

ARTHUR L. JOHNSON HIGH SCHOOL
HALL OF FAME
Class of 2018

Name of Nominee Joseph Patrick Curry
First Middle Last Maiden Name

Address N/A

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Cell Number _____

E-mail Address _____

Year Graduated ALJ 1972 or Dates of Service at ALJ _____

Is this nomination posthumous? Yes If yes, year of death 1973

Category Nominee is being considered (please check all applicable):

- Accomplished Professional
- Community Contributor
- Volunteer
- Crusader Pride
- Distinguished Faculty

To the person completing the nomination - Please complete the questions on the next page and the information about yourself below. Your personal information is needed to get in touch with you about the nominee.

Nominator's Name Alan Brian Richer
First Middle Last

Phone Number 518 475-9436 Cell Number 518 527-6393

Address 47 Surrey Mall Stingerlands, NY 12159-9643

E-mail Address richer.alan@gmail.com

How long have you known the nominee and in what capacity? 1967-1973

Joseph was my classmate and friend.

**ARTHUR L. JOHNSON HIGH SCHOOL
HALL OF FAME
Class of 2018**

Nominees Qualifications (Please complete where applicable and attach additional paper if needed)

1. List the nominee's outstanding achievements, awards, and accomplishments while attending or working at Arthur L. Johnson High School.

2. List the nominee's accomplishments and achievements post graduation that are relevant to this person's nomination to the Hall of Fame.

Joseph gave up his life trying to rescue a 13 year old who was drowning in the Rahway River. Recipient of a posthumous citizen award from the New Jersey State Bluemen's Benevolent Association. Town of Clark named a park in his memory

3. Briefly describe why you have chosen this person to be considered in a specific category and why he or she should be included in the Arthur L. Johnson High School Hall of Fame.

Joseph gave up his life trying to rescue a 13 year old who was drowning in the Rahway River

JOSEPH PATRICK CURRY

At the 2017 Arthur L. Johnson High School Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, I listened with tremendous admiration as Inductee William Duffy described Clark's Fallen Heroes who each made the ultimate sacrifice. As I reflected upon the stories of these great men, it brought back vivid memories of a former classmate, Joseph Patrick Curry. I went through grade school, junior high school and ALJ with Joe, although it wasn't until high school that we became friends.

Growing up, I had nicknames for everyone and my nickname for Joe was Mr. Bacciagalupe after the character on the Abbott & Costello show. I think it was Joe's beautiful wavy hair coupled with his unique sense of humor that made me identify him with Mr. Bacciagalupe.

Joe's inscription in my senior yearbook reads "Lots of luck to a crazy guy. Remember Fogerty and Journalism." I will now take a moment to provide the backstory in order to fulfill his request.

We sat together in Journalism class and one of the two most embarrassing things that ever happened to me was partly the result of Joe's sense of humor. Joe and I sat in the back of Miss Mary "Ma" Fogerty's journalism class and often we would exchange jokes rather than paying attention. One time Miss Fogerty was explaining how her brother had been employed as a boiler inspector for the gas company. Joe was setting up a joke. She explained further how her brother had gone to inspect a particular boiler just as Joe neared the punchline. At the exact time that Miss Fogerty told the class that the boiler exploded and her brother was killed, Joe delivered the punchline. I burst out laughing "That's the funniest thing I ever heard!" Needless to say, in the words of Ricky Ricardo, I had a lot of "splaining" to do.

There wasn't anything extraordinary about Joe that could be gleaned from our senior 1972 Yearbook, the Lance. The Senior Directory lists the following activities for Joe: Student Council, Crusader (school newspaper) Audio Visual Aid, and Sound Studio Assistant.

The Categories for Nomination into the ALJ Hall of Fame are:

Accomplished Professional

Volunteer

Distinguished Faculty

Community Contributor

Crusader Pride

At first glance, there would seem to be a gap between the categories for admission and Joe's life. But that all changed in a blink of any eye at about 3:30 in the afternoon on Saturday June

29, 1973. Attached is an article from the July 2, 1973 edition of the *Courier-News* (Bridgewater, NJ) as well as Joe's obituary from the July 5, 1973 edition of the *Clark Patriot*.

