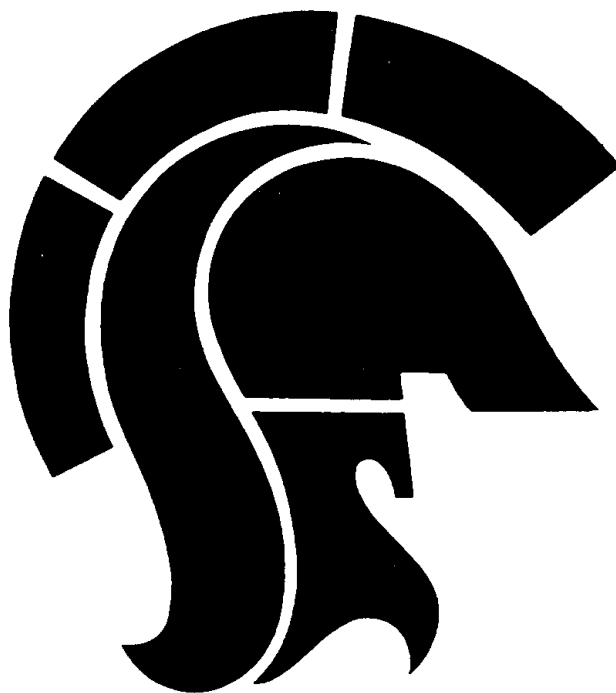


Athletic Hall of Fame

Shaler Area School District



Seventh Annual Banquet

Shaler Area High School

September 22, 2007

MISSION STATEMENT

To recognize those individuals who have brought prestige and pride to the Shaler Area School District athletic program and to the community either as a player, coach, administrator, or supporter.

Selection Committee

Don Bender, Retired Teacher/Coach

Amy Bodenlos, Secretary

Marna Bodnar, Community Member

Michael Brooks, Assistant High School Principal

James DiNucci, 2001 Hall of Fame Inductee

Richard T. Dixon, 2001 Hall of Fame Inductee

Jessica Zozos, Student

Susan Fisher, High School Activities/Graduation Coordinator

David Fortun, Retired Teacher/Coach

Lynn Handza, Community Member

Paul Holzshu, Athletic Director

Carol Martin, Teacher/Coach

Melissa McConville, Teacher

David Shutter, Community Member

William Suit, High School Principal

Mark Weidner, School Board Member

PROGRAM

Welcome.....Dr. Donald Lee, Superintendent

Invocation.....James Giel, Jr. Board Member

Dinner

Master of Ceremonies.....David Shutter

Presentations

INDUCTEES

PRESENTERS

Mike Bascasa.....Dale Truman

David Fortun.....Justin and Ben Fortun

Thomas Gralewski.....Robert Hinds

Michael Handza.....David Shutter

Rick LaFerriere.....Robert Siar

Kevin Nellis.....Keith Nellis

Kraig Nellis.....Robert Siar

The 1947/1948 Shaler Football Team.... Robert Bestwick

Michael Bacasa

Shaler Area-Class of 1989

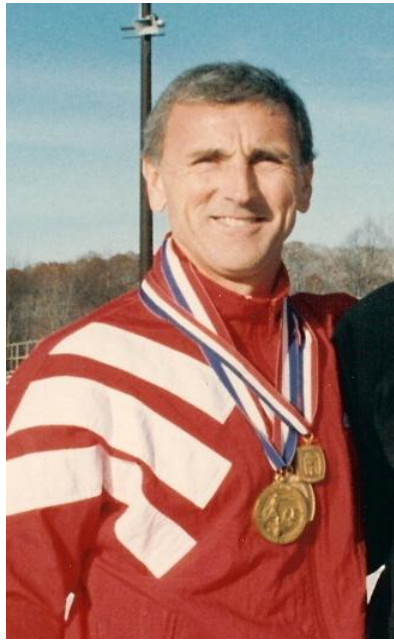


Mike competed in track and field, soccer, and basketball during his high school years and earned an amazing seven varsity letters. He captained the varsity track team as a junior and was the team's high point scorer. As a senior, he captained both the basketball and track teams. In 1989, Mike received the Forest Ford Memorial Award for Top Scholar Athlete and the Thomas S. Osso Memorial Award for Outstanding Male Athlete.

Mike's athletic success continued into his college years. As a freshman and sophomore at Westminster College, he started on the 1989-1990 District 18 Champion Men's Varsity Soccer Team and earned two varsity letters. He also placed 4th in the District 18 Triple Jump Championship. Mike then continued his education at the University of Pittsburgh and earned a spot on the varsity soccer team as a walk-on where he later received two varsity letters. During his senior season, Mike became the starting defensive stopper back and was named the team's most valuable player. His other distinctions include being a WPISL All-Star selection as well as a Kodak Olympic Profile Athlete of the Month. As a post graduate in 1993, Mike was named to the Academic All Big East Soccer Team.

