

A slice of Pascack Valley High School history

BY JUSTIN MATTES
CORRESPONDENT

HILLSDALE

The night couldn't have been more perfect, as friends, staff and alumni of Pascack Valley High School gathered at Seasons Restaurant on May 20 to celebrate 50 years of its history.

A table covered with vintage memorabilia brought everyone present back the era of poodle skirts, while Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock" greeted guests as they

entered the ballroom. The air was filled with 1950's tunes sung by members of the school choir.

Teachers and former students shared memories as they scanned yearbooks while remembering the "good old days." Friendships instantly rekindled.

It was also night to thank to Joe Talamo and Jeff Jasper, two men who have a total of over 70 years experience teaching and coaching at Pascack Valley between them.

Most schools claim to have a supreme teaching and support staff, others take pride on their sports

programs. Pascack Valley is unique because during its 50-year history, it has cemented its place among the top schools in the state in both categories.

As for Talamo and Jasper, both men clearly "possess an immense passion for coaching and for working with their players" according to Tom Gattoni, PV's athletic director.

Jasper has been teaching and coaching at Pascack Valley for over 30 years. He has coached everything from girls' and boys' basketball to lacrosse during his tenure at the Hillsdale High school, and holds

a remarkable record: four state championships, 11 state sectional championships and has led his basketball teams to over 700 wins.

However, Jasper sees himself as a teacher first.

"Though I have been involved with numerous championships at Pascack Valley, this award recognizes me for more than just a coach. My teaching is most significant," he says.

Just like on the court, Jasper sets very high expectations in the classroom as well. His subject is history; he embraces it with passion.

The night also honored the most distinguished coach in PV's half-century history, Joe Talamo. If you ask about Pascack Valley's sports history, Talamo's name is always at the top of the list. His record has set a high bar future coaches inspire to reach.

Being one of PV's first coaches has always meant something special to Talamo: "When I first came to Pascack Valley, I felt like the school was my new home. The teachers and students were my new family."