Joe lived in Clark near the Cranford border close to the Rahway River. That Saturday, he witnessed a thirteen year old boy fall into the Rahway River. In that instant of a second, Joe made a decision that, in my humble opinion, earned him induction into the ALJ Hall of Fame. Joe jumped into the river to try to save the boy, but sadly paid the ultimate price as he sacrificed his own life in the process. Fortunately, a nearby policeman using bystanders' belts lashed together was able to save the boy. Until one is presented with a unique and great challenge, it cannot be determined how they will react. Joe did not sit and contemplate, but he acted as a true hero.

I Googled "Hero Defined" and the first hit read as follows:

[Hero | Define Hero at Dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com/browse/hero)

www.dictionary.com/browse/hero

a person noted for courageous acts or nobility of character: He became a local hero when he saved the drowning child.

Joe's very close friend, Curtis Hellfrich, has provided a very raw yet poignant remembrance of both Joe and his heroic act. Joe received a posthumous citizen award from the New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association (see the attached article from the September 10, 1973 edition of the *Courier-News* (Bridgewater, NJ)) and the Town of Clark named a park near Joe's home after him.

While Joe is no longer physically with us, we have the ability to express our gratitude to Joe in a manner that will enshrine his most noblest of acts. Having his portrait hang in ALJ will serve as a teaching moment that potentially there is greatness in all of us.

One of the great honors in my life was being inducted into the Charter Class of the ALJ Hall of Fame. Having Joe once again besides me will make that great honor even more meaningful to me.

Respectfully submitted,



Alan B. Richer
ALJ Class of 1972
Member ALJ HOF Charter Class of 2014

JOSEPH PATRICK CURRY

Joe Curry is my best friend, I cannot remember when exactly we met, because I was so very young. Joe lived on the corner of James Avenue and I grew up about 100 yards away on Alice Lane.

Joe is the funniest person that I have ever known, if you were lucky enough to know him you know exactly what I'm talking about. Joe is also one of the bravest, but I did not know that then.

We lived in the part of Clark that was almost in Cranford, next to the Rahway River, and one summer day after our Graduation in 1972, the river was in flood stage and there was some stupid kid that had been swinging on the rope swing or something and he was swept downstream and he was about to go over that dam near the Garden State Parkway. He was going to drown for sure if somebody did not save his dumb ass.

Well Joe, along with 8 or 9 other friends decided that they could save this kid. They were right and they did save that boy's life. There was just one thing, Joe was a terrible swimmer, no kidding he really stunk, whenever we played whirlpool tag and Joe was it, he could not catch shit.

Joe went over the dam and then eventually under the Parkway Bridge.

As fate would have it I was out of town, Jimmy Mitchell, Steve Plotkin and I were on a cross country adventure, driving Mitch's Ford Van to Oregon and then back to good ole Clark, NJ. I don't remember why Joe did not come with us, but

Joe, at that time, was survived by his Mom and Dad and an older brother named James, who was married to a woman named Selonge(sp), they also had a little baby girl, I think. Joe was a very proud uncle. Joe's Mom was crushed and I could not even bring myself to look at Joe's Dad or Brother because they just looked so much like Joe.

I do remember that they could not find Joe for a week or two, so I was still hoping against hope that he would show up and say that he was just foolin' around. I started to have detailed dreams where Curry was alive and just as funny as ever. After the first dream I woke up and was sure that Joe was fine, but then the dream fog would clear... I continued to have these dreams until my early thirties, and it has been a very long time since I last talked with Joe in this way.

As an honor to Joseph's courage and sacrifice the City of Clark took the ball field behind Friendly Ice Cream on Raritan Road and re-named it "Curry Field". There is a big rock where

they attached a bronze plate to commemorate Joseph P. Curry. I can remember when we were just little kids, Joe and our buddies would play king of the hill on that rock and baseball on that field. I moved from New Jersey a long time ago, but every time that I pass through Clark, I'll bring a bottle of whisky and sit on Joe's rock, first pouring some booze on the rock then I drink some of it... If you are ever in Clark, I recommend visiting Joe, he really seems to appreciate the company. The last time I was there some punks had poured paint on Joe's rock and busted a couple of the bronze letters, but that all seemed fitting and I understand that Joe is OK with this honor too.

