objective of the AAC is to help develop an athletic environment that fosters the development of leadership, self-discipline, strength, courage, stamina, sound judgment and a sense of fair play at Ridgefield High School.

The AAC is grateful to the Ridgefield Old Timers for their further advancement of our goals by recognizing RHS student athletes and civic leaders in our community!



Past Posthumous Awards

1994: Ralph Crouchley, Kip Holleran, Francis Martin	2000: Art Bellagamba, Stubb Cummings, Margaret O'Sullivan	2008: James Principi, Jeanne Timpanelli
1995: Chuck Walter, Charlie Ashbee, Frank Minnerly	2001: Tony Deluca, Walt Ryba, Bob Seymour	2009: Bradford Mortensen and Edward Zandri
1996: Lou Girolmetti, John Sullivan, John Bacchiochi	2002: John Sturges, Jimmy Warner	2010: Richard Ligi, Richard McGlynn, Richard Serfilippi
1997: Lick Santini, Red Delugo, Bill Allen	2003: Scott Nye, Fred J. Romeo, Sr., Mario Scala	2011: Robert J. Morganti, Erik Hoag, Andrew Lecher.
1998: Joseph Venus, Art Sfondrini, Bob Stolle	2004: Steve Lancaster Bernie Leighton, Pete Carboni	2013: Gary Beaudine
1999: Alan Crowley, Don Ligos, Harold Hilton	2005: Charlie Ritch	2014: Harold Finch, Percy Marshall Bouton.
	2006: Roy Cogswell, Hank Wilson	
	2007: Tony Del Biondo	

Past Civic and Special Awards

1992: Richard Venus	1992: Pambianchi Family	2005: Doug Main, Renee Franks	2005: Pionozzo, Jeanne Cook	2005: Dave Campbell; Joseph Consentino.
1993: Bob Tulipani	1998: Dr. Peter Yanity	2006: Jack Sanders	2010: Christine and Philip Lodewick;	2013: Richard and Deirdre Aarons;
1994: Beth Yanity	1999: Charles Coles	2007: Ancona Family	2011: Mary and Nelson Gelfman;	2014: Darla and Ben Shaw; Joy and Hank Kutcha; Joyce Ligi.
1995: Aldo Tulipani	2000: Kitty Rosa	2008: Maureen Kiernan, Dave Scott	2012: Martha and	
1996: Ferdinand Bedini	2001: Lewis Finch	2009: Vincent		
1997: Matty	2002: Edith Mefley			
	2003: Kay Ables			
	2004: Chuck Dean			

Past Sports Awards

1992: Tabby Carboni, Lynce Carboni, Leo Pambianchi, Tom Clark, Charlie Frattini, Joe Forcelli, John Carboni	2006: Larry Bossidy, Jr., Isabel Carporale, Frank Lancaster, Jr., Carl Scala, John Stolle, Dave Sturges
1993: Gene Casagrande, Bob Mulvaney, Vin Petrini, Charlie Stolle, Joe Tulipani	2007: Dave Landers, Jay Contessa, Chip Dean, John Devendorf, Marie Frulla, Steve Martin, Alan Wallace
1994: Lyman Anderson, Harry Bennett, Aldo Girolmetti, Evo Principi, John Tulipani	2008: Richard Lavatori, Judy Laslo, Craig Saltzgaber, Frank Serfilippi, Paul Vaughn, Chip Wilson
1995: Peter Casagrande, Dino Cicolani, Joe Brunetti, Ray Eppoliti, Bud Mahoney, Reno Severini	2009: Robert Leary, Robert Lewis, Patricia Girolametti, Richard Miller, Peter Santini, Michael Principi and Dr. Richard Scala
1996: Ben Bedini, Fabio Biagiotti, Jack Leary, Harold Mead, Romeo Petroni, Janalie Severini	2010: Abe Morelli, Tom Fossi, Michael Bowman, Amy Fredericks, Christopher Winnes, Janel Jorgensen, Michael Dell' Aquila, Tony Wilmot.
1997: Primo Baldaserini, Dante Brunetti, Frank Lancaster, Sr., Walt Evans, Navio Ligi, Fred Mazzi	2011: Lee Pasquarella, Harland Brooks, Janet Yanity, Harry Geary, Thomas McDonald, Joseph Korczynski, Lea Ann Schmidt, Gary Bellagamba
1998: Gino "Jinx" Baldaserini, Dr. Phil Martin, Dr. Joe Moylan, Andy Montanari, Julius "Bugsy" Santini	2012: Michael Conroy, Anthony James Forcelli, Beth Ondrick Gattey, Terence Hughes, George R. Mulvaney, Phil O'Brien, Walt Valentine.
1999: Dick Bellagamba, Si Bellagamba, Gene Lavatori, John Lavatori, Gene McMahon, Harry Pierandi	2013: William 'Sandy' Allen, Paul Bossidy, Dorene Almgren DeCecco, Mike Harris, Mike Maiolo, Ed Stone, Nicole Colanari Twomey
2000: Glen Anderson, Bill Elliot, Booker Jackson, Tom Mitchell	2014: John Lorenzini, Peter Stuart Jongbloed, Brian Sullivan, Thomas Scala, Sandy Beal Carpenter, Nicole Muschett DiAntonio, Neil Ringers,
2001: Ned Carboni, Paul Carboni, Jim Costanzi, John Fossi, Art Frattini, Nick Reid, Gloria Sharkany	
2002: Ed Dowling, Jack Jones, Jack O'Keefe, Jim O'Keefe, Mike Ryba, Aldo Travaglini, Harry Zandri	
2003: Aldo Biagotti, Chip Bliss, Bob Carboni, John Forcelli, Jim Mullen, Vince Paccadolmi, Fred Romeo	
2004: Faust Verna, Lou Bellagamba, Chip Salvestrini, Alley Frulla, Rudy Marconi, Jim Tulipani and the CYO Girls Championship Basketball Team	
2005: Tom Cesca, Tom Santini, Richard Polverari, Bob Pambianchi, Gregg Hutchings, Carol Torcellini,	

