

Posthumous Honoree
Dennis Fabian



Nearly six decades after he caught his last pass for Norwalk High School, **DENNIS FABIAN** is still considered one of the best receivers the city has ever produced.

The 1967 season was certainly testament to that as Dennis scored seven touchdowns, all of them on pass receptions, to help NHS go 6-2-1 for the program's best record since its 1948 state championship team.

Dennis, who passed away in 2019 at the age of 70, was one of the main reasons behind the success of that talented '67 team, which finished runner-up in the tough Eastern Division. In addition to his seven TDs, he tallied six extra points to finish tied for the team scoring lead with 48 total points. He certainly impressed opposing coaches around the conference, who voted him to the All-FCIAC first team.

His NHS teammates also came away impressed.

"One thing I remember about Dennis is he had the best pair of hands around. He caught everything," said Billy Howard, another all-conference selection who shared the team scoring title with Dennis. "He was just a good natural athlete. He played on the basketball team, the baseball team, and the football team."

Even football coaches as far away as Des Moines, Iowa fell in love with Dennis's pass-catching ability and recruited him to play for Graceland College. One of them, Bill "Duke" Dudek, now 82 and retired, was an assistant on the Yellow Jackets' coaching staff when Dennis played.

"He was definitely one of the greatest wide receivers in Graceland history," Dudek, who also played at Graceland and served as head coach there for 18 years, said. "I really think he was one of the two or three best receivers from that era."

But while he enjoyed his time in college, the Norwalk High football program back home was always Dennis's first love and he would eventually return to his roots as a volunteer with the Bears.

"He would do anything that needed to be done," former NHS coach Pete Tucci said. "He would chase down footballs during the game. If we were close to the end zone and about to score, he would start walking down there to give the officials the football for the extra point and the kickoff. When he had trouble walking, I'd tell him let one of the kids get it, but he would say, 'No, I can get it.'"

"He was just a really great guy and he had a heart of gold," the Norwak Old Timers president added. "He loved sports, all kinds of sports — high school, college, pros. And he had a wealth of knowledge."

Dennis was also a big supporter of local high school and youth sports leagues, and coached his three children in their sports growing up.

Indeed, his love of sports never faded. Neither did his love for the Norwalk Old Timers dinner, which he rarely missed. ■



Congratulations to all the past Norwalk Old Timers and the 2025 Inductees

**A Special Congratulations
to this year's
Mike Errico Award Winner,
Jim Wrinn**

**For your many years of
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inspiring so many young athletes**

Gloria Wrinn





Mike Errico Award Jim Wrinn



JIM WRINN, who dedicated over three decades of his time as a coach, league official, and tireless worker to youth sports, is the recipient of this year's Norwalk Old Timers Athletic Association **Mike Errico Award**.

The award, named in honor of the late local sportsman who helped start the Norwalk Old Timers in 1963, is presented to an individual or group for the positive impact they've made to the Norwalk sports community.

For Jim Wrinn, that "impact" began in 1987 when he became a coach in the Norwalk Cal Ripken Baseball League and did so for 22 years, while also finding the time to serve as league president. Then three years after he started coaching baseball, Jim became a head coach in the Norwalk Pop Warner Football program and did that for 28 years. He would win three state championships, including an undefeated 11-0 season in 2016. He was even more proud of his team receiving the Fairfield County Referee Sportsmanship Award that season.

But Jim felt he could make an even bigger impact as a league officer and became president of the entire Norwalk Athletic Association in 2006, a position he held for two years before moving to vice president for the next decade. Under his watch, the Pop Warner program expanded, acquired new uniforms and equipment, and eventually made the switch to the growing American Youth Football (AYF) organization.

He also brought Cal Ripken Baseball, the league he began coaching in, under the Norwalk AA umbrella. He also coached and served as president in the NAA Girls Basketball League and eventually added coaching in the Norwalk Junior Soccer Association to his already-packed schedule. With soccer and football seasons both in the fall, Jim would conduct football practice three days a week and soccer practice two days. And on weekends, he would be on the sidelines coaching a football game on Saturday and a soccer game on Sunday.

Jim Wrinn's involvement in local sports, however, goes beyond the youth leagues. For 20 years he was "The Voice of the Bears" as the public address announcer at Norwalk High football and basketball games. He was also responsible for eventually securing a permanent home for the Norwalk AA trophy case in City Hall.

Outside of sports, Jim was involved with several civic organizations, including a life member with the American Legion Post 12, the Norwalk Veterans Memorial Committee, and a Memorial Day Parade Marshal for 12 years.

But Jim's passion with coaching, especially youth football, goes back to when his father, Gene Wrinn, was a head coach in the Norwalk Pop Warner program in the 1970s and a young Jim was on the sidelines helping him. In a full circle moment, Jim began coaching his son Joshua in 1990, and Joshua is now a Pop Warner coach in Stratford coaching Jim's grandson. ■



NORWALK OLD TIMERS 2025 SCHOLARSHIPS

The Norwalk Old Timers Athletic Association also honors “Young Timers” with six high school scholarships.

