

Reginald Nero

A Pictoral History

1943 - present

Showing some of his works over the last 60 Years.



BRUNY LINGS "No. 1" EASTERN SEABOARD CHAMPS - NEWBURG ALA

GENEVA

RUTH

BEATRICE

OLIVIA

SARAH

DOTTIE

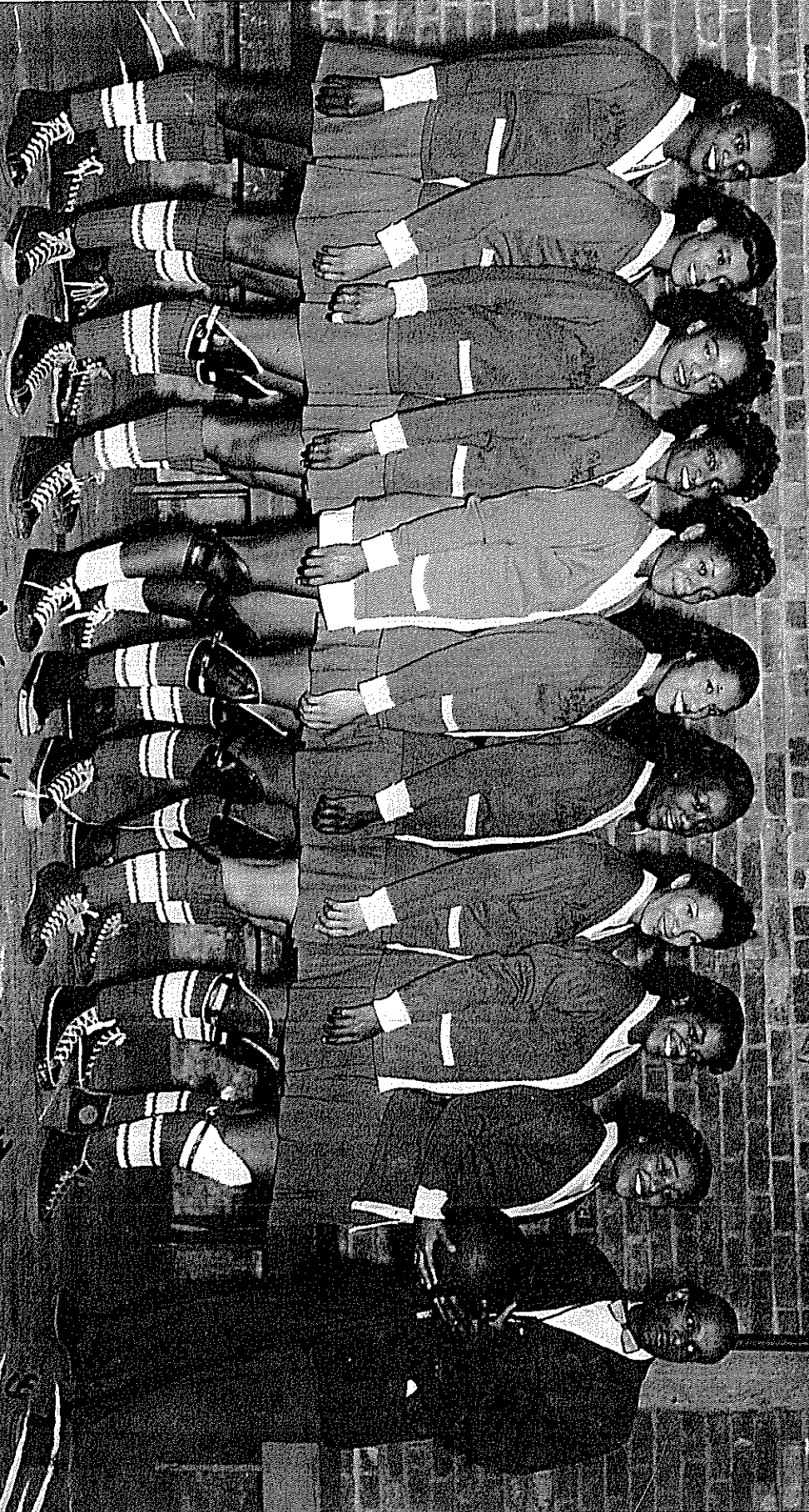
SADIE

GENEVA

MARSH

BETTY

ROSE



JOE GREAY

BRYAN

CELESTINE

TONIE

G. KAMNER



7.1.7 DONT WALL ST LEAGUE 1950-51 CHAMPS

MEMO. NO. 4 PLAYER



R. NERO

CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

ASSISTANT TO THE MAYOR
ROBERT M. BLUM

June 28, 1967

The Hon. Peter Aschkenasy
Deputy Executive Director
Department of Parks
The Arsenal
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York

RE: East New York Neighborhood Advisory Committee
Youth Council — Reginald A. Nero, \$6360 Per Annum

Dear Peter:

At the East New York Neighborhood Advisory Committee meeting yesterday, the group asked if Mr. Reginald A. Nero, a laborer in the East New York playgrounds, could work with a Youth Council which will be formed. It was agreed that Mr. Nero, for many years, has had the respect of and excellent relations with ALL of the youth in this area. He would be an asset to the summer Task Force program in this regard.

