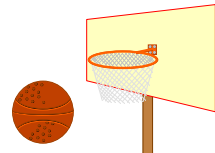


## Irvington Varsity "I" Club Newsletter

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NEWSLETTER # 71

JUNE 2002

HI FOLKS:

I hope to fill all the space with notes and letters sent to me by you gracious people for the financial support you folks have given to me, THANK YOU---I will keep sending the NEWSLETTERS.

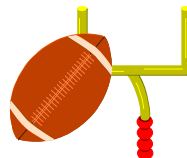
### NOTES AND LETTERS:

For your information, the acting Governor of N. J. has appointed me to be a "director" for the New Jersey Sports Hall of Fame. My term is for 3 years, I'm serving with Rick Cerone, Randy Berverly, and Bart Oates to name a few. Hopefully I can push Frank Hiller and Bill Cregar, both who played professional ball. Take care and good health.



Herm Pizzi '48

How many of you folks remember Jack Matthews, son of our former great football Coach, now living in Seattle, Wash. Jack writes; " I enjoy the Newsletter and I look forward to future ones".

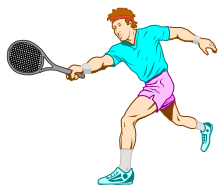


Ted Bosco'44 writes; "will miss the Shin Dig, keep up the good work!"

Roy Madsen '44 writes: enjoy your Newsletter – but please, no more bad news about Irvington, lets be happy with our memories of what it was for us.

Dorothy Hecht'46 " thanks to the note in your "EXTRA" Newsletter #70. I was reminded to send you my check for your very interesting Newsletter.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida reunion in Boynton Beach last month was great. There were about 300 at the Reunion- the oldest person was CHARLOTTE MAULL WEISENMBACH '24. Her nephew Bob Weisenbach '40 usually drives her to the Reunion. He was not able to attend this year- so she flew from Clearwater to West Palm Beach- by herself! How is that for loyal Alumni?



Bill Maley writes from Santa Fe, New Mexico. " I enjoy your Newsletter even though I do not recognize many names, it seems to bring back the good old days".

George Brown'54 writes; " I hope all is well with you "



Pete Skurla '37 writes: Over the years I meet many new faces all from Irvington. The Town must have emptied at least 2 to 3 times. It seems like every body is moving out of Irvington and no is moving into our war zone town that they still call Irvington. I have so many fond memories, they should change the name to war zone. I have not been feeling to good lately and I hope you can read this scribbling as I have been through a lot the last few years. I believe age is catching up to me. 82 years old or young, I believe my body is falling apart but thank God my mind is functioning O.K.



**I was sorry to hear that Jinks Hyer joined the I.H.S. graduates in a special place above. I visited her several times, wrote many letters and talked to her on the phone many times. She was more like a favorite Aunt than an ex teacher”**

**Mike Lytyn '37 and Mike Zuzack '49 write; “ keep the Newsletter coming, we enjoy reading them”.**

Dear Vito: writes Vic Oechler'20, I am always pleased to read your Newsletter although I do not know many Varsity members mentioned in them. I will never forget the many years I lived in Irvington. It is quite a job for you to write the Newsletter and I think all the members appreciate it. Please excuse my writing as I have had a cataract removed from my right eye and next week my left eye. So far so good.” Vito> I must tell you this for all you folks who do not know, Vic missed only one of our Reunions and on June 12, 2002 Vic will celebrate his 100 Birthday. God Bless you Vic, you have been an inspiration to all of us”.

**Frank and Margaret Gedrowicz write; “ We are enjoying your Newsletter very much, Margaret tell me Jerry Lewis did attend Irvington H.S. for a short time, his career came first”.**

**Richie Halperin'51 writes; “ I still enjoy the Newsletter – keep it coming- the EXTRA was great. We just got back from Chicago after 2 weeks. We had our first Grandchild – a little girl, her name is Semantha Saqualaine McIntosh.” Vito> “Welcome to the world of Grand parents, now you both got one more thing to worry about”**

**Rose writes on behalf of her husband John Druze'34. John is unable to write, his hands are bad with arthritis and on Christmas AM he had a fall and broke his hip. The operation was a success, he is now recuperating, doing O.K. with a walker. If it were not for the arthritic knee, bone on bone, he sure would feel better. He said, he would try to write soon or have me write again. .**

John Druze “34 almost put Irvington on the map. John played for that famous team in the late 30's the Fordham “ BLOCKS OF GRANITE” who as Bill Gallo, writer for the New York Daily News called the PILLARS OF GRIDIRON.

