

## HALL OF ACHIEVEMENT

2009/2010  
Journal

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### WALTER M. O'CONNELL

#### Class of 1964

Walter grew up in Copiague as the eldest of six brothers. He still remembers the teachers at Copiague High School who made a difference in his life. After a knee injury ended his participation in sports, he became the school's official scorer, keeping the score books and statistics, and working the clock for most sports. He also enjoyed being the football public address announcer. In addition, Walter, a former paper boy, spent his high school years writing a town sports column for the *Long Island Sun*.

After graduation, Walter enlisted in the U. S. Air Force, attending technical school before being assigned to Anchorage, Alaska, where he worked in military intelligence, specializing in safeguarding and transporting top secret crypto information and documentation. In 1968 Walter intercepted the coded message sent from North Korea to the Soviet Union that the Koreans had captured the *U. S. S. Pueblo* and its captain, Commander Pete Bucher. He also continued his outside activities as official scorer for the Anchorage Baseball League, reporter for the *Anchorage Daily News*, and sports writer for the Armed Forces Radio Network. In 1970, Walter joined the People's Alliance Federal Credit Union where he worked for 38 years. He was Vice President of Internal Controls and Secretary to the Supervisory Committee. He was responsible for coordinating activities with the U. S. Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Police Department.

To honor his father, Walter G. O'Connell, founding Principal of Copiague High School, Walter started the Walter G. O'Connell Archive in which he purchases first edition hardcover books written by prominent Americans, who autograph the book for the school. The collection, which currently holds over 500 volumes, contains every living President, Vice President, numerous governors, senators, congressmen, cabinet members, Supreme Court justices, astronauts, and sports and entertainment personalities.

Walter and his wife Patricia live in Ronkonkoma and are the parents of Daniel and Erin. They are active volunteers in their community.

**"It takes many good deeds to build a reputation, and only one bad one to lose it."**