Past Educator Awards

2013: Dr. Harold E. Healy and Dirk Bollenback
2014: Dr. Philip Pitruzzello

Honoring Ridgefielders since 1992

More than 20 years ago, a group of friends got together with the idea of forming an old timers group for Ridgefield. Paul Baker, Julie Petrini, John Tulipani, and Joe Brunetti met at a dinner. They decided to model the new organization after old timers groups in Danbury and Norwalk, which had already honored several Ridgefield athletes over the years.

The original purpose of the new organization was to honor great athletes who were unable to continue their education past their school days, and set up a scholarship to assist current athletes. The organizers held several meetings and drew in 18 other supporters. They elected a board of officers with Paul Baker as the first chairman. Walt Evans was elected treasurer, and Julie Petrini was the first secretary.

The Ridgefield Old Timers Association began to have awards banquets in October 1992.

Seven Ridgefielders were selected to be the honorees and the first Special Award went to Richard E. Venus. The first scholarship recipient was Thomas B. Gareau. He had been accepted at the University of Virginia.

The guest speaker at the first banquet was Spec Shea, a pitcher for the New York Yankees.

The advertisement book for that first gathering was only 20 pages, cover to cover. The event was a success and money was put into a scholarship fund. The award of the scholarship to a female Ridgefield High School graduate occurred in 1996. Janine Murphy was involved in three sports and many civic endeavors. A year later, it was decided to annually award scholarships to both male

and female recipients, and the winners in 1997 were Charles Bliss and Kerry Bennett. The amount of the scholarships has grown over the years as a result of the advertising placed in this book, as well as other fund-raising efforts — especially the annual golf outing and pig roast, which takes place in June at the Ridgefield Golf Course.

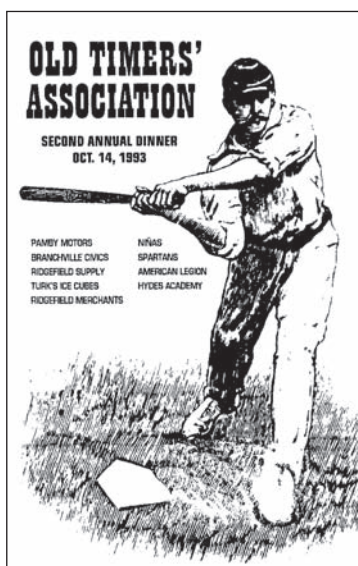
In the association's second year, it introduced the Civic Award, and the first recipient was Bob Tulipani, who is a very active club member to this day. The next year, Beth Yanity became the first female recipient of the Civic Award. In 1999, Sandy Pierandri Warner became the first female member of the board of directors, she was also the association's third secretary.

The motivational guest speakers, once thought necessary for a good event, began to make the banquets stretch late into the evening. Members and guests wished to hear more from the award winners. After the event ran until 11:10 p.m. in 1999, the association decided to drop the guest speakers and to feature the honorees, as well as the emcee,

often founder Paul Baker, who had a long career as a radio and television broadcaster.

The Ridgefield Old Timers Association has continued to meet annually in October to honor athletes and others, and to award scholarship.

In 2006, the bylaws were updated to allow Ridgefield residents who have lived here at least 25 years to become members. Before this, members had to be natives and/or graduates of Ridgefield High School. And to paraphrase the United States Marine Corps, "we are always looking for a few, very good, hard-working new members."



Cover from 1992 Old Timers banquet program