There are a few stories that I would like to share about Joe. Like the time we drove to Staten Island, wait I shouldn't tell you that one. Or the time that we were on the Senior Class "trip" and climbed to the top of the Water Tower... wait I shouldn't tell that one either. If you knew Joe then you have your own memories, I am sure. One thing that is positive, when we were all young, there were no smart phones or facebook to record our adventures and that is a very good thing.

I have misplaced our Senior H.S. Yearbook but I did find the C. H Brewer School (7th and 8th grades) year books from 1967 and 1968. Joe signed mine and here is what he wrote: 1967, "Duch" just the one word, it is NJ slang for you're a Douche bag, 1968 was more personnel "Curt, lots of luck you Jerk, Joe".

Joe was always really incredibly funny, he was also smart and very self-aware (for a rock). As a young man, he did not pick on or persecute weaker kids and he would stand up to challenge things that he saw as stupid and wrong-headed. He taught me a lot about life, friendship, music and bad judgement.

Joe was one of those people that could fit in with the geeks, the jocks, the theatre kids, the hoods, really everybody. I have come to understand that Joseph P. Curry is a collection of the better angels in all of us. In remembering his raw potential and what Joe would have become, his great pleasures of life were to bang on his drum kit, hang out and laugh, life was simpler then, and we still had our whole future in front of us...

Regarding the nomination of Joe to the A.J. Johnson Regional Hall of Fame, I am reminded of the time that I wanted to join some club and I asked Joe if he would join with me. Joe said that he would not want to be a part of an organization whose standards were so low that they would have us as members.

Joe, See ya soon jerk, Love, Curtis Helfrich, November 12, 2017

Drowning feared in rescue attempt

CRANFORD — Police will continue searching today for the body of an 18-year-old Clark resident who was apparently overcome by the pull of the Rahway River Saturday while attempting to rescue a boy stranded in the rain swollen waters.

Joseph Curry of 36 James Ave., Clark, was said by Union County Police today to have dived into the river about 3:20 p.m. to rescue Donald Nauhert, 13, of 12A Seafoam Ave., Winfield.

Police said Nauhert, who was in satisfactory condition last night in Rahway Hospital, slipped from the banks of the river near the Garden State Parkway Bridge and into the river. He was drifting in the water, holding onto a pile of debris, when Curry spotted him, police said.

Police arrived at the scene in time to save Nauhert, while bystanders said they saw Curry

succumb to the river's undertow.

Searchers sought Curry's body until 9 p.m. Saturday and tried again yesterday. Clark, Cranford and Winfield police joined the Union County Park Police in recovery attempts.



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FOR SALE

Harold Mays, 68,
of 408 Douglas
Road, Roselle, died Saturday, June
30, in St. Elizabeth Hospital in
Elizabeth.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This Ordinance published herewith was introduced at a Special
meeting of the Council of the Township of Clark, in the County
of Union, State of New Jersey, held July 2, 1973, and will be
further considered for final passage after public hearing at a Regu-
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Obituaries

Joseph Curry, 19, lost in heroic rescue try

Joseph Curry, 19, of 36 Jamesford Street, Clark, jumped into the swollen Rahway River and drowned on Saturday, June 29, in an attempt to save a 13-year-old boy who had fallen into the river.

Donald Neumert of windfall was watching the turbulent river at County park police, and fell into the water at the dam at the Garden State Parkway off Faritan Road in Cranford.

Services were held Tuesday, June 26, for Henry Tillery, 79, of 6 Pomona Avenue, Newark, formerly of Rahway, who died Friday, June 22, in Beth Nursing Home in Woodbridge.

Henry Tillery, 79, Mason, veteran at General Cable worker many years

Services were held Friday, June 29, for Mrs. Alfred (Theresa) Werner, 89, of 224 W. Grand Avenue, Rahway, who died Tuesday, June 26, at the Mapleton Nursing Home in Woodbridge.

John Domminey reservations supervisor, in NYC for Penn Central for 52 years

John F. Domminey, 68, of 408 Douglas Road, Roselle, died Saturday, June 30, in St. Elizabeth Hospital in Elizabeth.

