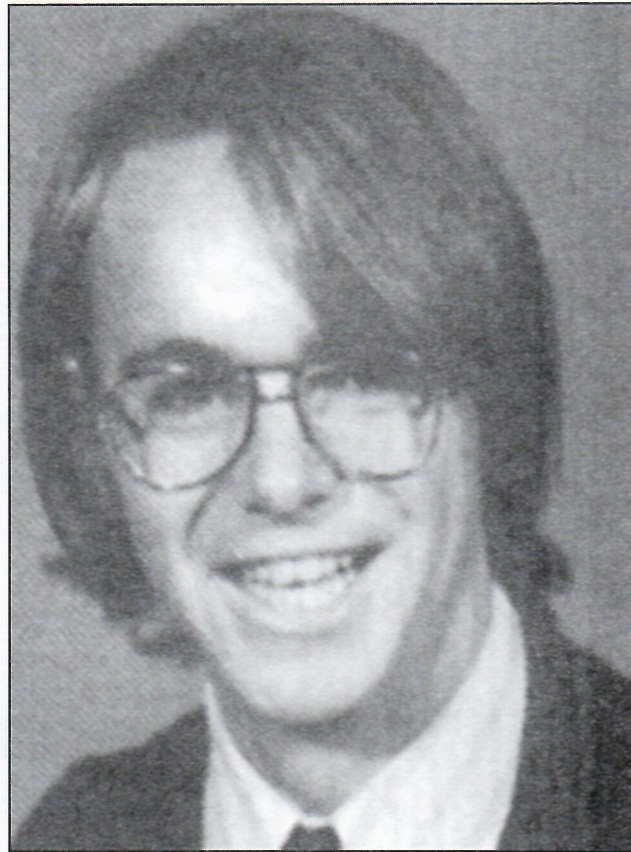


Watchung Hills Regional High School Hall of Fame



Brian Penn

Computer Scientist, Geospatial Software Engineer

Class of 1976

Brian Penn is still remembered at Watchung Hills for his record of achieving one of the top two-mile times for the Sectional Meet in track, which, he says, served him well for the rest of his running career and life. "It is a transcendent moment, because if you succeed, you move to a higher plane from which you can never truly fall... These opportunities occur only a few times in our lives, and how we respond makes all the difference. Prepare yourself, be awake and ready for them, then go for it."

This philosophy guided Dr. Penn's path when his interest turned to professional and academic interests. As computer scientist at Texas Instruments, he helped develop the first commercial 3-D seismic workstation, the first low-level penetration system to fuse digital elevation maps and radar, and an artificial intelligence system for managing cockpit activities. He was among the pioneers to use Hyper-Text Markup Language in his dissertation field area. At the University of Texas at El Paso, he helped establish a NASA based university research center and became deeply involved with Hyperspectral remote sensing.

Later, Brian did numerous Hyperspectral studies for the Boeing Company and became involved with the Shuttle Columbia recovery effort in East Texas. He currently works as a geospatial software engineer for the National Ecological Observatory Network in Boulder, Colorado.

His three offspring follow in his running footsteps, their success "in no small way due to the lessons learned from Coach Peiffer," says Dr. Penn of the family's common interest in track.