The 2024–25 school year marked the 34th year of the *Eugene ‘Ike’ and Alberta Kern Scholarship Award*, which is named after the late legendary Norwalk High School football coach and his wife, and is presented annually to an NHS senior football player. Presented in the spring, the 2025 recipient was **ETHAN HUDSON**.

Since 1993, the Old Timers have presented the Williard R. Williams Scholarship Award in memory of the longtime *Norwalk Hour* sports editor who covered local sports for more than half a century. The scholarship recognizes a male student-athlete at Norwalk and Brien McMahon high schools. This year’s recipients were **EDGARDO TORRES** of NHS and **KENNEDY FERDINAND** of McMahon.

The *Thomas C. O’Connor Scholarship Award* was created in 2001 and recognizes a female student-athlete at each high school. O’Connor, the former Mayor of Norwalk, was a big fan of girls sports and this scholarship was started shortly after his passing. The 2025 recipients were **MACEY BRASHER** of Brien McMahon and **AVERY VACCARO** of Norwalk High.

The Norwalk Old Timers also created a new scholarship in 2011 in the memory of Jack Casagrande, the former coaching legend at Brien McMahon who passed away in December 2010. It recognizes a senior football player for the Senators, and the 2025 recipient was **JERMEL BYNUM**.

All six high school scholarship winners were awarded \$1,000.

*‘Ike’ Kern, Williard Williams, Tommy O’Connor, and Jack Casagrande
are all past Old Timers honorees.*

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ASHLEY, from p.29

his playing days Mike returned to the McMahon basketball program as an assistant coach for three seasons before relocating to Chicago and becoming an assistant coach at Harper Junior College. He currently resides in the Atlanta area and volunteers his time working with youth

programs, but not coaching basketball. Instead he introduces them to the game of golf, his second love.

But whether it's on the basketball court or the golf course, this Norwalk Old Timer is still making an impact. ■

DIAMANTIS, from p.31

While Diamantis dominated on offense, he also shined on defense for Central Catholic. So much so that when he enrolled at Graceland College in Des Moines, Iowa, he was used strictly on the defensive side of the ball as a defensive back and became one of the best in the Heart of America Conference. In fact, he was named All-Conference and All-District three straight seasons, while earning All-America Honorable Mention as

a junior and second team All-America his senior year.

Longtime former Graceland football coach Bill 'Duke' Dudek, when recently asked about Diamantis, called him "one of the greatest defensive backs in Graceland history. We could put him at free safety, we could put him at cornerback, and he also returned kickoffs and punts. He was one of the best players I ever coached." ■

FULLER, from p.33

McMahon Nips Norwalk, 2-0 On Terry Fuller's Tackle

Headline from The Norwalk Hour

Ricky, won a pair of league championships in 1986 and '88.

His brother also coached him in Little League, where Terry was an all-star catcher and later played second base in the Norwalk Babe Ruth League. He also excelled in martial arts and in 1992 received his third-degree black belt in Tang Soo do Karate.

This year's Norwalk Old Timers award for Terry

continues a Fuller family legacy. His father Lloyd Fuller Sr. was honored by the Old Timers in 1983, while his older brothers Ricky and Lloyd Jr., were recognized in 2001 and 2015, respectively. Before them, his uncle, George Fuller, was honored in 1976, while his cousin, Mike Ashley, joins Terry as a 2025 Norwalk Old Timers honoree. ■



MICKLE, from p.39

coach to become the new head coach of the University of Bridgeport women's basketball team. And as fate would have it, one of his first recruits was Cherise Mickle, who was a four-year starter for the Lady Purple Knights.

"I felt so blessed to spend another four years as Cherise's coach," the Hall of Fame coach and 2010 Norwalk Old Timers honoree said. "I told her back then she's probably the only basketball

player in the country to play for the same coach in high school and college eight straight years."

It seemed only fitting that Cherise's entire basketball journey eventually came full circle as well. When her playing days were finally over, she would return to the Carver Center where it all started to coach a team in its boys basketball league. ■

ROSS, from p.41

Some 47 years after he played his final game, the name Robert Ross can still be found on several lines in the UConn soccer record book. Besides his single-season marks, Rob owns the career record for lowest goals-against-average with 0.35 from 1975-79, while his 14 goals allowed in a career is also No. 1, and he still has the fewest career losses

by any Huskie goaltender with three. His 19 career shutouts also rank in the top-10 all-time.

Saving the best for last, he added one more special UConn memory on June 11, 2012 when Norwalk's Robert Ross was inducted into the Fairfield County Sports Hall of Fame UConn Wing. ■

SEYMOUR, from p.43

Carrie raced home with the winning run to give Norwalk High its first ever FCIAC championship in softball. It was also the first of four straight conference crowns by the Bears and the first of their FCIAC record 11 championships. And Carrie Seymour helped jumpstart that dynasty with her daring base running.

