

## **DON BENEDETTI**

*1964-2002, cross-country/track coach*

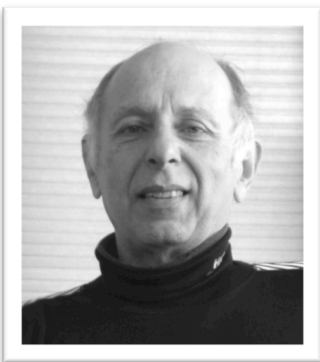
Benedetti grew up on a small family farm in the Western Mass community of North Adams. He attended school there and then graduated from nearby Williams College, earning a BA in 1963. He went to graduate school in 1964 at Harvard University. While working on his Masters degree, Benedetti began his long relationship with Wayland High School. "I did an internship there from January through June in 1964," he said. That partnership proved to be mutually agreeable. In September of 1964, Benedetti became a social studies teacher at Wayland High and remained there 38 years until his retirement in June of 2002.



Along the way, Benedetti became an important part of the school landscape, serving in capacities as varied as cross-country and indoor and outdoor track coach, clock operator at home basketball games, Dual County League track commissioner and ticket seller for football games and wrestling matches. He even started the girls' cross-country and track programs in the 1970s. His longest athletic tenure was as cross-country coach. He held the head coaching reins from 1964 until his retirement in 2002, an amazing 38 years. Benedetti coached indoor track 1966-67 through 1976-77, a grand total of 11 years and was the outdoor coach for 12 seasons, 1969 through 1980.

An indicator of what Benedetti meant to the school in general and cross-country in particular came in 2001 when he retired. Approximately 50 of his former runners and their families gathered to honor him. Included that night were Dennis Berry, his captain from the 1965 season, David Berry, Dennis's son who captained the 2000 team and Alberto Salazar, who traveled all the way from Oregon to honor his ex-coach.

His Wayland teams won numerous championships and Benedetti received many coaching awards. The Wayland Tab gave him its People of the Year Award in 1997 and he won the Mary Johnson Memorial Travelship in 1993. Don and Anne Benedetti celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary earlier this year. They are the parents of Betsy, Michael and Dan and the grandparents of Will, Brad, Katie and Elliott.



"I would like to give special thanks to Ralph Salvati, Buzz Bowers, Rick Moyer and Bill Snow for the help and support they gave me during my coaching career," said Benedetti. "During my teaching career, John Lindsey, Frank Smith, Sally Alexander, Larry Hines and Charlie Ruopp deserve similar praise."