

Donna Conkling

From: Rob Burns <rburnso@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 11:57 PM
To: Mayor; Clerk's Department
Subject: Richard "Rippy" Phillips Field

CAUTION: External sender.

Members of the Scarsdale Board of Trustees,

My name is Rob Burns and I am writing to you in support of naming the football field at Crossway after Richard "Rippy" Phillips. I have to say this up front, my family does not live in Scarsdale, but my wife, Suzanne, has taught at Quaker Ridge Elementary School since 1992, our children, Robert and Angie went through the Scarsdale school system and graduated from SHS in 2014 and 2017 respectively, and Robert is also currently a Scarsdale Firefighter. So while we do not live within the confines of the Village, we've spent a lot of time there, collectively. As "outsiders" we understand we do not have a say in any of this, but I would still like to take the time to speak up for someone who has spent countless hours volunteering his time to positively influence the youth of Scarsdale.

If you haven't been already, I am sure you are about to be bombarded with support for this cause. You will hear about the hours Rippy puts in, about how he organizes, schedules, coaches, even cheer leads, and how the kids, young and old, flock to him anywhere he shows up. You're going to hear how everybody knows him, and how he knows everybody by name. You will hear adults say that Rippy got them into football when they were mere youngsters. They will attest to how much fun they had playing football when he coached them, how many great friends they made because of youth football, and that their high school football experience was so much better because Rippy had them playing together, bonding together, pulling together, since their first day of 3rd grade football practice at Crossway Field.

But Rippy's shadow isn't only cast over that football field on Mamaroneck Road. My daughter didn't play football and was never coached by Rippy, but she sure as hell played FOR Rippy. You see, Rippy was and is EVERYWHERE. He is a walking, talking advertisement for Scarsdale. If there's a game going on, and a team is wearing the Maroon and White, Rippy Phillips stops to watch, he stops to yell "Let's Go Raiders!!!" during every lull in the action. He checks to see who's playing, and if he knows somebody on the field, or if they have a brother that plays or played football, he's pumping them up by name from the sidelines and stands. My daughter tells stories of seeing and hearing Rippy cheering her teams on while she played field hockey and lacrosse. And she wasn't Angie to him, she was "Burnsey", the same name he tagged our son Rob with the day Rippy met him at his first 3rd grade football practice. When Rob's varsity hockey team won their first Section 1 title, Rippy was there, pumping up the players, pumping up the crowd, by far the most vociferous voice in the building. When they went to Shenendehowa for Regionals, Rippy again lead the charge, and when they went to the NYS Frozen Four in Utica, Rippy was there again. When Angie's varsity field hockey team beat Mamaroneck for the first time in forever, Rippy was there. And when the Raiders beat the Tigers a second time, this time for the Section 1 title, he again lead the crowd all night. When they went to Regionals, and then up to the NYS Final Four, Rippy was at every game pumping up our fans. Maroon and White awards dinners? Rippy was always there. Graduation? Rippy was there. My parents, who live out in Queens, know and love Rippy for all he's done for their grandchildren and their teammates. Angie is currently a senior at Franklin & Marshall College, which also happens to be Rippy's alma mater. The first F&M homecoming football game we went to her freshman year, Rippy was there. I swear. Loudest guy in the place, too.

I'm sure there are many teachers, coaches, counselors, etc. who have had great influence on many of the kids who have passed through Scarsdale's schools. But I can't think of anyone who has volunteered so much of their free time and had such positive impact on so many of the lives of the youth of our community. The naming of the Crossway football field in Rippy's honor is a simple tribute that would permanently mark a piece of turf that is held sacred by so many who have grown up in this village. Anyone who grew up in Scarsdale and played youth football, knows that spot well. But more importantly, they associate that field with Rippy and the countless autumn afternoons and evenings they spent practicing and playing there, under the watchful eye of someone who always had their best interests at heart. A guy who day after day, year after year, taught, coached, counseled, mentored, inspired and was a positive role model to all through and beyond their high school years.

Rippy will tell anyone who listens that Scarsdale is a "one of a kind" place, but the truth is, Rippy is one of a kind. Rippy Phillips **IS** Scarsdale.

Let's honor the positive impact Rippy has had on a generation of our kids by naming Crossway football field after him, it would be a well deserved tribute.

Thanks for your time.

Go Raiders!!

Rob Burns