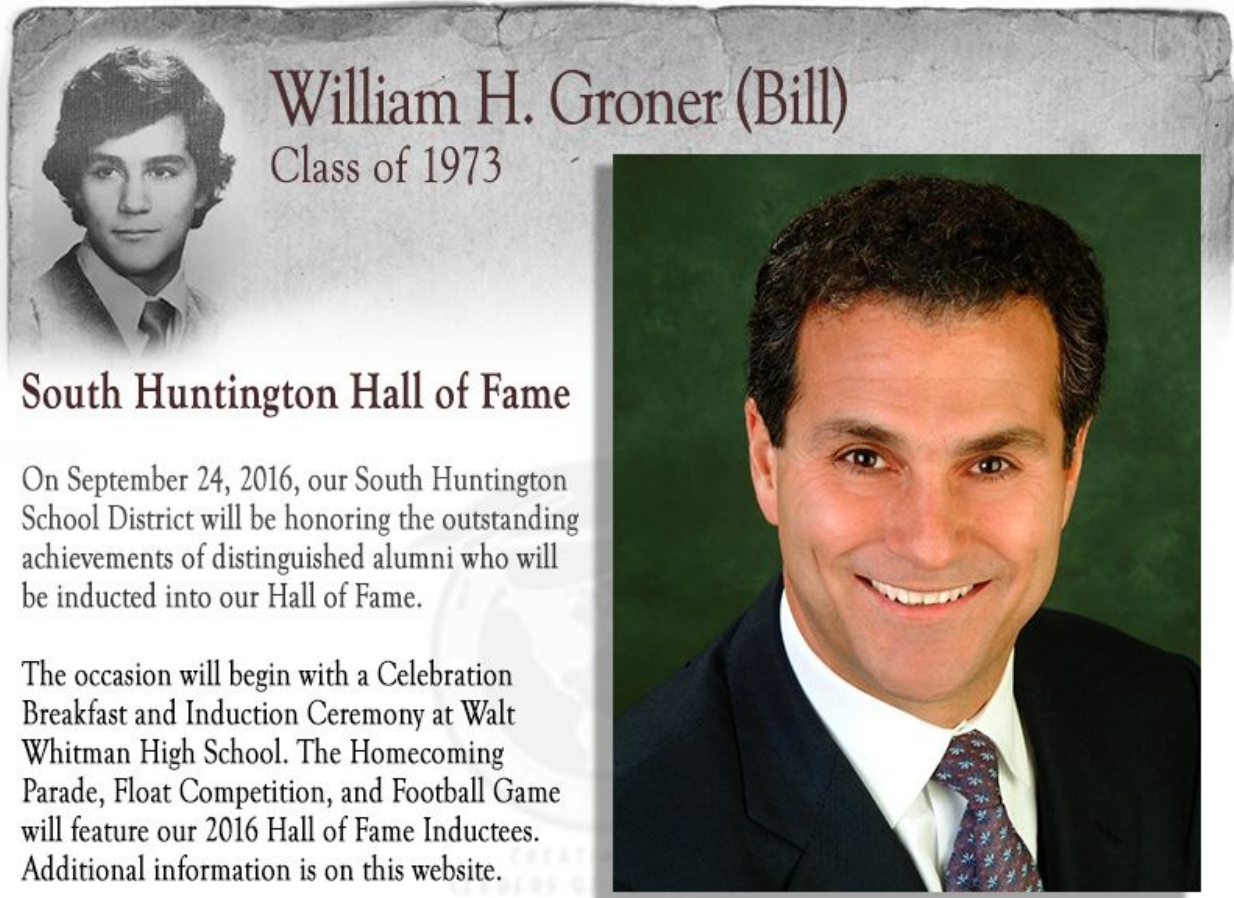


## Introducing Hall of Fame Inductee William H. Groner



**William H. Groner (Bill)**  
Class of 1973

**South Huntington Hall of Fame**

On September 24, 2016, our South Huntington School District will be honoring the outstanding achievements of distinguished alumni who will be inducted into our Hall of Fame.

The occasion will begin with a Celebration Breakfast and Induction Ceremony at Walt Whitman High School. The Homecoming Parade, Float Competition, and Football Game will feature our 2016 Hall of Fame Inductees. Additional information is on this website.

For many of us who didn't grow up in the Huntington area it's hard to imagine that most of Long Island was once primarily potato fields. Fortunately for some of our Hall of Fame Inductees their memories serve as a tour guide to another era.

"I remember playing football in the fields along Wolf Hill road, only to be one day kicked out because they were building Holy Family High School, which has since become St. Anthony's," said our Class of 1973 alumnus Bill Groner. "Back then there wasn't much east of Huntington so when they talked about building a mall past Smithtown (Smith Haven), we laughed because we thought there weren't enough people in Suffolk County past Huntington to make that work, but boy were we wrong."

"I had an amazing time at Walt Whitman," said Bill, reflecting back to a simpler time. "I was involved in many activities. The most significant to me was starting the Ice Hockey Team, and in 1973 played goaltender for the team in the Suffolk County Championship series. The experience of starting that team and realizing a

dream of playing hockey for my school was the first of many experiences where I understood that we can all create our own realities.”

“I went to Binghamton University where I learned the beauty and responsibility of independence, and the absolute joy of having virtually unlimited opportunities to explore who I was and what I was good at, and not so good at.” Upon graduating Binghamton in 1977, Bill enrolled at Boston University School of Law and flourished.

After moving to New York City and becoming a Trial lawyer in 1980, it didn’t take Bill long before he started his own litigation firm and moved it to Westchester. As a member of the Board of Directors of the New York State Trial Lawyers Association, Bill founded and was President of the Westchester Chapter.

“I handled many high profile cases throughout the years including the first ever lawsuit against various companies in the cell phone industry claiming that cell phone use in the car created driver distraction, where I was featured on the ABC News program 20/20,” said Bill. In 2003, he received the ultimate test when he had the honor and privilege to handle a case that a decade later, would be called by legal scholars as “the most complex mass tort in the history of the United States.”

The day after the horrific 9/11 attacks, thousands of first responders, construction workers, utility workers, city employees and volunteers began rescue and recovery operations at Ground Zero. Their heroic work over the next 9 months resulted in their inhalation of a toxic brew of dust and contaminants never seen before by the medical establishment. “I had the honor and privilege of representing 10,000 of these heroes, in a lawsuit against the City of New York as well as over 150 companies for their failure to provide proper respiratory protection to these police officers, firefighters and other responders,” said Bill. After a decade long David vs. Goliath legal battle, Bill and his partners recovered over 800 million dollars for these true heroes.

Married to his soul mate Sue for 20 years, the two share a daughter, Victoria who just finished her first year at University of Pennsylvania and a son Hudson, who just finished his sophomore year at high school. “I find balance in life, by hiking, meditating, listening to alt rock as well as piano music, spending time in the Colorado mountains as well as in New York City, and tending to our gardens, honeybees and chickens at our home in Bedford, NY,” added Bill. “But I will never forget the coming of age aspect of high school. With my friends and fellow students, we all learned how to navigate our teen years, and to explore and push boundaries and ourselves. We laughed together, experienced so many things for the first time together, had successes and failures together, and formed relationships that would last lifetimes.”