**Jonh Druze and Al Bararsky are the only two of the Blocks who played alongside of the famous Vince Lombardi received the “Mara Family Award” Friday April 26. John could not attend because of his illness, however Al Bararsky did and was able to tell some stories of Vince Lombardi. Some day we will appreciate the ability of John Druze, he was a 3 sport man at Irvington, in baseball he played first base, on Champion ship teams in football he was one of the best tight ends you could find. I know, I was a teammate of his on both these teams with him. John, had a terrific career, after high school, he went to Fordham University, when Fordham was the biggest football school in the east. They had memorable football games with Pittsburg which ended for successive years with neither school being able to score on the other. 0-0 After college John tried Pro football, after a few years took a job as assistant to Frank Leahy at Boston , with the success they had at Boston , he then went to Notre Dame as an assistant to Frank Leahy . After 15 years at Notre Dame and many national championships, age creeps in on all of us, after a few years in Belmar, John is in Scottsdale, Az. trying to enjoy his remaining years.**

From Saul Schwartz '44 “ Just received your current Newsletter' it is forwarded to me from N.J. to Fl. March 9<sup>th</sup> we had the 6<sup>th</sup> annual I.H.S.Reunion Luncheon @ the Holiday Inn in Boynton Beach. **There were close to 300 in attendance. I am enclosing a program from the affair. Vito> “THANK YOU SAUL”**

**From Dixie Sayle '52 “ I always look forward to your Newsletter I guess it helps in recapturing my youth! Our class (1952) is having their 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion in Oct. of this year and I am going to be there. I wish you a Happy birthday on July 4<sup>th</sup> and many more.**

Marty Klena '47 “ We thoroughly enjoy your Newsletter-Please keep up the great job”. Vito > Marty is married to Peggy or Margaret Schilling, daughter of Joe Schilling who has been a long time supporter and member of the Varsity Club, For you Joe, I have not forgotten you, you will always be my Banker.

**Hi Vito: Just a short note to let you know how much your efforts are appreciated. The Irvington we knew will never be the same, but your Newsletters and Reunions keep good memories alive. I have known you for a good many years. My first gym uniform – sneakers for Florence Ave School were purchased at your store. After I returned from Korea I would stop in your store and talk about football. I was playing in the North Jersey Semi Pro League at that time, you were never too busy to talk over old times. I was sorry to hear that we're not having the Reunion this year. Take care of yourself and keep the Newsletter coming as long as you are able. Thanks again.**

**William Ray Smith '47**

**P.S. I still have the Varsity Club Pin they gave me at the Ivanhoe.**

Ginny Weiner; “ we enjoy your letters and look forward to hearing from you, please keep them coming, as far as telling about Irvington, I think everybody knows about Mick. My claim to fame was playing for the “AMAZONS”. Vito > Yes Ginny everyone forgets that you were a star on that team of Max Deutsch, Max had you girls traveling all over, beating the best girls teams around. Like many folks you and the Amazons were ahead of your time. Presently you would be a pro, making a lot of money.

Bill McGrady '37 writes: Just a note of thanks for **keeping** up your Newsletter. I have lunch with Mickey Weiner now and then, he still looks great. Not much news for you with the exception that I am a year older

From Joe Polewka '46. Thank you for mailing your Newsletter to me, it is great to hear about our old classmates. It is a shame what is happening to our beloved Town of Irvington. We are moving from Forked River to Sebring, Fl. I hope you are in good health and I am looking forward to future Newsletters.

From Dot Gernert. Vito, we really enjoy your Newsletter even though we are saddened by the deploring news of Irvington. Imagine, Irvington having the highest violent – crime rate in the state. Certainly doesn't make one want to boast that they came from Irvington.

