BOB FRIERY

            A homegrown product, Bob Friery coached and taught school in Castro Valley for almost 40 years, mostly at Canyon Middle School.

            In his 30 years coaching flag football at Canyon, Friery’s teams won 19 league championships and never finished worse than second place.  He made an even larger mark as the school’s athletic director from 1982 until his retirement from teaching in 2010.  Friery oversaw an athletic program that included flag football, cross country and softball in the autumn, basketball and wrestling for both boys and girls in the winter, and co-ed soccer, track and field, tennis and golf in the spring.

            It was also in his capacity as athletic director that Friery founded the Southern Alameda County Middle School Athletic League (SACMAL).  Until then, there was no league for middle schools.             Schools from San Leandro and San Lorenzo joined Canyon as inaugural members and later the league added Creekside and schools from the New Haven District in Union City.

            An outstanding athlete in his own right, Friery lettered in football, basketball and baseball at Castro Valley High, earning all-league honors in both football and baseball.  He was named CVHS Athlete of the Year in 1967, his senior year.

            Friery realized his size (5-8, 145 pounds) would prevent him from playing major college football, so when Whittier College offered him a partial academic scholarship out of high school, he jumped at the opportunity.  He played four years of football as a defensive back and two years of baseball as a third baseman at Whittier.

            Bob began his teaching career at CVHS while assisting John Brosnan with the football program.  He was a varsity assistant and head junior varsity coach for eight years before moving up the hill to Canyon. He also coached JV baseball for six years at CVHS.

            For 20 years (1971-1991) during the summers, Friery ran the Bob Friery Swim School, teaching hundreds of local children to swim. He and his wife, Colleen, raised three children in Castro Valley.