

10th Annual
Ohio Valley Athletic Conference
HALL OF FAME

Induction Ceremony

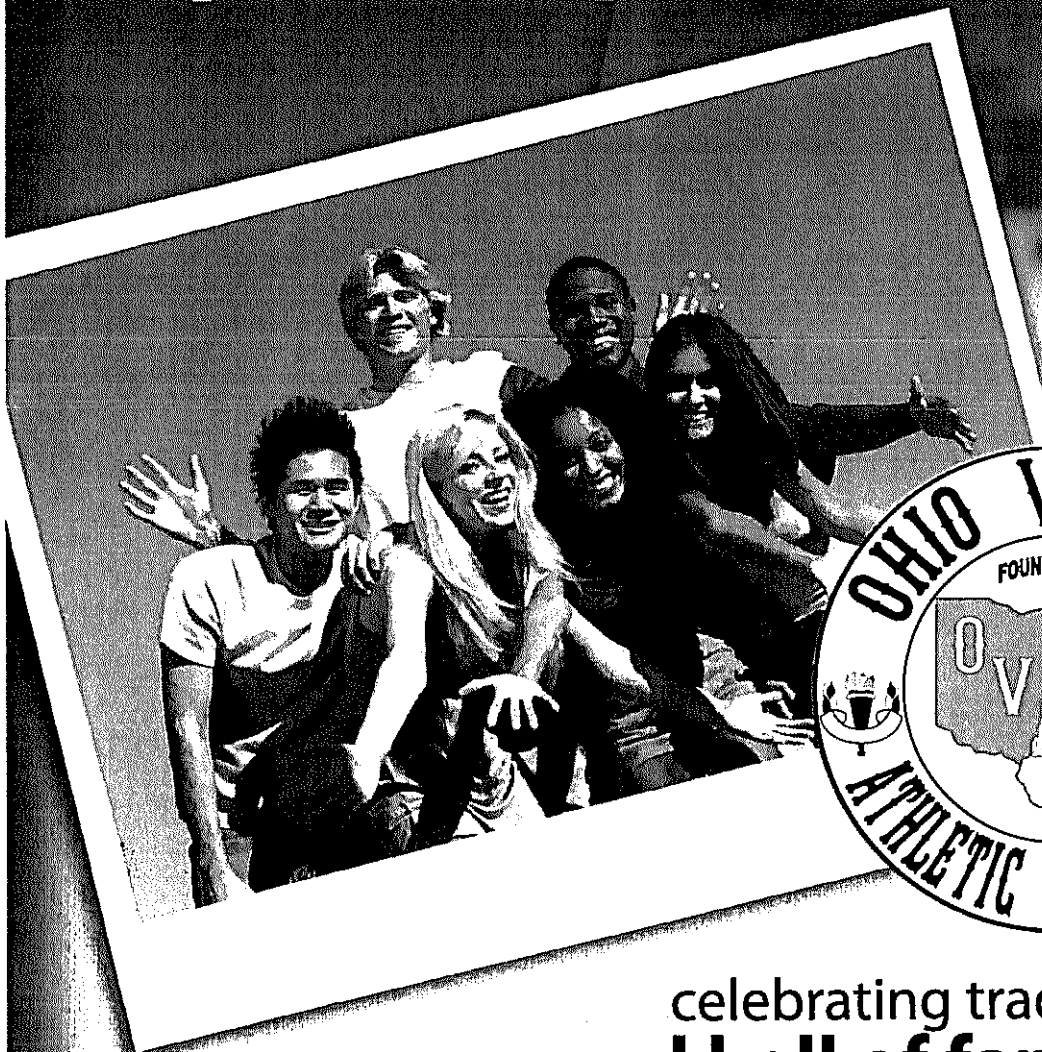


Presented by Robinson Auto Group

Saturday August 17, 2013
WesBanco Arena, Wheeling, WV



we are a
proud sponsor of:



