

## DOMENICK "DECO" PARADISE CLASS OF 1949



Domenick (Deco) Paradise's athletic and professional career spanned 43 years and ended where it began. Dom was the starting left guard as a sophomore on the undefeated, untied and unscored upon 1946 Mynderse Academy football team and retired in 1989 as the Mynderse Academy Athletic Director. In between, and since, Dom personifies the word "contributor".

Dom was born in Phelps, New York, the youngest of eighteen siblings and graduated from Mynderse in 1949. While at Mynderse, Dom started for three years in football, two years in basketball and three years in baseball in varsity competition. Dom's love for athletics was born on the courts and playing fields of Mynderse Academy.

After graduating from Mynderse, Dom enlisted in the Air Force, and while serving in Japan, played fast pitch softball and basketball, winning the Far East Championship in fast pitch softball.

Following his military career, Dom earned his Bachelors and Masters degrees from Michigan State University, while at the same time teaching and coaching at Bath, Michigan. While coaching in Bath, Dom was 15-3 in basketball, 12-2 in baseball and 6-2 in football.

Returning to New York State in 1959, Dom taught in the Interlaken School District, squeezing in courses at Syracuse University for his administrative certification. Dom ultimately earned certifications in Health, Physical Education and Recreation from Cortland State, as well as certifications for administrative positions through superintendent.

In 1961, Dom went to Auburn High School where he coached, taught and became assistant to the Athletic Director, Henry Vetter. While coaching at Auburn, Dom's JV Basketball teams compiled a 55-5 record and in his final season, 1967-68, his Varsity Basketball team compiled an 18-3 record. During this same period, Dom was also the Assistant Line Coach at Hobart College under football coach, Alva (Al) Kelly.

Dom returned to Mynderse Academy in 1968 to become Mynderse Academy's first Athletic Director. Dom developed the first curriculum for both Health and Physical Education, worked tirelessly to improve the facilities in Seneca Falls, and was instrumental in bringing teachers/coaches into the district who would lead Mynderse Academy into sports prominence in central New York.

In addition to his career as Athletic Director at Mynderse, Dom was, at various times, in charge of the entire Health, Physical Education and Recreation Programs for the school district. He was an Assistant Principal, advisor to the Block M, and coached Varsity Football and Varsity Basketball.

During his career, Dom has received awards from the Wrestling Booster Club and St. Patrick's School for his contributions. When asked, Dom feels that he is most proud of his contributions to the advancement of athletic opportunities for females at Mynderse. Dom made sure that the addition of women's sports did not mean inferior equipment or venues, and that the young women always had the best available uniforms and proper schedules. In fact, that's how Dom approached any Mynderse team; they always got the best, even if Dom had to help raise the money himself. In addition, Dom was personally involved in securing improved lighting at Bracht Field, adding a weight room to the Mynderse facilities, and helped in the establishment of new sports at Mynderse, such as soccer and lacrosse.

For twenty one years, Dom was the "heart and soul" of Mynderse athletics. He was an administrator, coach, mentor, supervisor, advisor, coordinator of volunteers and a person who tried to show students how best to represent Mynderse Academy. Dom always had time to work with a young coach or athlete, write recommendations for and find scholarships for graduating seniors, and in general, caring for his teachers, coaches and students.

Subsequent to his retirement from Mynderse in 1989, Dom continued to give back to his hometown. Dom served numerous terms on the Board of Education and worked with Seneca County Child Care. He was elected Seneca Falls Supervisor multiple times and chaired the Seneca County Board of Supervisors Finance Committee for years.

If the word "contributor" means "to give something to someone", Domenick (Deco) Paradise is the embodiment of that word.

Dom and Ailene live at 10 Rumsey Street in Seneca Falls.