

'I'm just flying high'

Letter wins Yankees fan and Nyack Democratic leader invitation to the White House with Bombers

ANDREA RUBIN
The Journal News

NYACK — Richard Kavesh wants his two favorite skippers to autograph the same baseball, and he's hoping Joe Torre and Bill Clinton will oblige when he meets them both today.

Kavesh will come face to face with his idols this afternoon when he attends the White House celebration in honor of the Yankees' World Series sweep.

"I'm flying high," Kavesh, a Nyack resident, said yesterday. "I feel like I just won the presidential election and the World Series all in one."

Kavesh, the Nyack Democratic Committee chairman, was invited to the festivities after sending the White House a copy of a letter he wrote to the New York Times in 1996. In the letter, the longtime Yankees fan pointed out that it was the first time since 1936 that a Democrat was elected president the same year the Bronx Bombers won the World Series.

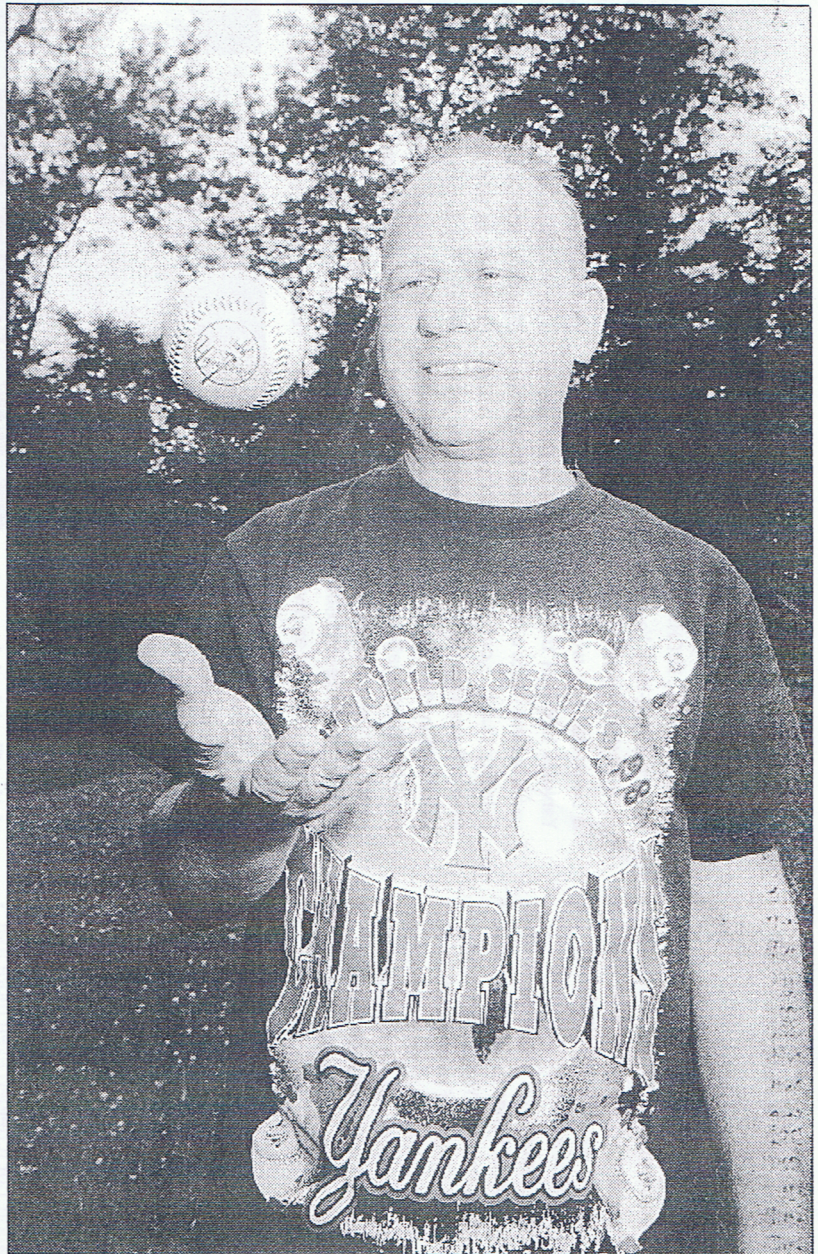
At the bottom of the photocopied letter, Kavesh asked for an invitation to the White House when the president honored the champs.

"Believe it or not, I thought I would be invited," said Kavesh, who got a call telling him that his wish was coming true. "I had faith."

Kavesh, 46, saw his first Yankees game in 1960. He's been a loyal fan through the good times in the late 1970s and some of the leaner years in the 1980s.

Kavesh was at the stadium for Joe DiMaggio's last appearance there last year. And he was at Game Two of the World Series — the last home game of the record-breaking 125-50 season.

"I'm just flying high," he said. "I'm a big-time Yankee fan. I have autographs from Mickey



Kathy Gardner/The Journal News

Richard Kavesh played yesterday with the official Yankees baseball that he hopes Joe Torre and Bill Clinton will autograph when he meets them today at the White House.

Mantle, Whitey Ford and Don Mattingly."

When he meets his pinstripe heroes today, he hopes center fielder Bernie Williams, shortstop Derek Jeter and first baseman Tino Martinez will sign the new ball he bought yesterday for the occasion. He even purchased a new pen — just to make sure everything goes smoothly.

He's looking forward to chatting with David Cone, who Ka-

vesh said "just symbolizes the class, heart, tradition and work ethic of the Yankees." And he wants to tell all the Yankees that he thinks "they're still the greatest team in baseball" and that he's sure they'll win the World Series again this year.

"This is right up there with any thrill I've ever had in my entire life," he said. "I'm not going to be driving to Washington, D.C., I'm going to be flying low."