

Donna Conkling

From: Thomas Reno <reno@precisionstrategies.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2021 11:03 AM
To: Mayor
Cc: Clerk's Department
Subject: Richard Phillips/Crossways Field

CAUTION: External sender.

Dear Mayor Samwick,

I'm writing with regards to the football field at Crossways being named after Richard "Rippy" Phillips. For context, my wife Wendy and I were born in Scarsdale, graduated from Scarsdale High School (classes of 1981 and 1980 respectively) and we returned to Scarsdale to raise our family. I've known Rippy since grade school, when we played football in the Scarsdale Recreation Youth League and later as high school teammates.

When we moved back to Scarsdale in 1994, the football program – youth through high school – was on the brink of disappearing. The high school could not field a varsity team and youth football was down to single town team per age category...a far cry from the days when every elementary school could field a team, and the high school had freshmen, junior varsity, and varsity teams.

Our collective experience playing for football for Scarsdale was so rewarding, offering a lifetime of lessons and memories, many of us at the time could not fathom the town without football. Fortunately, in 1990s, a number of former Scarsdale players returned to town to raise our families and we banded together to turn the tide – Rippy was chief among us. I cannot think of another person who's contributed more to Scarsdale football, and frankly to the town, than Rippy. I had the privilege of coaching with Rippy and having him coach my two sons. I witnessed firsthand the positive impact he's had on countless young men and women. Rippy's much more than coach, he's the older brother, and in some cases, the father that many of these children did not have. And, he's been doing this more than three decades! Having played for a hall of fame college coach, Dick MacPherson, I can speak to the influence a person in that role can yield. Please know, there is a legion of former Scarsdale youth football players who are now successful adults, in part, because of the values and discipline instilled by Rippy.

As one of the few people who actually knew Bill Dean, for whom Dean Field is named, Rippy is cut from the same cloth: dedicated citizen, friend, neighbor and town advocate. It's not an accident that among our circle of friends, Rippy's often referred to as the "Mayor of Scarsdale." Moreover, I can only imagine the thousands of hours Rippy spent on the Crossways field coaching – rain, snow and all. How fitting that the field be named after him.

Scarsdale is our hometown, and even though we now live in Westport, CT, we still bleed maroon and white. Moreover, I'm happy to report that my adult son is now house shopping in Scarsdale – in no small measure because of the experience he had growing up and playing football for Rippy. I hope the Board of Trustees will do the right thing and name the football field after Rippy.

Sincerely,

Wendy & Tom Reno

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