Do you recall Principal Haerrter calling a special assembly to reprimand the students for not getting off the sidewalks to let pedestrians pass? Evidently someone complained to the office and it really pertained to the afternoon session that were leaving school when business commuters were returning home. Can you imagine such an assembly taking place today! Vito> I sure remember Mr Haerrter as Principal, he was good, tough and fair to all students. I was fortunate, all my high school, 4 years were in the mornings and I had all afternoon for sports, and yes I have a copy of the book mentioned by you. Thank You.

Sandy Klurman'58 “ I just want you to know how much I appreciate getting your Newsletter. I just turned 62 years of age, I am still in the scrap business, I have 30 trucks and 60 men working for me. If you are ever in this area, please call me”.

Leo Menkin '34 a teammate of mine and John Druze; writes me and tells me about his friend John Feeney who passed away. “ I was with John about a week before he passed away and he seemed to be in good health. As stated by Leo, “He was a good man”. By the way, There are only four men from that team, still living, Menkin , Miele, Choborda and Druze. Does anyone know of others? Of course, the Assistant Coach at that time, Mickey Weiner. Yes: anyone else.

Joe Urban '38 writes, “Enclosed is my donation for the Newsletter – please keep it going !!! Reading the letter is like a breath of fresh air. Irvington may be down in the dumps now that is expected with the type of people living there and those running it. I should write ruining it instead It is nice to read the little tib-bits about your old classmates and also about all the people you formerly knew in Irvington.

Things are going pretty good for me in Arizona- weather is great- wearing my Bermuda shorts already!! Golfing 3 or 4 times a week- shot a 79 the other day- 2 under my age!!? Going to a Bionic Golf match next week, guys with prosthesis implanted in their body are eligible! I get to play because of my hip replacement!

I am sorry to hear about Ms Hyer passing – she was a “ good” teacher. If the teachers of today were like her, we would have better educated kids.

From Carlsbad, Ca. writes C.C.Ksycewski’38 “ enclosed please find check to cover the cost of sending the Newsletter to cover the increase cost of letters that Post Office will soon put into effect. **We enjoy the Newsletter very much. Memories of the Town, certain areas, people and occurrences, are so nice to recall. Your work in putting it together is outstanding. Thanks again, God Bless and take care.**

**Vito> I must admit to all you folks, I am having a devil of a time with my computer. If you will notice some of the print is bold and some is regular. I cannot get the Bold key to stay down. It seems to be working O.K. now. Lets see how long it will last. I think it is the operator.**

Sam Lesser ’41 writes; “ Hi Vito, enclosed fine check, Good Luck, God Bless-Sam

**Note from Casey Mullin’49 “ enjoy your Newsletter, keep up the good work. Can’t imagine a year without a reunion’. I notice that someone wrote to you about Fran Higgins, Fran is my cousin and I was wondering where he is. A suggestion for the Newsletter, a column called “WHERE ARE YOU NOW”. Vito> O.K. we are going to put Casey’s idea in the works, does any one know where Fran Higgins is? Or if you care to find any other person let me know.**

Here is a letter that comes from San Rafael, Ca. it is from my daughter, Beverlee Miele Hibbs. It has some personal things in it, one she refers to her Twin, Barbara now deceased 1997, Multiple Sclerosis. I as their Daddy always refer to them as little girls, (as all fathers do) well they are not, both were born in the year 1941, so you can figure out their ages. Here is the letter uncensored.

**Dear Daddy:**

**I just received your recent edition of the Irvington Varsity “I” Newsletter. I wanted to write as you suggested and requested to let you know how much I really enjoyed reading it. I find that many of the people mentioned and contributing to this news flash are more your contemporaries than mine, the fact that the town and school is the main focus of conversation, is my place of birth and of which I am an alumnus, keeps me interested. The items mentioned often include a few subjects to which I can relate and stir up old memories This issue caught my eye so I figured I would let you know how I felt about them.**