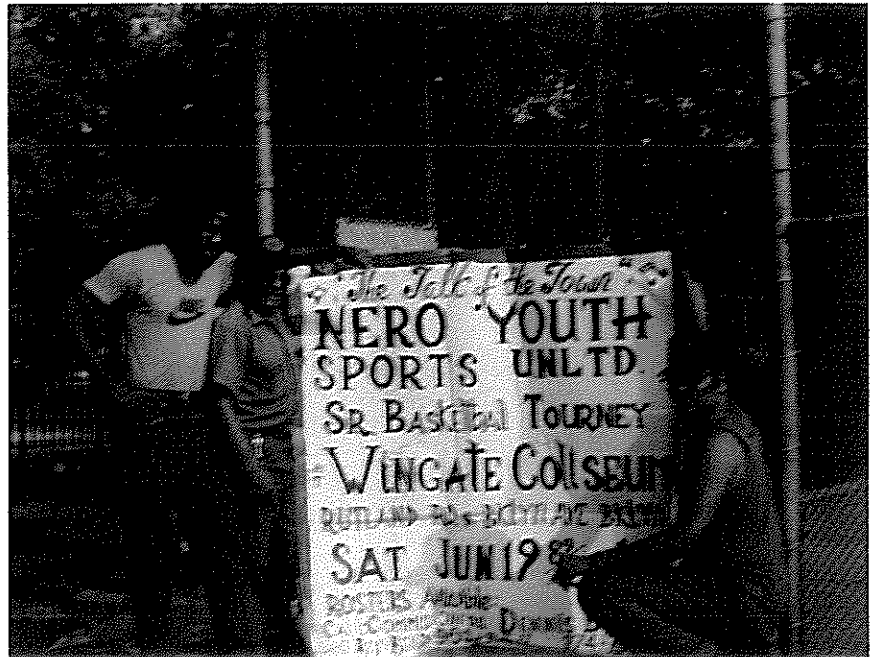
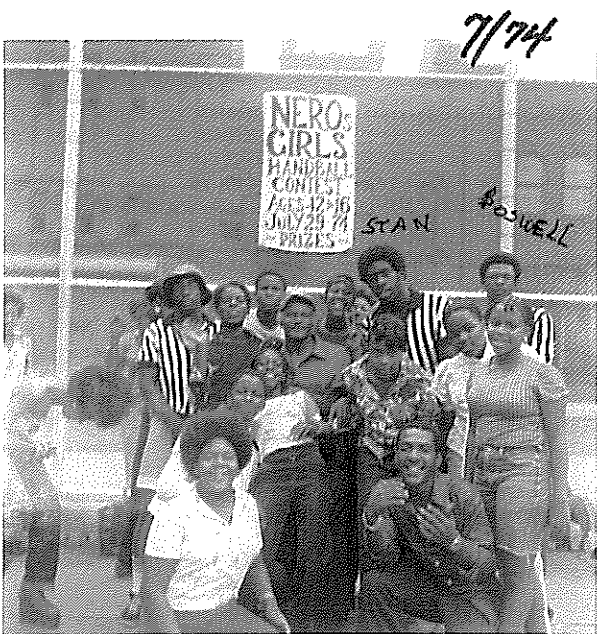
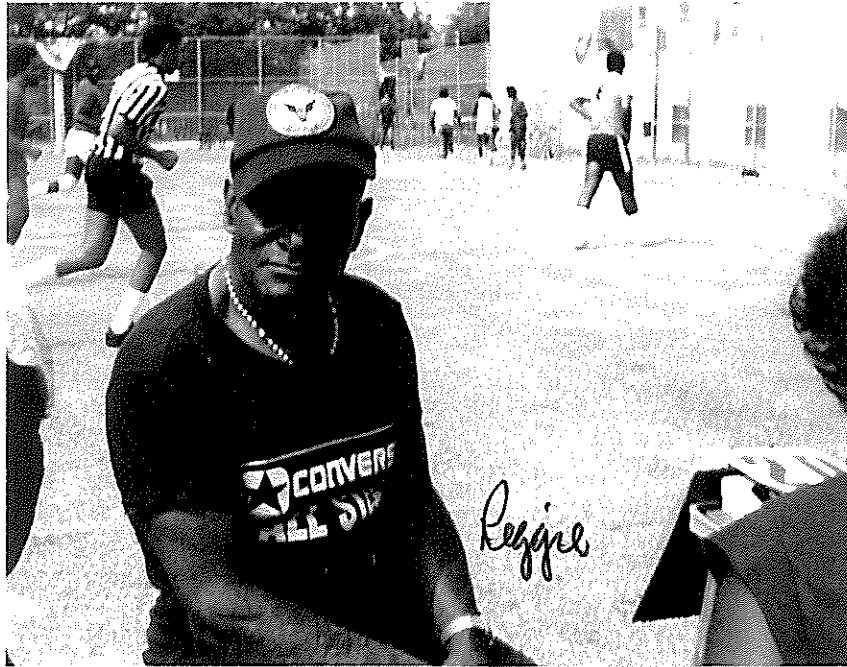