celebrating traditions of the
annual hall of fame banquet



ROBINSON
AUTO GROUP

ROBINSON DRIVE - THE HIGHLANDS

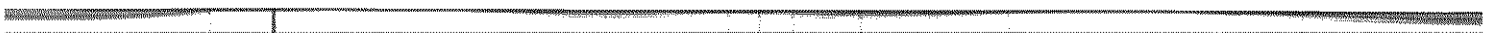
(304) 233-8000 / GM

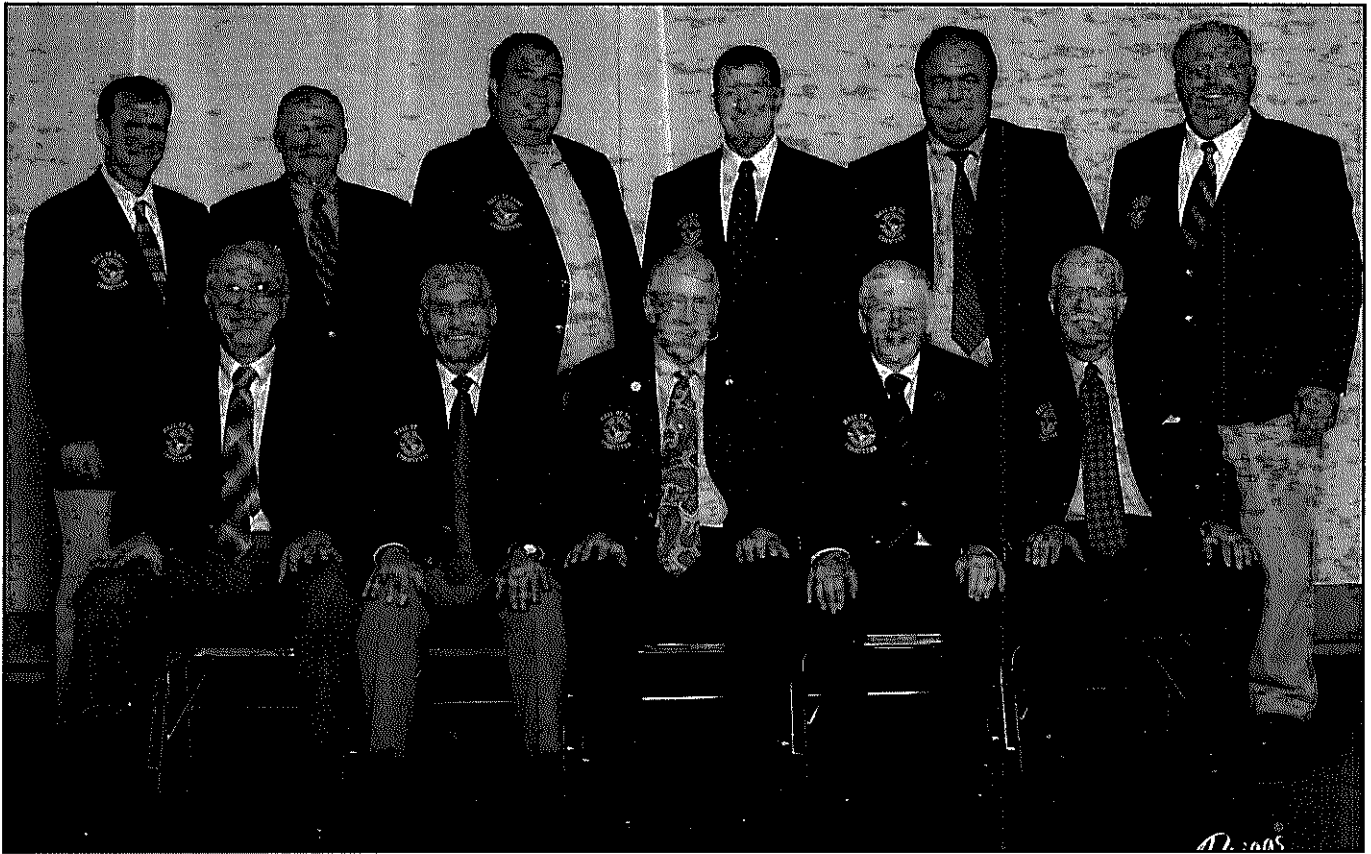
(304) 232-1880 / Toyota

(304) 232-2400 / Ford



EIGHT BRANDS. YOUR CHOICE. ONE PLACE.





The OVAC Hall of Fame Committee. Front row left to right, Tom Rataiczak, Don Zinni, Dick Wolf, Ron Mauck and Doug Huff; back row, Kelly Rine, Tom Tisher, Seth Staskey, Robert "Bubba" Kapral, Jeff Harrison and Bob Koch.



OVAC Hall of Fame Selection Committee



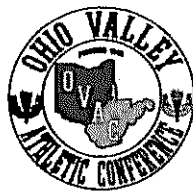
Jeff Harrison.....Sports Editor, The Daily Jeffersonian, Cambridge
Doug Huff.....Retired Sports Editor, The Intelligencer, Wheeling
Robert 'Bubba' Kapral.....Managing Editor, The Times Leader, Martins Ferry
Bob Koch.....OVAC Football All-Star Game Director
Ron Mauck.....Former OVAC Football All-Star, Wrestling Tournament Director
Tom Rataiczak.....OVAC Executive Secretary
Kelly Rine.....Athletic Director, St. Clairsville High School
Seth Staskey.....Sports Editor, The Times Leader, Martins Ferry
Tom Tisher.....Teacher, River High School
Dick Wolf..... East Liverpool City Schools Board Member
Don Zinni.....OVAC Football Commissioner