**First off, when you started this edition by talking about April Fool’s Day pranks it made me chuckle. Though I do not believe Gracie Brecht was still teaching there by the time I got to Irvington High School. I heard that story of how she would hide in the book closet and jump out as her holiday prank, many times from you and Mommy while growing up. Reading of it now, I immediately flashed back to my memory of Bobbi and I and our prank for that day of switching our classes to see if any of our teacher or fellow students recognized which Miele twin was there. They seldom did!**

**Then the letter from Saul Schwartz brought tears to my eyes as I so vividly recall that in 1953 visit of Jerry Lewis. As a 12 year old I was so star struck (I am sure you remember) and the idea that the famous Jerry Lewis would be from my home town and would come back to visit and that I would get to see him dazzled me. I recall that event as if it were yesterday. I can still see that parade and meeting him in the Town Hall; it is so real. I have told that story many times over the years, Me and Jerry Lewis!**

Barry Sirota, boy that name sure sounded familiar. What he wrote you of himself makes him sound older than us and probably of an earlier class than 1959, so I was not surprised when I could not find him pictured in Bobbi’s copy of our yearbook. But all he told of

living on Park Place near the Hospital and my other alma mater, Chancellor Ave Grammar School, brought back fond memories. He mentioned sledding down the hill behind the hospital and we did that so often, beside right down in front of our house on Prospect Ave. That sure was long ago. Your brief comment to him about the status of Asbury Park and how like Irvington it has become, startled me a bit. I did not realize that wonderful old town is on the skids too. . . .

Your comments regarding the ongoing political career of the first African American female Mayor of the Town made me laugh. I am not sure if you are showing your **political** side here or your male chauvinistic attitude. (as your daughter, I can say that) Vito> On April 5<sup>th</sup> 2002 the Star Ledger and Asbury Park Press had headlines such as this: IRVINGTON MAYOR INDICTED ON CHARGES OF CORRUPTION. Of course she says she is not guilty, however she says she will not run for reelection this coming May. Irvington definitely will have a new Mayor)

Finally, how you ended your Newsletter, pointing out the status of your health and you are no longer coordinating the Reunion made me sad. I know that this July marks your 86<sup>th</sup> birthday, but to me you will always be a young man. I accept, as you said, we are getting older (even me) but I do not want to think of you as anything but my young pop. I regret that you do not have the Reunion to work on; of course it took a lot of effort and you know best of what you can and cannot do, but as I saw it, it was something you enjoyed doing and did it well that it became a fun activity for many of our family. As I guess, all good things must come to an end.

Which leads me to ending this letter, since your Newsletter concludes with a request or solicitation for a donation, I have enclosed check too help defray some of the cost. I hope this will help with some of the expenses of preparing, printing and mailing this Newsletter. I would like to help to keep it going as long as you feel like or are up to doing it.

THANKS MR. EDITOR, FOR ALL YOUR FINE WORK!

I love you Daddy.

Signed: Beverlee

Michael Cohen'75 writes; enclosed is a check to cover expenses incurred in the cost of the Newsletter. I know my father Al Cohen, **would want the Varsity Club and the Newsletter to go on for as long as possible. Even though I don't go back as far as most members (class of '75) my memories of I.H.S., all the sports and the Town are so great. Thank you for the Newsletter.**

Ray Knispel'39 writes from Fl. Thank you for the Newsletter. It is great to hear some news about Irvington. Eileen and I hope that you get to feeling better and without pain.

. Eileen had a stroke last July and was in the hospital 10 days. It effected her right side arm and leg. Then rehab for 6 weeks in a nursing home. She is doing somewhat better now, she can use her right arm and hand to eat some. It is mostly her right leg, she is on a walker now, goes to therapy 3 days a week at Health South. We are hoping she can **walk soon without the walker and maybe with a cane. I had a Colon operation last June and thank goodness every thing is O.K.**

**Eileen and I had birthdays this past year, 81!! Getting up there. Hope that this check will help. Keep up the good work. Thanks again--- Ray**

**Note from Babs Walsky; Dear Vito: Just a line to send you a check so you can continue your good work. Lee really enjoys reading about everyone. He is still in a wheel chair but has survived a Pacemaker, Diabetes, broken legs, Crones Disease, and Muscular Degeneration. His will to live has pulled him through and he thanks many for calls and visits. Vito> Lee, hang in there we are all routing for you.**

Newton Hamfeldt'39 writes from Louisville, Ky. Dear Vito: I am proud to say I was born in Irvington and was brought up there . The names, events and memories of the "old" Irvington I cannot get enough of. Yes, I would be proud to have my teacher to rewrite that sentence.