David Fortun

Shaler-Teacher/Coach



As a player and then a coach, Dave has played a major role in five WPIAL Championships and one PIAA Championship. Success for Dave began at Springdale High School where he was the goalkeeper on two WPIAL Championship teams. He also excelled at baseball and earned a tryout with the Pittsburgh Pirates.

As a coach, the accomplishments of Dave's teams are remarkable. As an assistant baseball coach at Shaler Area, Dave helped to lead the Titans to two WPIAL Championships in 1980 and 1981 and one PIAA Championship in 1980. As the head soccer coach at Deer Lakes, Dave turned around a team that was 1-17 in 1979 into two time section champions. Lastly, Dave's work as an assistant coach helped the Fox Chapel Varsity Soccer Team to win a WPIAL Championship in 1995.

As successful as Dave has been on the athletic field, his most important contribution is the wonderful influence he has had on countless young people he has taught or coached. Dave was the first recipient of the Paul Schweiger Award, an honor given to the Shaler Area High School Teacher voted by students as being the most influential role model and friend.

Thomas “Whitey” Gralewski

Shaler Area-Community Supporter



Whitey has been an integral part of Shaler Area Baseball for over a quarter of a century in his roles as President of the Shaler Area Baseball Boosters and President of Shaler American Legion Baseball.

As president of the baseball boosters, Whitey has spent countless hours supporting the many players who have put on a Shaler Area uniform. Whitey's influence can perhaps best be seen at Matulevic Field, one of the finest high school baseball facilities in Pennsylvania. Whitey has worked to raise thousands of dollars which have been used to maintain and make improvements to the field. Under Whitey's leadership, Matulevic Field has become a showcase of which our school district and community can be proud.

Whitey has also been a driving force in American Legion Baseball in Western Pennsylvania as both a coach and president of the Shaler squad. The Shaler teams have experienced incredible success over the years, and Whitey's commitment to this program has provided hundreds of Shaler Area baseball players the opportunity to play together after the scholastic season ends. .

Michael Handza

Shaler Area-Class of 2002



Mike Handza has dominated Western Pennsylvania hockey since he stepped onto the ice as a Shaler Area High School freshman. Since his graduation five years ago, he is one of two players from this area to ever play for and win an NCAA Division I Ice Hockey Championship.

Mike played three seasons of varsity hockey for the Titans. He led the team in scoring his freshman season. He played in two interscholastic all-star games, was the leading scorer in AAA hockey, and was awarded both the Shaler Area and the Pittsburgh Post Gazette's MVP Hockey Award.

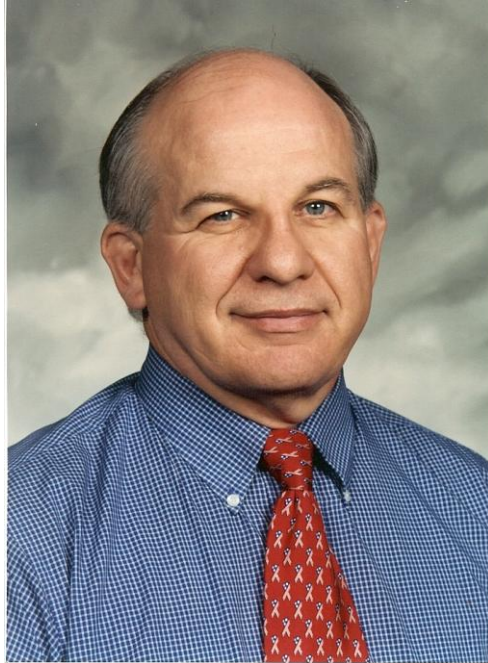
Mike continued playing hockey with the Pittsburgh Forge of the North American Hockey League. In his two seasons with the Forge, he was named Rookie of the Year, twice led the league in scoring, and scored the winning goal in the 2003 championship game, earning him most valuable player honors as well as the distinction of having his hockey stick enshrined in the USA Hockey Hall of Fame.

Mike then received a scholarship to play hockey at the University of Denver, one of the top 10 hockey schools in the NCAA Division I. He played an integral role in helping the team win back to back NCAA National Championships. Mike is currently among the top 5 all-time in NCAA hockey history for games played.

Richard LaFerriere

Shaler-Class of 1968

Player-Coach



Rick's name in the sport of wrestling is synonymous with success. He has distinguished himself as an athlete, coach, and referee.