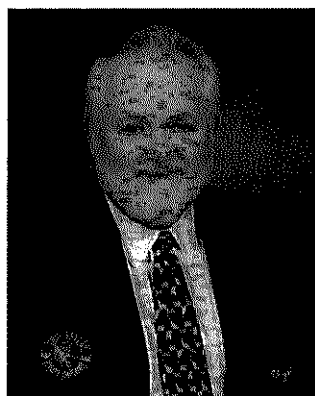
2013-2014 OVAC *Executive Board*



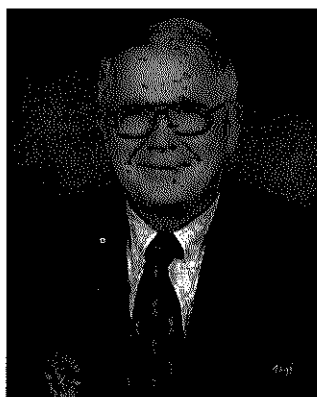
The OVAC Executive Board for 2013-2014. Front row, left to right, Dr. Dianna Vargo, West Virginia Board Member; Dan Enich, West Virginia Board Member; Corey Murphy, Past President; Walt Skaggs, President; Bernie Dolan, Vice-President; Jerry Narcisi, Ohio Board Member; Jeff Crosier, Ohio Board Member; Dr. Dan Doyle, Ohio Board Member. Second row, Steve Wojcik, Baseball Commissioner; John Howell, Basketball Commissioner; Ron White, Assistant Basketball Commissioner; Don Zinni, Assistant Football Commissioner; Dave Clutter, Football Commissioner; Tom Bechtel, Softball Commissioner; Pegi Bannan, Volleyball Commissioner. Back Row, Thomas E. Rataiczak, Executive Secretary/Treasurer; Fred King, Class 1A Representative; Ed Cihy, Class 2A Representative; Molly Feller, Class 3A Representative; Kelly Rine, Class 4A Representative; Rick Leach, Class 5A Representative; Bob Koch, Football All-Star Director.



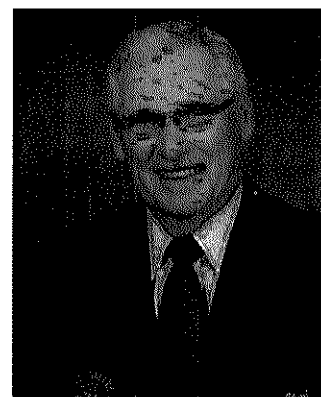
The OVAC is proud to salute three of its own



JOHN HOWELL
Basketball Commissioner



TOM RATAICZAK
Executive Secretary/
Treasurer



DON ZINNI
Football Commissioner

Congratulations
to the HALL OF FAME COMMITTEE
on its 10th Anniversary
of recognizing the best in the Valley.

Special Congratulations to the OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC
CONFERENCE for seventy years of continuous service to
our schools and student/athletes.

From our 75 Conference championships
to the OVAC Sports Museum
to the Hall of Fame recognition and display
to the \$40,000 worth of scholarships
to our All-Star contests
to our Banquet of Champions
to our Sports World assemblies
to our website and marketing
to our All-Conference academic recognition
to our 12,000+ student-athletes
And to our 50 member schools

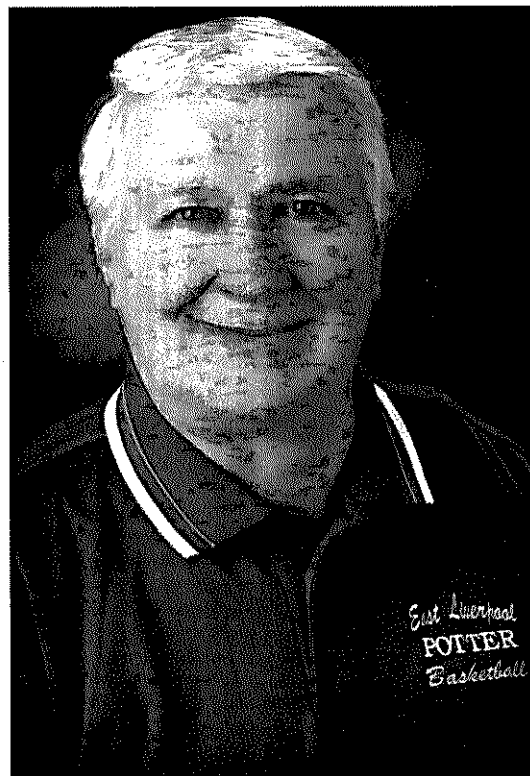


We will remain committed to serving for the next seventy years.

Congratulations to my favorite coach,

Nick Aloï

on your induction into the OVAC Hall of Fame



*Nick's appreciation for coaching basketball
has been an integral part of his life.*

Your loving wife, Linda

The Barnesville High School Athletic Department
and The Barnesville Boosters Club

