

THE GALILEO OBSERVER

A Monthly Newsletter of the Galileo Alumni Association

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AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM OUR WEBMASTER

AOL is automatically blocking many mass mailings, and the Observer may be included. If you are an AOL subscriber, please let us know if you receive this issue. Just send a message saying "Got it" to webmaster@galileoalumni.org.

Phil Kaiser's popular "Lion's Pride" newsletter definitely has fallen into AOL's spam filtering trap. AOL no longer delivers the "Lion's Pride" or any of Phil's messages to the subscribers on his mailing list. If you get the "Lion's Pride" and your friends on AOL want it, then please forward a copy to them. In the meantime, we are trying to determine whether or not the Observer is also being blocked.

SMALL WORLD

(an editorial)

Approaching the beginning of my eighth decade of life, it always amazes others when I tell them I bumped into so and so, an old buddy or a friend from high school. San Francisco has always been a small town in the sense that one "bumps" into friends all the time. We who grew up together in The City and attended Galileo maintain a love and nostalgia for our past. We are constantly recalling events that happened and where we were when they happened. There is no place like San Francisco. It is a microcosm of the world with all its different cultures, languages and foods.

It was the same when I attended Galileo. People from other cities and towns don't understand how we can keep relationships alive for so many years. I can number several dozen people that I've known for over 50 years and many for over 60 years. I have kept all my high school memorabilia — Block G sweater, Pendulum copies, three yearbooks, etc. It feels good to have these things around. But more so as a reminder of what good times I enjoyed growing up in San Francisco and attending Galileo.

Recently some seventy people from Marina Junior High School, Galileo and North Beach gathered for luncheon at Caesar's Restaurant, an annual event. There were classmates I hadn't seen in 50 years. Some had lost their hair, what remained on others had turned grey and white, some had paunches, but all of them still had that spark of youthful memories. This is why we alumni like to keep in touch. I hope that as Galileo alumni we never lose this connection with our past.

TO THE 2003 GALILEO GRADUATING CLASS

Today you have become alumni of Galileo. The one sure way of keeping in touch with your alma mater is by joining the Galileo Alumni Association. Today's students are tomorrow's alumni. Plan on joining the GAA now and maintain your Galileo connection.

Recently a couple of former students attended one of GAA's Thursday board meetings and hooked up with a member of the board who had experience in planning a reunion. They gained valuable advice on how to plan a successful reunion.

The GAA board usually meets every second Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm in Room 210 on the ground floor, just inside the Francisco Street entrance. They're taking a break for summer, so the next meeting will be Thursday, September 11th. Any and all alumni are invited to attend these open meetings. We hope to see you soon!

DID YOU KNOW. . . .

In Latin, Galileo means "Gallic lion" .

The Galileo Academy is one of the few public high schools in California with an observatory.

In January 1993, Galileo received an honor award from the California Department of Education and the Scope, Sequence and Coordination Project.

Galileo offers four science and technology career pathways to its students, not only giving them access to varied course selection but also field experience through college courses and internships.

The Galileo Academic Decathlon Team of 2001 received 11 medals.

Galileo is the first high school in San Francisco to have the Academic Block G Program.

(From Galileo Handbook)

GALILEO GRAD PRODUCES IMPORTANT WWII FILM

Fred Basconcillo, a graduate of Galileo, has produced a film documenting the story of unique sacrifices and accomplishments during World War II. Titled "An Untold Triumph: America's Filipino Soldiers" , it tells the story of the most important period in the history of Filipino Americans, a time when war in the Pacific and a great calamity in their homeland brought them together for the most important fight of their lives. Their participation in World War II changed forever the way Filipino-Americans saw themselves and the way most Americans thought of them.

It chronicles the humbleness, resourcefulness, resiliency, perseverance and loyalty of the Filipino-Americans as they struggled to find their place in America.

Combining interviews with regiment members and scholars with archival footage and stills, diaries, posters and other material, the one hour film is an intimate portrait of a group of immigrants and sons of immigrants who fought prejudice and in the end triumphed.

The film was completed in November, 2002 and premiered in Honolulu. In January, it was shown at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C. It has also been shown in several colleges and universities throughout the United States. In March, it was screened at the Kabuki Theater as part of the International Asian American Film Festival.