Rick was a three year letterman at Shaler high School where he won the Shaler Invitational Championship and the Section 8 Championship at 138 pounds. He received a scholarship from Edinboro where he captained the freshman team as well as the varsity squad on which he lettered. Rick placed fourth in the Freshman Championship and was named a regional Olympic qualifier in 1972. After college, Rick placed third in the Mid-Atlantic AAU Championships and second in the 2002 Veteran National Championship.

Rick then started coaching wrestling at Shaler, a career that lasted an amazing 34 years. The accomplishments of his teams and individual wrestlers are remarkable. Rick's teams won four WPIAL Section Championships and were runners-up six times. Other team awards include a WPIAL Regional Championship, two WPIAL Regional Runner-up, and eight top 30 finished at the PIAA Championships. Rick's individual wrestlers include 153 section place winners, 52 section champions, 48 section runners-up, 48 WPIAL/PIAA SW Regional Place Winners, and 110 WPIAL/PIAA SW Regional Champions. Two of Rick's former wrestlers went on to become college All-Americans. Rick was named WPIAL Section Coach of the Year three times and was USA Wrestling Magazine's Coach of the Year Runner-Up.

Rick is also a highly regarded referee who has worked many prestigious international tournaments. He is a two time recipient of the PAWF Official of the Year award, and he received the USWOA Lifetime Achievement Award.

Kevin Nellis

Shaler Area-Class of 1974



Kevin's success as a Shaler Area High School wrestler is clearly evident in his 70-4 career record. He was also a three time West Penn Conference Champion, a three time section champion, a 1973 and 1974 WPIAL Champion, and a 1974 PIAA Runner-Up. Kevin also captained the 1974 WPIAL Tournament Championship Team.

Kevin continued his wrestling at the University of Pittsburgh in 1975 and 1976 where he was a two time Eastern Interscholastic Wrestling Place Winner as well as an XYZ Tournament Champion. At Oklahoma State University in 1978 and 1979, he compiled a record of 18-6-2 which included a Southern Open Championship as well as a Big Eight Championship. In 1978, Kevin was also a National Championship Qualifier at 118 pounds.