Congratulate

Larry Marmie

Quarterback Barnesville High School

Quarterback Eastern Kentucky

Berea Kentucky Pirates Head Coach

Morehead State Eagles Secondary Coach

Eastern Kentucky Colonels Defensive Coordinator

Tulsa Golden Hurricanes Defensive Coordinator

North Carolina Tar Heels Secondary Coach

Tennessee Volunteers Defensive Coordinator

Arizona State Sun Devils Defensive Coordinator

Head Coach Arizona State University

Tennessee Volunteers Defensive Coordinator

UCLA Bruins Secondary Coach

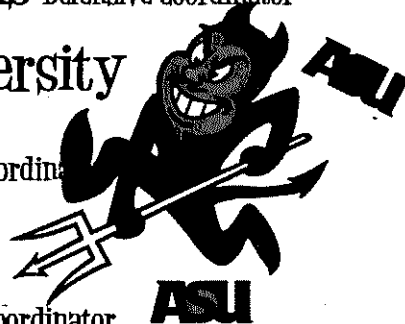
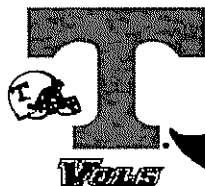
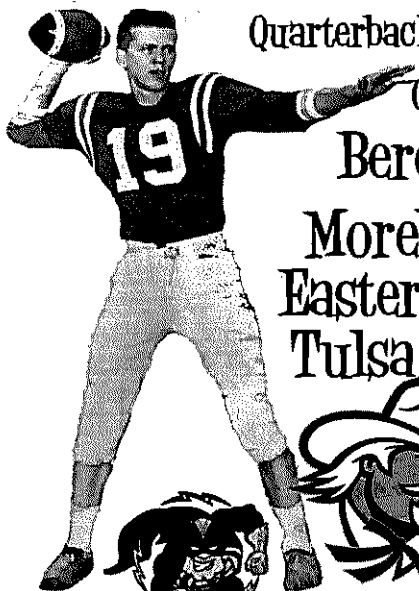
Arizona Cardinals Defensive Coordinator

Saint Louis Rams Defensive Coordinator

Seattle Seahawks Secondary Coach

Las Vegas Locomotives Defensive Backs Coach

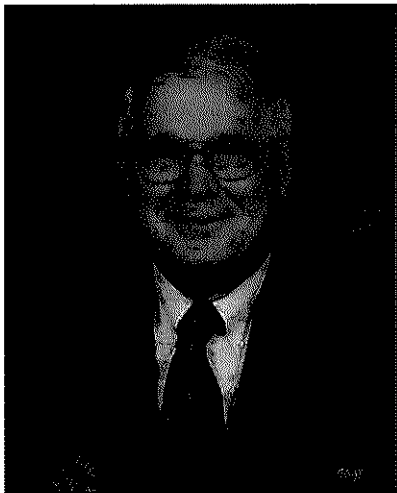
Currently Pro Scout Oakland Raiders



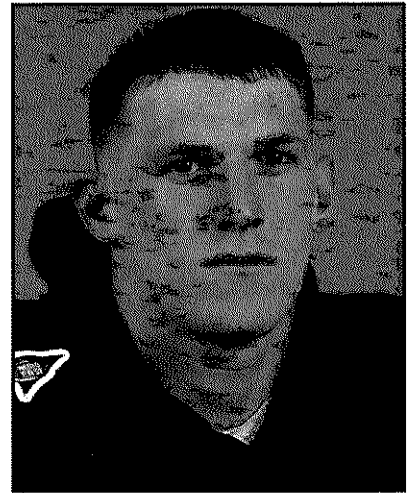
Congratulations



Bellaire Big Reds



Tom Rataiczak
Class of 1964



Ben Taylor
Class of 1996

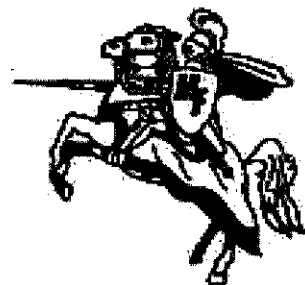


from
the Bellaire High School
Athletic Department



Sprit, Pride, Tradition

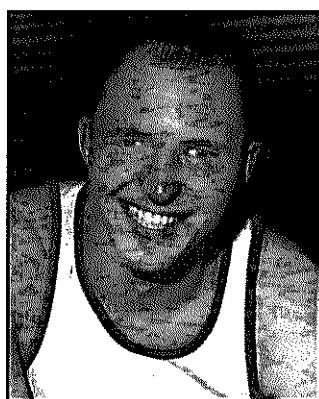
Purple Rider Pride



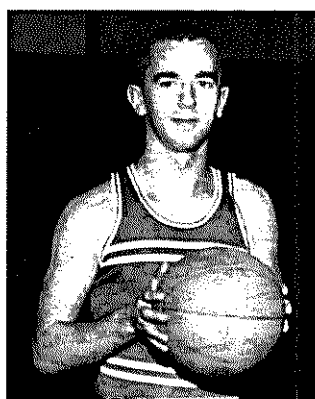
The Martins Ferry High School
Athletic Department salutes and congratulates