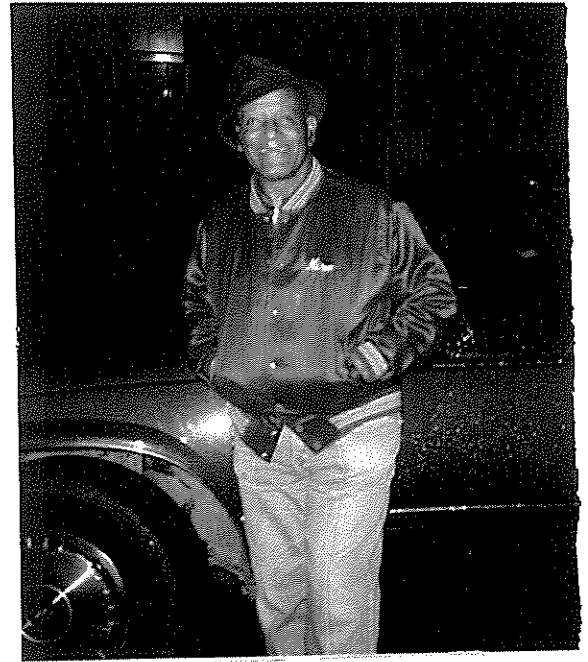
Will you arrange for him to work with this Youth Council beginning on July 7th and ending on September 8th of this year?