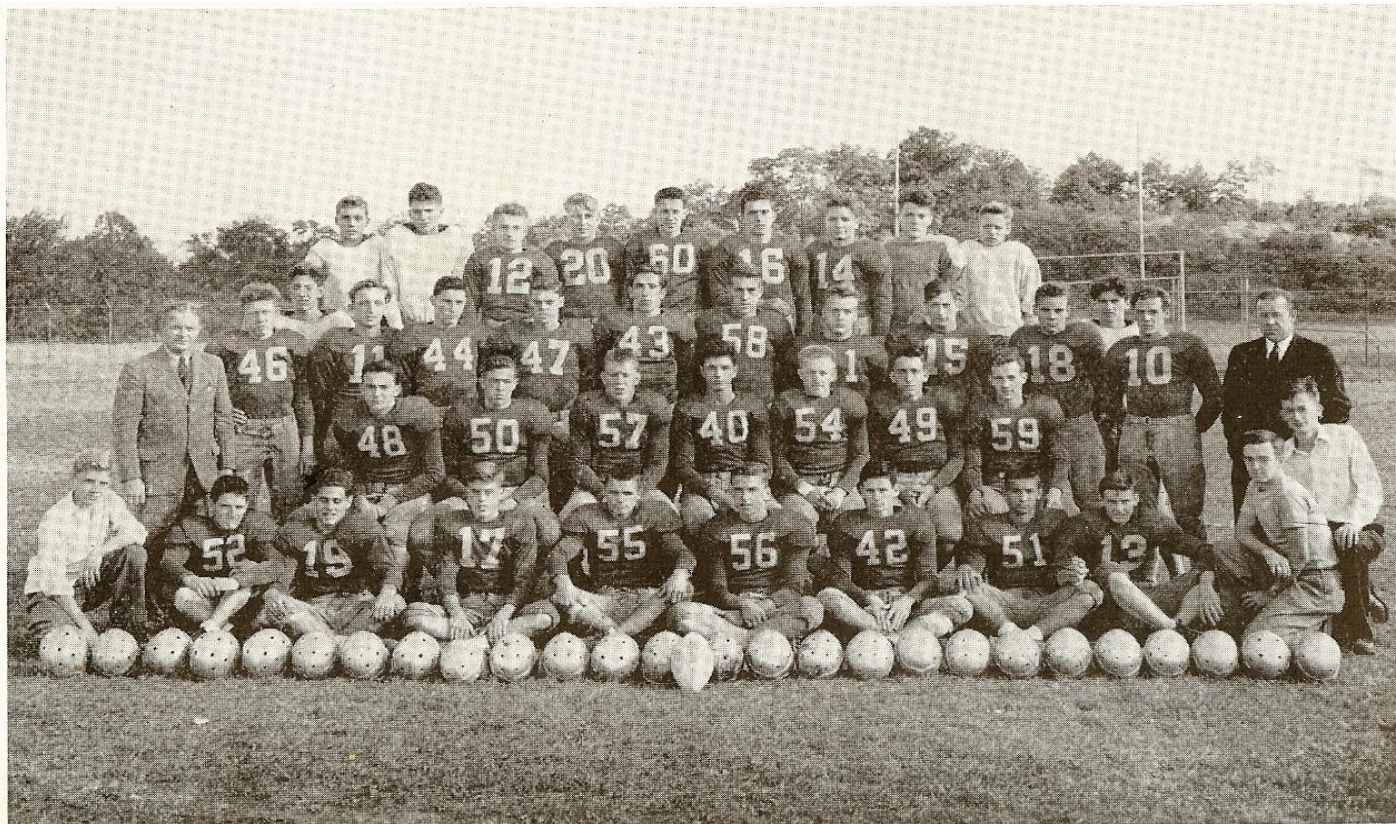
Kraig Nellis **Shaler-Class of 1979**



Kraig compiled a career record of 77-9-1 as a Shaler Area wrestler. In the 1977-1978 and 1978-1979 seasons, he was a two time section champion and a two time WPIAL Champion and he place fourth and second in the PIAA Finals. Kraig was also name to the Dapper Dan Wrestling Classic PA All-Star Team in 19799.

Kraig combined his love for wrestling and community service in his roles as a member of the Board of Directors for Dapper Dan Charities and the co-director of the Dapper Dan Wrestling Classic. He also oversaw the youth wrestling program at the Boys and Girls Club of Western Pennsylvania which served inner city youths living in high risk environments.

The 1947/1948 Shaler Football Team



The 1947/48 Shaler Huskies Football Team is the only undefeated football team in the schools history.

This special team compiled a record of: 9 wins, 0 losses and 1 tie.

1st Row: Reed Schilpp, John Elder, Joseph McGarry, Richard Graham, Robert Bestwick, Thomas Bigelow, Richard Dixon, Eugene Winters (Wisniewski), James Ruefle, Donald Coates, Sam Farmerie

2nd Row: Mr. Ford, William Schmidt, Ronald Gahagan, Gilbert Duffy, John Kernic, Charles Davis, Martin Fullerton, Ronald Bauer

3rd Row: Elmer Stucky, Jack Bett, Frank Marti, Raymond Klingensmith, Jack Thompson, Mel Brantner, Patrick McGinn, James Bowen, Roy Schweitzer, William Congalton, Schilling, Joseph Wilkinson, Mr. Davis

4th Row: Walter Howell, Peter Cerina, Ludwig Buechel, Regis Lippert, Paul Breitenbach, Charles Hallam, John McMarlin, Raymond Heverline, Gilbert Fleissner

Not in picture: William Thorne and Ivan Hammill

Athletic Hall of Fame

Class of 2007

Michael Bacasa

Dave Fortun

Thomas “Whitey” Gralewski

Michael Handza

Richard LaFerriere

Kevin Nellis

Kraig Nellis

1947/48 Shaler Football Team

Athletic Hall of Fame

Class of 2006

Colleen Geyer

Troy Letters

John Kuzniewski

Rich Massucci

1941 Millvale Football Team

Athletic Hall of Fame

Class of 2005

Alan Alt

Ralph DeStefano

Alan Gray

David Longwell

Clarence “Ben” Martin

Tricia Miller

Jason Rakers

Athletic Hall of Fame

Class of 2004

Scott Bronowicz

Dr. Richard Brown

Earl Ceh

Donald Geyer

Robert Siar, Jr.

Matt Stennett

Jeff Trew

James Wirth

1980 State Champion Girls Basketball Team

Athletic Hall of Fame

Class of 2003

Robert Bestwick

Gene Biles

Lauren Colaizzi Henzler

Clifford "Lefty" Fair

Keith Nellis

Kyle Nellis

Paul Schweiger

Gary M. Siriano

1977-78-79 Boys Swim Team PIAA Qualifiers

Athletic Hall of Fame

Class of 2002

**Mary Bukovac
Julie Deer Keenan
Leo “Ducky” Elter
Forrest Ford
Jan Kepple
Robert Kopinisky
Jerry Matulevic
Michael McDermott
Kenneth Nellis
1980 Baseball Team**

Athletic Hall of Fame

Class of 2001

**James DiNucci
Richard T. Dixon
Arthur Howe
Kenneth Karcher
Joseph Kopnisky
James Laslavic
Louis Martig
Beverly Miller Markwith
Edwin Peery
Robert Siar**