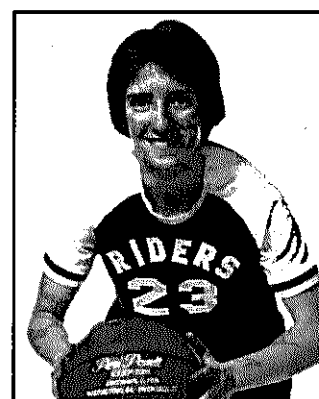
Ken Vargo



'Cy' Godfrey



Jim Brown



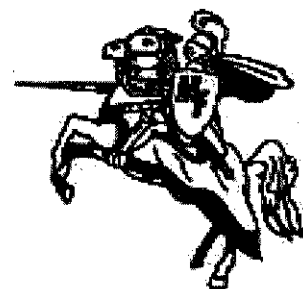
Peri Powell

OVAC Hall of Fame inductees
Ken Vargo (Class of 1952)
Ron 'Cy' Godfrey (Class of 1956)
Jim Brown (Class of 1961)
Peri Powell (Class of 1979)



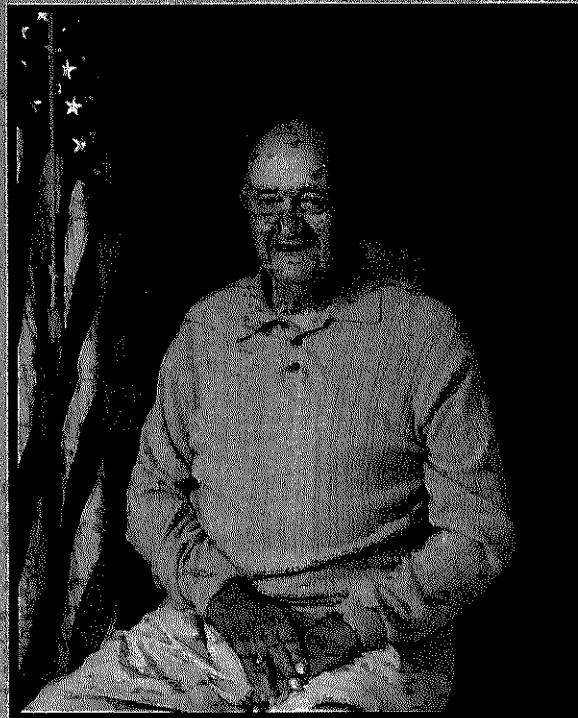
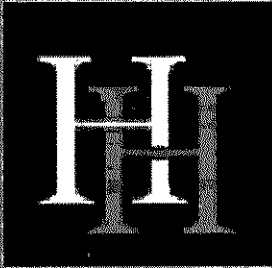
'Tuss' Edwards

and OVAC Legend
Russell 'Tuss' Edwards (Class of 1923)



Part of a rich tradition of athletics

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT "BOB" HUGH



We honor your years of service to our
community and school district.

Harrison Hills City
School District
Board of Education

Harrison Hills City
School District
Students, Staff
Faculty & Administration

CONGRATULATIONS

Nick Alooi

and

Ken Cunningham

FROM THE EAST LIVERPOOL REBOUND CLUB

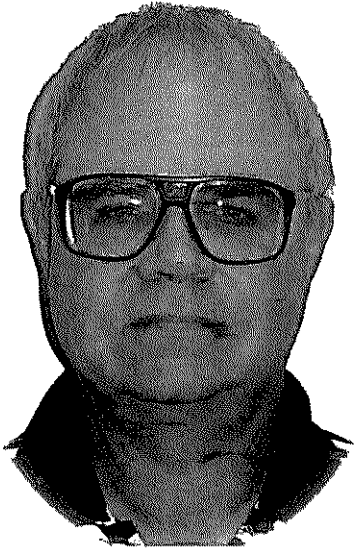
Bill & Teresa Crawford, Co-Presidents
Melissa Waggle, Vice-President
Stacey Conley, Secretary
Bob Bosco, Treasurer
Nate Conley, Head Coach



POTTER NATION IS PROUD OF YOU!

Congratulations

RICH "HOOT" GIBSON



*On being inducted into the
OVAC Hall of Fame
at the 10th induction ceremony!*

The Times Leader

200 SOUTH 4TH STREET | MARTINS FERRY, OHIO

740-633-1131

www.timesleaderonline.com



The Shadyside Athletic Department



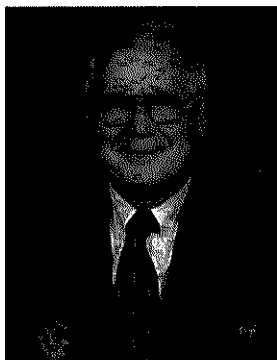
Congratulates
John Howell



on his induction into the
OVAC Hall of Fame

and his many years of service as an official

Tom Rataiczak



To a most deserving Hall of Famer,
the “visionary and backbone” of the Conference!

“CONGRATULATIONS”

Kelly Rine & Dr. Dee Nazzaro



Martins Ferry
High School
Faculty and Students
congratulate
Coach Peri Powell,
on her induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame

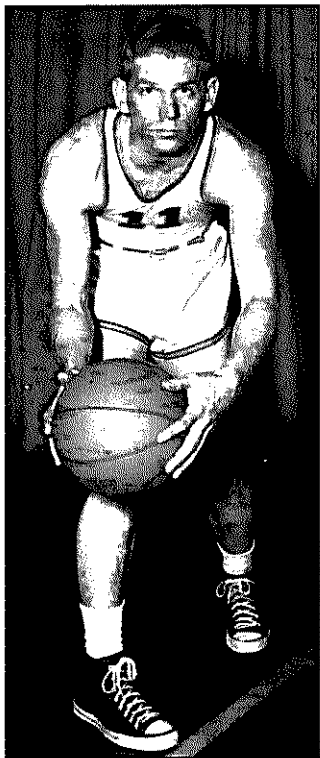
Rider Nation is proud of you!