" An Untold Triumph" will be shown this coming August at the Herbst Theater in San Francisco and will be free to the public (time and date to be announced). Look for the announcement in the Observer.

BIOGRAPHY

Imagine you are a very sick kid in a hospital and you've got an incurable disease. You don't have much time to live, and the time you have lived has been filled with very few memories. It's Easter Sunday and you look up from your bed and you see the Easter Bunny flapping its ears and handing you a present. You momentarily forget your plight and enjoy the moment, the moment when someone cares enough to give you a little joy and comfort and hope.

This is what Ray Piccinini, alias the Easter Bunny, has been doing for the past 40 years. Ray (Galileo, 1951), armed with boxes of donated candy and stuffed animals, makes the rounds of Bay Area hospitals and lifts the spirits of countless children. This year was no exception. The Easter Bunny visited eight hospitals. His co-workers—family and friends—put together over 700 packages of goodies for the kids. Like that other comedian's kids on Labor Day, Ray's kids look forward to his visit each Easter.

Ray has received letters from Presidents Reagan and Bush as well as the Mayor of San Francisco and the Governor of California. He carried the Olympic Torch for the 2002 Winter Games through San Francisco. Ray, who is 70, almost gave up doing the Easter Bunny. He had triple bypass and temporarily had to assign his great nephew to take his place. But Ray was back at it the following year. He attributes his stamina and enthusiasm to the constant support of his wife of 22 years. "Pamela is my biggest supporter, fan and helper, and her love and caring are an inspiration for me to continue to do this every year," Ray says.

At Galileo, Ray teamed with Harry Underhill in a comedy act similar to Martin and Lewis. He later worked as a waiter at Enrico's (where the Easter Bunny idea got started) and now can be seen waiting on tables at The Stinking Rose Restaurant on Columbus Avenue after 5 pm Tuesdays through Fridays.

Ray Piccinini proves the adage, that "in giving, one receives" . He says, "I love being the Easter Bunny because of all the joy I get bringing gifts to sick children on Easter Sunday. Perhaps the single most important thing that keeps him going year after year is the little girl who was very ill and hadn't spoken in a month. Upon seeing the Easter Bunny, she turned to her Dad and said, "I told you he would not forget" . And we will not forget you, Ray.

TRIBUTE TO HANK

Angelo "Hank" Luisetti passed away recently. Long before Michael Jordan, Hank Luisetti was considered the greatest basketball player who ever lived. If Dr. Naismith was basketball's founding father, then Hank Luisetti was its son.

When Hank played basketball for Galileo, tall men were considered to be 6'2" . It was still a game that the person of average height could play and compete. Today there are point guards who are 6' 2" and taller. Luisetti played under the legendary coach Thomas "Fox" DeNike. Shooting free throws underhanded and set shots with two hands was common. When Hank went to Stanford he developed the one-handed set shot and was an All-American at three positions.

In the history of Galileo sports, Hank Luisetti is undoubtedly the most famous player in a particular sport, considering "The High School of Champions" produced such outstanding and revered athletes as Joe, Dominic and Vince DiMaggio, Tony Lazzeri, Dario Lodigiani and Dino Restelli (baseball), Bruce Hale and Don Bragg (basketball), Gino Cimoli (basketball and baseball), Grover Klemmer (track) and Ann Curtis Cuneo, Patsy Elsener, and Joe Marino (swimming and diving).

Basketball has produced some of the greatest athletes in the world. The legacy of Hank Luisetti is one of its hallmarks.

ALUMNI LOOKING FOR CLASSMATES

KATHY O'LEARY BROWN (1948). Email: kmbrown@access-4-free.com

JIM STEINBERG (1950), 10956 Green Street, #171, Columbia, CA 90350. Email: jimnkd@mlode.com. Jim got together with Elmer Jansen for the latter's 70th birthday and wants to hear from anyone that remembers him!

The Galileo Observer invites your letters, memories, inquiries and suggestions. Send them by email to: editorgalileoobserver@yahoo.com, or by postal mail to: Galileo Observer, care of Galileo Alumni Association, 1150 Francisco Street, San Francisco, CA 94109.

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*Comments? Contact the [Galileo Alumni webmaster](#)
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