



**"To live an extraordinary life, you must resist an ordinary approach."** ~ Frank McKinney

## Tribute to Bernie McCracken at the WHS Multiclass Reunion

by Kathy Boyer Maher

A highlight of the Wildwood High School Multiclass Reunion last September was the aptly named Reunion Festiball, spotlighting our outstanding sports teams—especially the 1964 State Champions—and honoring a beloved teacher and basketball coach, Bernie McCracken, who passed away in February 2013 at the age of 77. Fifteen members of "Bernie's Army" were on hand in the gymnasium for this warm tribute.

Coach McCracken began teaching and coaching at WHS in 1960. While there, he accumulated a record of 256 wins and 88 losses; he was inducted into the South Jersey Basketball Hall Of Fame in 1984. He was most proud, however, of his work with the many algebra students he taught and mentored over the years. The impact he had on his students and players will last forever.



*The McCracken Family*

As one of his star players, Harry (Bubby) Hayward put it: "Coach never used the 'Win' word. He knew good things would happen if we just followed the program and worked hard. I can truly say that he was by far the best teacher, coach, and person I knew in the formative stages of my life. We were blessed to have him."



*"Bernie's Army"*



*Bernie McCracken and Harry "Bubby" Hayward*

The Festiball was held at the Wildwood High School Gymnasium on Saturday, September 29, to honor the sports teams (1963-1973)—especially the basketball teams coached by Bernie McCracken—took on added significance when Bernie passed away on February 7. We're so glad we had a chance to honor him! As you'll see in the photos, he couldn't have been happier that day.