We have called Brooklyn Park Director's office for proper title of this man, as well as his full name. They, of course, will only be guided by your office.

Cordially,

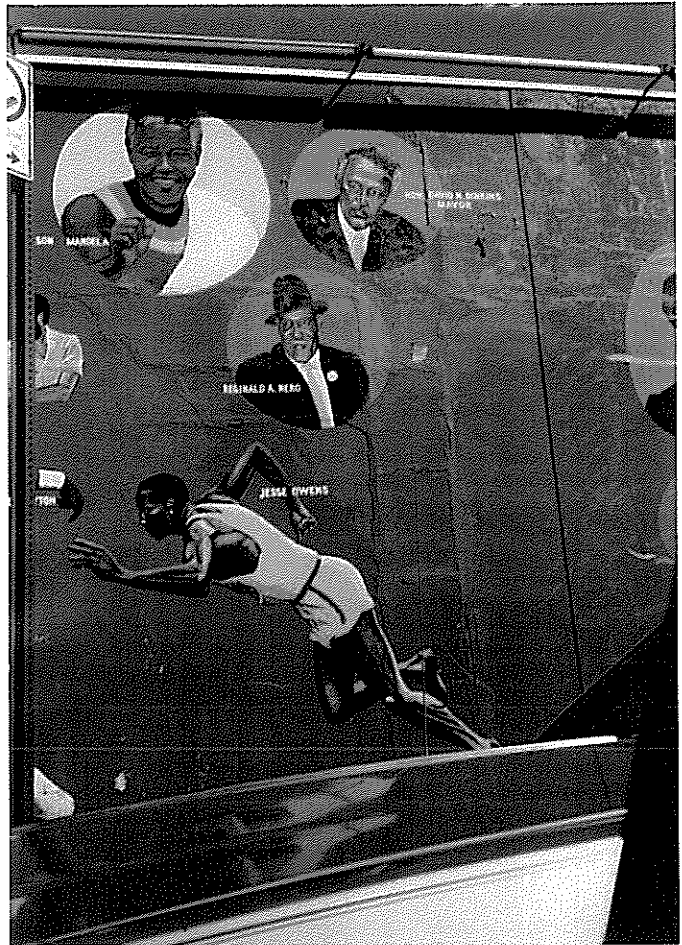
Frank Arricale
for
Robert M. Blum

FA:mam





4 YR OLD BABY RACE



REGGIE HIS AWARDS AND INVENTION CERTIF
1979

1983

Spotlighting— Reggie Nero

"We'll make it smcke!" says Laborer Reggie Nero, proudly showing a visitor the nearly rebuilt running track at Wingate High School Playground in the shadow of Brooklyn's Kings County Hospital. And nobody deserves this new facility more than Reggie who's been an inspiration to thousands of youngsters in his 28 years with the Department.



Reggie Nero

Even before joining the Department in 1954, Reggie's interest in sports surfaced when he coached the basketball team for Francis I. duPont & Company on Wall Street where he was a receptionist and repaired tickertape machines. He graduated from Alexander Hamilton High School, served in the Army and Merchant Marine and after the stint on Wall Street and three years with the Board of Education, came to the Department and was assigned to Lincoln Terrace Park as an Attendant. After some time he took the Assistant Gardener's test, became one, and was transferred to the Elton and New Lots Playground in the East New York section of Brooklyn.

"Here," says Reggie, "I spent some of the best years of my life." He went on to explain that when he arrived, he was met with racial slurs scrawled on the playground walls and a question in his mind as to whether to try to "cut it." But Reggie decided to stay and slowly won the respect and trust of the neighborhood children and their parents. In 1966 his work was a feature in the "Only Human" column of Sidney Fields in The Daily News. Reggie remained there until 1971 when his supervisor needed a driver and he was made a laborer and transferred to that job. He moved in 1973 to the Ebbets Field Playground where his interest in sports and volunteer youth work continued as it has since his transfer to Wingate in 1978.

Speaking of his relationship with him, Borough Commissioner Julius Spiegel says, "Reggie is a one-man Park and Recreation Department. Not only does he take care of business during his eight-hour workday, he also runs elaborate recreational activities during his so-called off-hours. He is the Commissioner of Wingate Park, running leagues in basketball, paddleball, chess, etc., replete with age and class divisions and, of course, with his own T-shirts. He is a tireless worker on behalf of the Parks Department and the youth of this City."

And Charles Wellbrock, PPS for Wingate and District 9 in Brooklyn, agrees with Commissioner Spiegel. 100%, adding, "He's always helping people out. The kids just love him. We

ride around the District and everybody yells out "Nero, Nero!" and it really makes you feel good. He's dedicated his life to kids."

And so it is, with the eight handball and four full basketball courts filled with activity during the warm weather months and in the wintertime at the local gyms, schools and churches, Reggie can be found, always for the kids and their elders, too.

At the Park alone, he has a basketball program for juniors, 16 and under, girls teams for 14 to 18-year-olds, senior boys in the 17 to 20 year age group and for what he calls the "unlimited age groups," those 20 years and older. He's even put together a basketball tournament for those six foot and over and another for those under six. This winter he's been active in another project of his, "Community Bootstrap," a guidance counseling program.

When the warm weather comes, you can be sure Reggie will be busy not only scheduling events on his handball and basketball courts but organizing activities for the sparkling, completely refurbished track and field areas where finishing touches are being put on the \$310,000 rehabilitation. The running track has been resurfaced, new bleacher seats installed, and there are spruced up high jump, long jump and shot-put areas for the pleasure of his contestants.

As if he wasn't busy enough with these activities; his Nero Lions basketball team, fight film festivals and his day-to-day, head-to-head contacts with the neighborhood youth; Reggie has plans for a mural on black history for the walls of the parks building. He'd like to see historical, theatrical, musical and political subjects covered with Afro-Caribbean aspects incorporated, and listening to him talking about it you get the feeling that he'll find the talent to get it accomplished.

Reggie lives on Bedford Avenue in Crown Heights with his wife Josephine. They have three daughters; Michelle who teaches, Sharon, a bookkeeper, and Regina, a student in communications at Pace University in White Plains. Sixteen-year-old Reginald D. is a junior at Bishop Loughlin High School with ambitions toward an M.D.