But her future would be in basketball and following her graduation from NHS she continued her career at Eastern Connecticut State University where she was three-year letter winner. As a senior captain in 1982-'83, she was named team MVP

after averaging a team-high 10.2 points and leading the Warriors to their first NCAA tournament bid in women's basketball. She capped her collegiate career by being named All-New England.

After her playing days, Carrie remained part of the Eastern Connecticut program as an assistant coach and then became an assistant at three Division I schools in eight years, including the last six seasons at St. John's. All roads led to Pace University, where the following season she began building her own legacy. ■

TRIMBOLI, from p.45

Her love for basketball also extended to the Norwalk Biddy League, which she was involved in for 30 years as both a coach and later as league director. And when the Norwalk Girls Basketball Association (GBA) was formed, Regina coached and served on the Board.

In 2024, Regina Trimboli and her Connecticut

Classics teammate were recognized by the Connecticut Women's Basketball Hall of Fame. She has also been inducted into the Joel Barlow Athletic Hall of Fame, and was recently named the Connecticut Masters Female Athlete of the Year. ■



FROM: THE NORWALK UMPIRES ASSOCIATION

**Congratulations
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Honorees**





In Memoriam

We remember fondly and honor two of our past honorees who died in the year since our last Sports Awards Dinner.

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MILT PECKHAM

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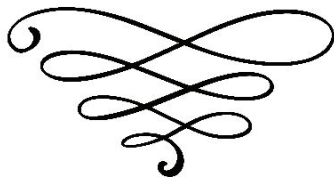
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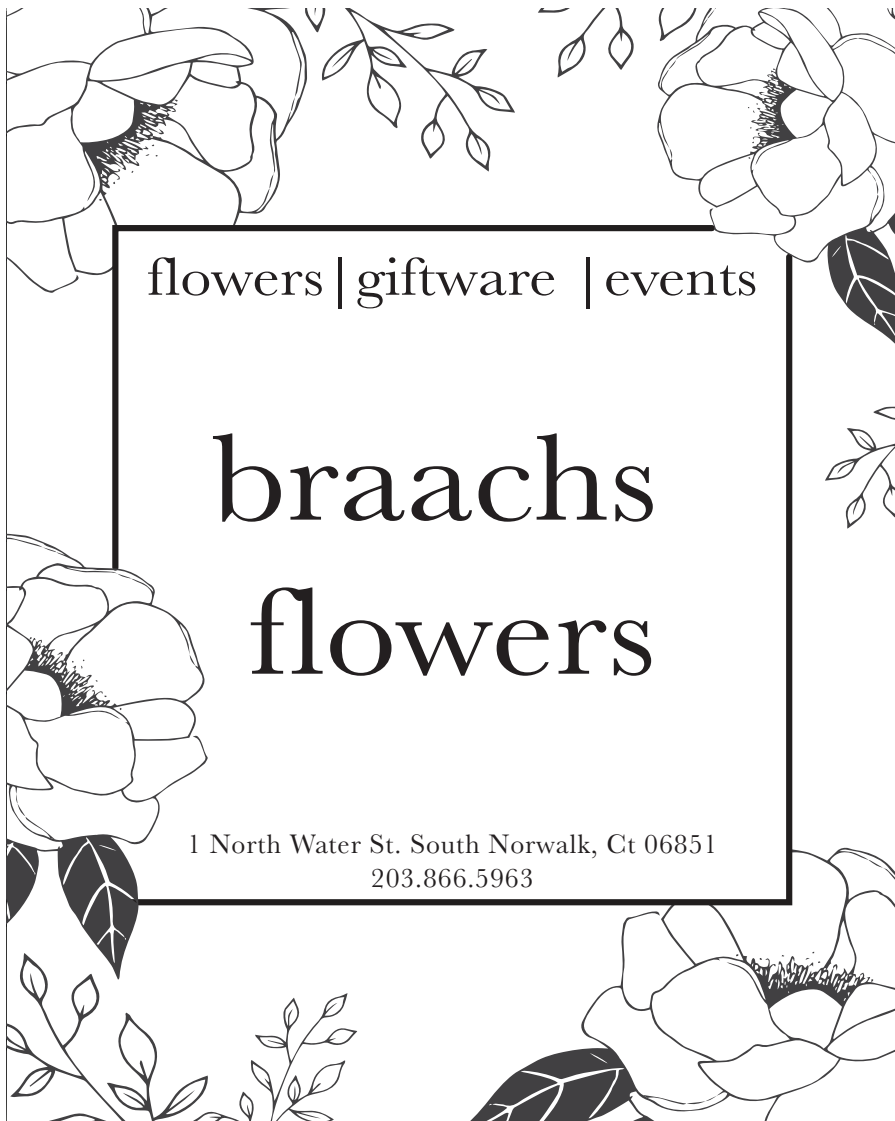
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