

## Richard Salinsky Inducted into Marblehead High School Hall of Fame



THEY'LL SWEAT IT OUT FROM SIDELINES

Three Marblehead regulars will be out of uniform Saturday when the Magicians host the Salem Witches in their annual meeting at Spanish War Veterans field. Sitting this game out while observing the Jewish holiday are, from the left—Scott Dittrich and Dick Salinsky, guards, and Ray Katz, tackle. (Staff photo)

Richard Salinsky

A clipping from the 1962 Salem News shows the “kosher middle,” and their decision not to play on Yom Kippur.

**AMY SESSLER POWELL**  
Jewish Journal Staff

**MARBLEHEAD** — Richard Salinsky lives his life like every moment is fourth and one.

It is a message he learned more than 50 years ago from his football coach, Manny DeCastro, the man who introduced him to the game that he believes made him the man he is today.

Last month, Salinsky, president of Best Petroleum, had the opportunity to share these messages and thank the people who shared the journey with him. He was inducted into the Marblehead High School Football Hall of Fame, honored in part for his role in the 1962 Thanksgiving game versus Swampscott, when Marblehead upset Swampscott and went on to win the conference. Salinsky is proud to have been part of the squad that beat Swampscott three years in a row, 1960, '61 and '62, and won the conference twice.

Though Salinsky has accomplished a lot in the intervening years — he has built a company from the ground up, been

recognized by SIGMA, his professional organization, as “distinguished marketer” for 2011, raised a beautiful family with his wife, Esther — this honor means everything to him.

He built Best Petroleum from a single filling station into one of New England’s most familiar fuel companies. Now, he manages his properties and consults for marketers, refiners, banks and law firms. However, he is not sure he would have accomplished so much without football.

“Football made me strive to be successful, to understand teamwork,” he said.

Salinsky recalls himself as a troublemaker. He liked to shake things up a bit as a kid. He remembers being kicked out of Hebrew school for setting a stink bomb under the bus.

When he got to high school, DeCastro, a shop teacher and coach, said, “Either you’re going to play football for me, or you might end up in reform school.”

When he looks back, more than 50 years later, he said, “I chose football, but reform school might have been easier.”

At about 5’4” and 145 pounds,

Salinsky was an unlikely lineman. In a twist of fate, he shared the line with two other Jewish players, Scott Dittrich and Ray Katz, both also undersized. The team nicknamed them “the kosher middle.” In 1962, with a game scheduled for Yom Kippur, the kosher middle took their lead from Sandy Koufax and didn’t play. Marblehead lost that day.

Salinsky describes a turning point in his life. It was the moment he realized “that fourth and one, the last chance a team has to find the fortitude to continue,” would be his life motto. It was during a sweltering summer double session workout, when Coach Manny told the linemen to take 10 laps around the field.

“We all struggled to make those 10 laps in the heat, in full pads. When we were exhausted, he said, ‘Okay, who can do another lap? It’s fourth and one, and [we’ll] find out if you’ve got the heart and desire.’”

Salinsky remembers himself and the others crawling that last lap with dirt in their throats and the sweat burning their eyes, but they did it. The coach said, “You will never forget fourth and one,” and he hasn’t.



Amy Sessler Powell

Richard Salinsky displays the plaque from his induction into the Marblehead Football Hall of Fame.