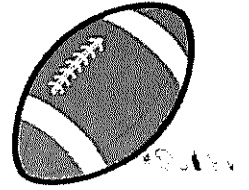
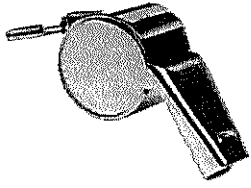
Congratulations

Harry ‘Moo’ Moore

on your induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame

from the Moundsville
High School Alumni Association

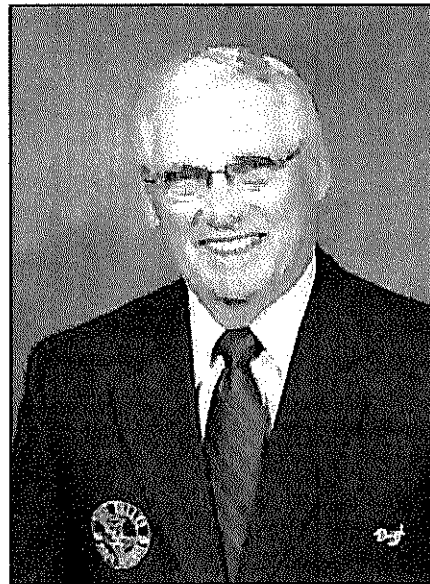




Congratulations

Don Zinni

FOOTBALL
OFFICIAL



OVAC
COMMISSIONER

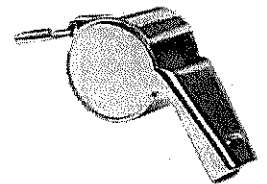
on being inducted into the OVAC Hall of Fame

WE ARE SO PROUD OF YOU!!

LOVE YOU FOREVER! YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN,

Donna and Mike, Dave and Natalie, Dan and Jill

Steven, Marissa, Lauren, Kristin, Tyler, Tanner, and Trip



The Man In The Glass

By Dale Wimbrow

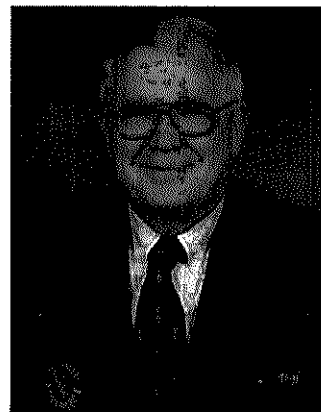
***When you get what you want in your struggle for self
And the world makes you king for a day
Just go to the mirror and look at yourself
And see what that man has to say.***

***For it isn't your father, or mother, or wife
Whose judgment upon you must pass
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life
Is the one staring back from the glass.***

***He's the fellow to please – never mind all the rest
For he's with you, clear to the end
And you've passed your most difficult, dangerous test
If the man in the glass is your friend.***

***You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years
And get pats on the back as you pass
But your final reward will be heartache and tears
If you've cheated the man in the glass.***

***You have opened so many new avenues
for the OVAC through your visions,
hard work and dedication.
Congratulations on receiving this award.
I am so proud of you!
Love you,
Linda***

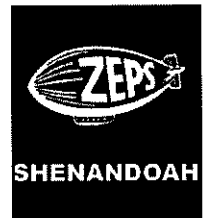


Thomas E. Rataiczak

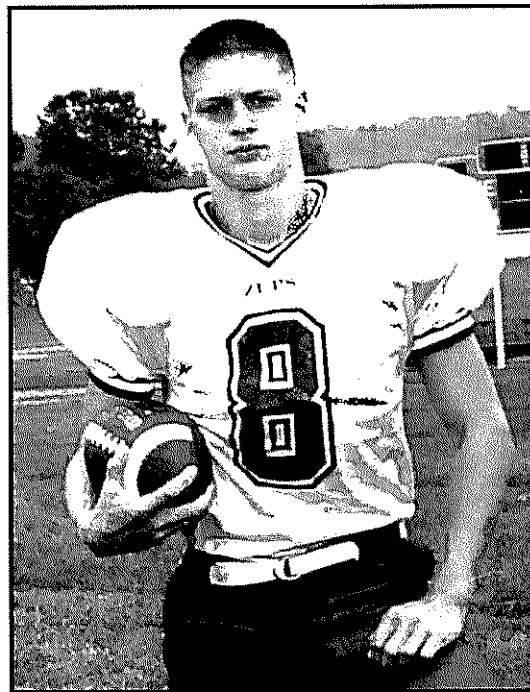




Congratulations
Jed Stephen



‘The Pride of Shenandoah High’