With my parents I lived on Nye ave. near Ball St. 1928 to 1941. As the H.S. students walked daily past my house it was a wonderful experience to know and speak to most all.

Scholars, our sports members, musicians and every average day high school girl and boy. They all turned out to be wonderful to me and it would wonderful to see and hear them again.

The school was excellent, made so by the efforts and intentions of our dedicated teachers. Who can forget our wonderful in school events, Sports, Dances, Clubs, Assemblies, Musicals, Lectures—plus more. Life was at its best, American Flag and Prayer were never questioned.

Yes, thanks for the old Irvington, The young and the old who lived there in the 20's 30', and the 40's. That is my personal resident history or remembrance. THANKS Vito \_ my right eye sight slips a little but I hope you understand some of my thoughts and feelings. Thanks for the Newsletter, I am more than please when it arrives..

It is now Mon., Sunday is for reading the Newspapers.

I guess you folks know that I do not write this Newsletter in one sitting, I took time out. It was Sat. I went to Mass. at 5 o'clock, got home just in time to hear and see the Kentucky Derby on TV, being Newton is living in Louisville I thought perhaps he could give us a tip. The winner, War Emblem, with Victor Espinoza in the saddle paid \$43.00 for 2. Boy, Newt we could have been rich if you could have given us a tip like this. Were you there?

Stan Cesaro'57 writes: Enclosed find check for Newsletters and help for future expenses. Health, Wealth, & Happiness to you.

Received this letter from Doris Schwing Simpson'44 married Ed Simpson'44 and the founders of "MUIRHEAD" **Dear Vito: I attended Union Ave School (class of 1940) Jerry Lewis was in that class. I only remember him as being a nice quite boy.**

I took dancing lessons at Annette Klein's Dancing School, on Union Ave, in from Chancellor Ave. We had a yearly recital at the Rex Movie Theatre, several times Jerry acted as M.C. I knew that his father was in "show business."

Jerry left at the end of his Freshman or Sophomore year at Irvington High. He sat behind me in Mr. Carlson's home room.

Vito> Have you ever tried the Muirhead: Pecan Pumpkin and other Specialty Foods. "They are Good, real Good, you would enjoy them.

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

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Harry Hill 7/8/30; Bill McGrady 7/8/18; Stanley Jarosz 7/9/30; Joe Urban 7/11/20; Pete Skurla 7/15/19; Frank Addonizio 7/15/21; Jack Cordes 7/24/28; Michael Petrouly 7/27/31; George Andreach 7/27/34; Ed McGrady 7/29/30; Barry Sirota 8/11/36; Ron Smith 8/2/34; James Reilly 8/2/10; Jerry Betzner 8/11/34; Adam Scrupski 8/18/28; Bob Zitch 8/28/23; Joseph Ens 8/28/36; Ray Smith 8/29/29; Bill Stiles 8/31/38; Gene Malinowski 9/6/39; Bob Eitel 9/17/30; Richie Halperin 9/20/33; Art Kull 9/21/20; Harry Stevenson 9/22/14; Father Wayne Pavela 9/27/51; Jerry Chirichella 9/30/31.

We cannot wish you a HAPPY BIRTHDAY unless you send your Birthday date into us.

I just got enough space to ask you folks to write me about what you are doing or about Irvington, about your athletic endeavors now or in the past. About your grand kids, and what they are doing to make you happy. I know, that athletes are not very good at writing but many of you have married a classmate, I hope you show these Newsletter's to her and perhaps she can assist you in writing of your experiences. The only way you can see your name in print is by writing. Our next issue will be in Sept. You have all summer to think about this, so write now, I'll be waiting for your letters.

Have pleasant and enjoyable summer:

VITO