With a crinkle of his eye and wry smile on his youthful face, belying such talk, Reggie speaks of retirement but his enthusiasm seems to put aside such an idea. "I don't knock it," says Reggi of his job. "I wish I could do it all over again. I was always able to put something on the table every day." What a modest summation for a man who can remember one of his basketball players, now a top public official, saying, "My father was a drunk but you are my father," or some of his other "alumni," Frank Thomas, now president of the Ford Foundation, or Connie Hawkins who played with the Lakers, or Jackie Jackson of the Globetrotters... or the thousands of others he's given a gentle nudge in the right direction. ■

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SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA ◊ MEMPHIS ◊ NATIONAL ◊ NEW ENGLAND ◊ NEW YORK

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



REGINALD NERO



© Andrew French

I started writing this story many times, but I've never had the chance to complete it until now.

My father Reginald Nero's youth outreach efforts unofficially began in 1938 with an all-girl basketball league, the "Brooklyn Wings" – probably the first league of its kind documented. When he was drafted and served as Company Clerk during WWII, he organized boxing tournaments to entertain the officers, both in the United States and in Europe.

He performed similar unpaid extracurricular services when later employed on Wall Street.

In Ebbets Field in Brooklyn, Reginald Nero held sports tournaments and later expanded his volunteer work to Wingate Park and Rego Park in Queens. He organized several Leagues using money from his own salary and occasionally some outside funding.

Many of Reginald Nero's achievements—he is now 80 years old—are just fond memories in a scrapbook. That is, until they occasionally come to life when one of the many people he's inspired come to visit him and thank him.

-REGINA NERO

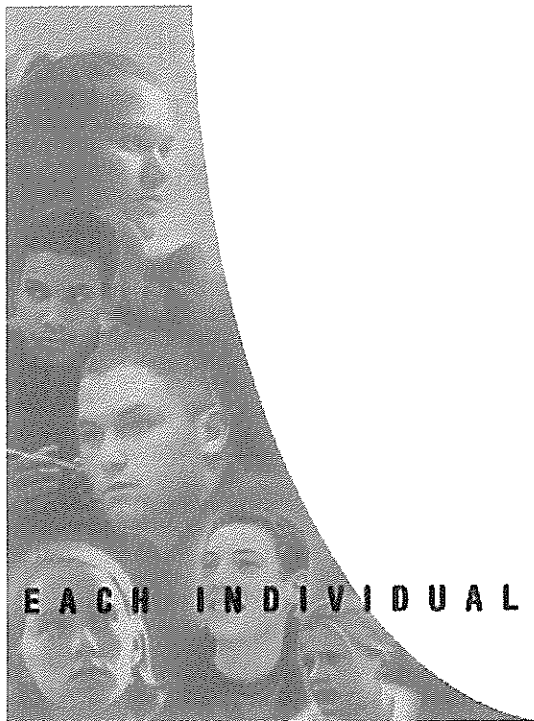
EACH INDIVIDUAL CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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FAQ



Testimony of Robert F. Nolan and Michelle Braverman Field
In support of Peggy Braverman Way, Bronx County
Before the Parks Committee of the New York City Council
February 7, 2012

Good afternoon Chairperson Melissa Mark-Viverito and members of the Parks Committee especially Bronx Councilman James Vacca, who was a dear friend of Peggy's almost his entire adult life and is the main sponsor of the street name addition Peggy Braverman Way to be located in the Pelham Parkway section of The Bronx.

Seated with me is Michelle Braverman Field, Peggy's daughter who is here not just for herself and her family but on behalf of her brother Henry and his family, who live in Massachusetts.

Peggy was a very special woman beloved by all those who came into contact with her. Not satisfied to stay home, Peggy was President of three different parents associations, special assistant to former Councilman Stephen Kaufman and then former Bronx Borough President Stanley Simon, where she served as my executive assistant for several years. She was a one person dynamo who was relentless while seeking employment for a person in need or fighting some landlord on behalf of a tenant. No request for assistance was too small for Peggy who was a self made advocate, even on behalf of people she barely knew. Perhaps this came from her upbringing during the depression in Knickerbocker Village before moving to the Bronx and marrying her beloved Charlie and raising Shelly and Henry.

One time when I introduced her at an event, I referred to her as "everyone's second mother" because of her devotion and support of a group of young men including myself, Steve Kaufman, Councilman Vacca, Father Richie Gorman, veteran chair CB #12 Bronx, and Jimmy Organ, former assistant Labor Commissioner under former Governor Cuomo. She loved us all and we loved her back.

Peggy found time to serve as a Democratic district leader and Deputy County Clerk of The Bronx for 14 years. Peggy dedicated her life to her family, her community and especially to all people in need. We are extremely proud of her record of service and her love for her friends in all Bronx neighborhoods.

Madame Chair, we urge Committee support for Peggy Braverman Way in The Bronx.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/9/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: M. Nero

Address: _____

I represent: "Reginald Nero Way"

Address: _____

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