on your induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame

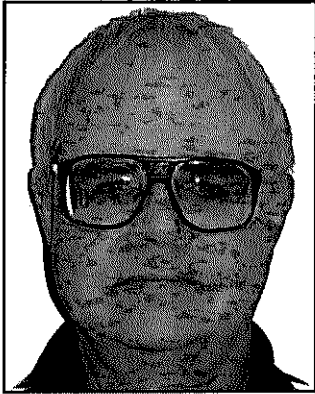


From
The Shenandoah High School
Athletic Department

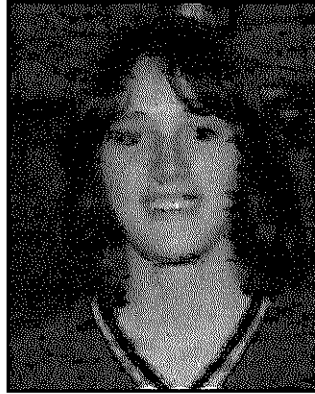


St. Clairsville High School

Congratulates these three Red Devils



Rich Gibson
St. C. Class of 1970
Media

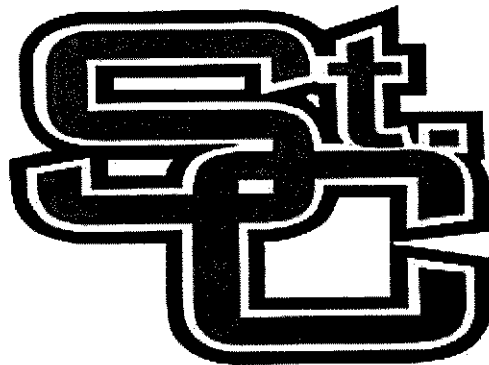


Rhonda Noble
St. C. Class of 1979
1970s Athlete



Bethany Piccolini
St. C. Class of 2001
2000s Athlete

on their induction
into the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference
Hall of Fame, Class of 2013



Red Devil Nation is proud of you!



Russell "Tuss" Edwards

1903 - 1983

Pap we love you and thank you for your life and love. You were always there to take care of us and help us get better. You instilled in us the pride of being an athlete and how competing and striving were worthy ways to live our lives. We looked up to you and loved when you told stories of competing with the very earliest great Martins Ferry teams. You held the Valley Scoring record for Decades with your 8 touchdown game against Coshocton. Your stories of playing in the Polo Grounds and kicking the winning field goal and your games at W & J kept us wanting to be athletes. The stories of the great players you coached and played with as well as the stories of "Pop" Heisman and Andy Kerr, your college coaches kept us imagining great things about being an athlete.

Pap you were a great coach in the years that you coached high school sports. Winning at Adena, Warwood and Linsly. Your Linsly team was undefeated and made it past the second round of the National Basketball tournament where you lost to South Carolina. The player for South Carolina shot the basketball two handed "Wilt the Still" style underhanded to beat you.

Pap one of your greatest accomplishments was organizing and help start the Wheeling Midget League. Parading through downtown Wheeling and heading to Belle Isle for 3 inning warm up games for the season openers always excited us. The league gave a lot of players their first chance to play organized baseball and it was well appreciated by all the people of Wheeling resulting in you being named Citizen of the Year.

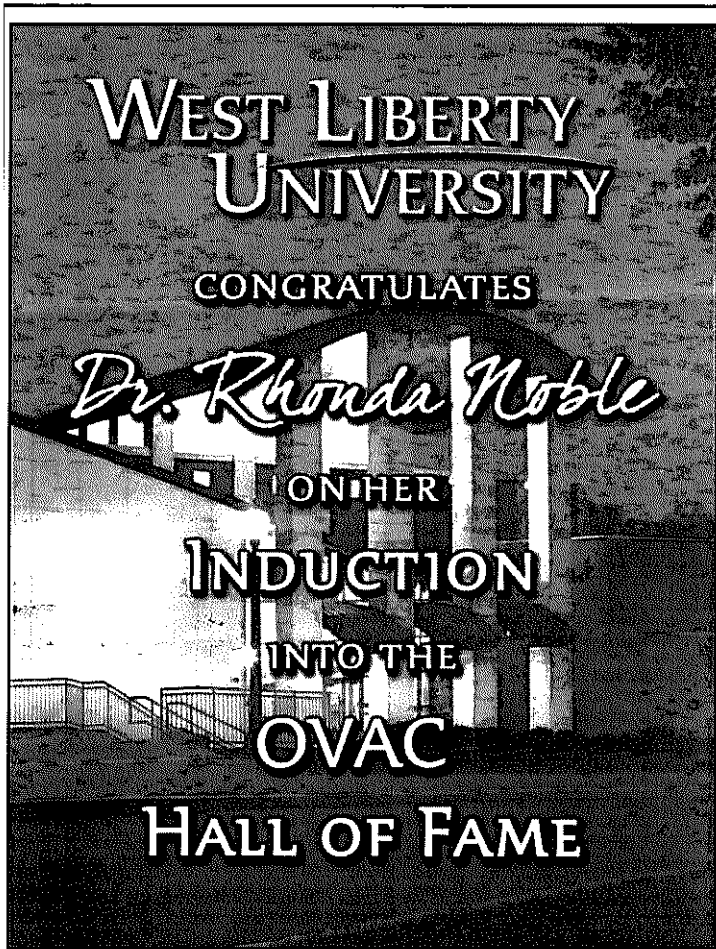
Pap we were lucky to live with you and to always live close by you. You took care of us when you moved on the Linsly campus and became the grounds keeper. You fed us daily, helped train us and kept us on time and ready to go. We got to share our careers with you. You watched our games, talked about what we did right and how we could get better. You always followed all your grandkids at CCHS as well. You always gave us positive feedback and we always wanted to make you proud and honor you anyway we could.