George Higgins, 60, of 401 W. Grand Avenue, Rahway, died Monday, June 25, at Rahway Hospital after a brief illness.

Christian F. Duvelsdorf, 82, of 24 Truman Drive, Brick Town, Jersey City and lived in Roselle Park area, 20 years before coming to the Roselle Park area.

George Higgins, 60, Koppers mechanic, in fishing club

George S. Higgins, 60, of 401 W. Grand Avenue, Rahway, died Monday, June 25, at Rahway Hospital after a brief illness.

Mr. Duvelsdorf formerly was a member of St. Mark's Lutheran Church of Elizabeth.

Surviving are a son, Thoma; six daughters; Gertrude White of Columbia, Md.; Mrs. Ruth Gottle of Long Branch, Mrs. (Melvin E.) Rose Daye of Washington and Mrs. Roberta McNeill of Piscataway.

Former Rahway health officer succumbs at 73

Joseph J. O'Neill, 73, of 450 Verona Avenue, Elizabeth, died Wednesday, June 20, in Alexian Brothers Hospital in Elizabeth after a brief illness.

Mr. Duvelsdorf was employed by the Lehigh-Crabiel Funeral Home, 275 W. Milton Avenue, Rahway.

Surviving are a son, Thoma; six daughters; Gertrude White of Columbia, Md.; Mrs. Ruth Gottle of Long Branch, Mrs. (Melvin E.) Rose Daye of Washington and Mrs. Roberta McNeill of Piscataway.

Harry Deboff, 92

Harry Deboff, 92, of 3 W. 33rd Street, Coney Island, New York, died Thursday, June 28, in Kings County Hospital.

Mr. Duvelsdorf was employed by the Lehigh-Crabiel Funeral Home, 275 W. Milton Avenue, Rahway.

Surviving are a son, Thoma; six daughters; Gertrude White of Columbia, Md.; Mrs. Ruth Gottle of Long Branch, Mrs. (Melvin E.) Rose Daye of Washington and Mrs. Roberta McNeill of Piscataway.

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PBA honoring 10 acts of heroism

Ten valor awards will be presented tomorrow during the four-day N.J. State

Policemen's Benevolent Association convention in Atlantic City.

The top award will go to Lt. Peter Catelli of Perth Amboy, credited with attempting to save the life of a 13-year-old boy on Jan. 6.

Catelli found the youngster playing on a railroad boxcar that had touched a high-tension wire. He climbed the fully electrically charged car and removed the boy with the assistance of two rescue squadsmen.

The youngster was in critical condition several weeks before he died, and during that time, Catelli spearheaded a fund drive to help the family defray hospital and medical costs.

A silver award goes to Patrolman Daniel Strickland of Lower Township who last Dec. 28 arrived at the scene where a former mental patient was firing shots from a car.

Strickland crawled toward the rear of the vehicle, but the suspect spotted him and opened fire. Strickland ducked, came up and fired several more shots from his own pistol as a Cape May patrolman fired through the windshield. The suspect was pronounced dead at the scene.

A bronze award will go to Sgt. James Mong of Absecon who was credited with saving the lives of eight elderly patients during a fire at a home for the aged Jan. 29.

A posthumous citizen award will go to the late Joseph Curry of Clark who died while trying to rescue a 13-year-old boy who had fallen into the Rahway River.

Burned man, 20, 'critical'

MIDDLESEX — A 20-year-old man burned in a fire at his home early Saturday remains in Raritan Valley Hospital's intensive care unit, in critical condition.

Bruce Hutchins of 302 Giles Ave. was carried from the house by Fireman Kenneth VanNostrand.

The man's mother, Mrs. Julia Hutchins, 48, is in fair condition at the hospital. She suffered burns of the hands and face. Authorities say she was driven from the house by smoke but attempted to get back in to save her son.

Members of the family of George Lyon, 314 Giles Ave., attempted to rescue Hutchins. William, 24, a brother of George visiting from Florida, was treated at the hospital for cuts on his left hand, suffered in smashing of windows of the first floor bedroom where Hutchins apparently was trapped.

Two other sons, Dale, 19, and Glen, 16, entered through the back entrance and said they got into the bedroom within a few feet of him but they were driven back. Their father, meanwhile, tried to douse the flames with a