

Local Organization Gives Back and Has Fun Doing It!

What do you get when you put 200 former athletes and coaches from Sto-Rox and Montour in a room together? Hilarious memories, thundering back-slaps, and bellowing laughter, that's what. Throw in a couple of tin trays of homemade Italian sausage and lasagna by Bobby D's Catering, colorful sports tales by Danny Daniels, Nick Haden, and Randy Grossman, and what you have is a perfect day in the land of Western Pennsylvania sports.

This year's Third Annual Memorial Scholarship Luncheon, hosted by Athletes of Action on April 14, brought together local sportsmen to not only swap stories and fill their bellies with delicious food, but also to raise scholarship money for local high school seniors. The nostalgic crew of creaky-kneed old-timers mixed with 30-somethings for an afternoon of shared victory at the Kennedy Township Volunteer Firemen's Hall. The local authorities ensured that no impromptu "replays" of heated rivalry games would take place – unless tubs of analgesic and Advil were supplied by the local hospital.

"I love hearing all of the crazy stories from the old-timers," a member of the younger generation said. "They have all of these memories from their playing days. It was so different back then. It's so interesting to hear about. Some of them didn't even wear facemasks on their football helmets. They were wild."

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Athletes in Action's mission is to build community and honor legacy; to preserve the histories of athletes and coaches from the community; and to provide scholarships to local high school student-athletes attending college.

"We want to remember and honor those that came before us, but it's even more important to give to our youth," said a former Stowe High School basketball star.

"Getting together with guys I haven't seen in 30 years is fantastic," said a former Montour footballer, "but contributing to a young person's life feels even better."

The afternoon was punctuated by a scintillating keynote address by former Pittsburgh Steeler, Randy Grossman. The fire-whistles in the next door firehouse nearly blew from the roar of the crowd during his story about "tossing his cookies" into Head Coach Chuck Noll's lap during a flight from a game his rookie season. Over a plate of steaming sausage and stuffed chicken, one local businessman said to a man sitting across from him, "I can't believe I just saw my high school coach. I haven't seen that guy in 22 years! I wonder if he's going to yell at me again for

the shot I missed in our last game my senior year."

Those that attended the Memorial Scholarship Luncheon found it well worth their money and their time. Anyone that came to witness and participate in the event could very well see that the old adage about the McKees Rocks area still rings true: "McKees Rocks has more characters per square foot than any other neighborhood in America - maybe even more than Hollywood."

Athletes of Action is looking forward to engaging in community events throughout the year and hosting next year's luncheon. For more information visit www.athletesofaction.com or call (412) 771-8937.