Pap isn't it great that another generation later your great- grandchildren would honor your name. In the 2000 decade Wheeling Central went on a run in sports and particularly football that was one of the schools greatest. Who lead that powerhouse but Edwards. Justin Edwards starting it off like a rocket with his play than Alex Edwards Peluchette came on and they rolled. Lee finally came and kept it rolling. Not sure if it will ever stop at CCHS.

Pap tonight is the final honor for you on earth but your name and spirit will always live on in the athletic arena.

Love,

Peluchette & Edwards Family

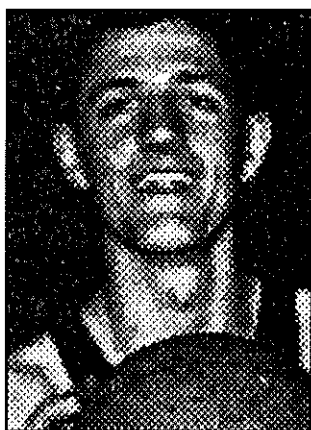


The Martins Ferry Athletic Department congratulates our coach, **Ms. Peri Powell**, on her induction into the OVAC Hall of Fame



Congratulations

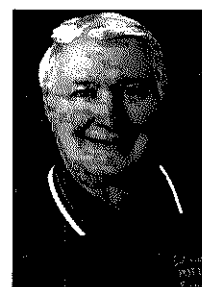
You will always be our legend



The Robert Hugh Family

Congratulations

Nick Aloï



on your induction into the OVAC Hall of Fame

from

Frank and Mary Aloï

WTOV



9

wtov 9 .com

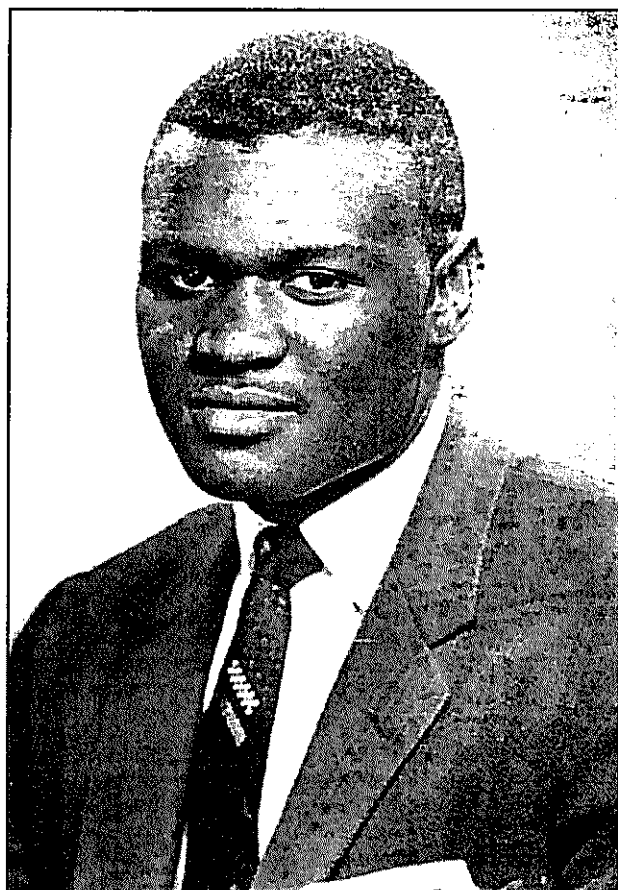
*Proud to be your Official
OVAC Television Station.*



Tim McCoy - GENERAL MANAGER

Congratulations

OVAC 'Legend' Joel Jones



Jones' teammates from
the 1950-51 and 1953-54 seasons:

Coach James Wares

Arnett Brogdon	Leonard Brown*
Raymond Brown*	Robert Byrd
William Brown	Calvin Burns*
Henry Burns	Lawrence Chester*
Raymond Castelow*	John Douglas
John Curenton*	Richmond Gibson*
Bobby Jean Douglas	James Gregory*
Wilson Gilliam*	Willie Gregory
Franki Gregory	Joe Hill
Fletcher Gregory	Roy Ingram
George Hopkins*	Robert Jeter*
Walter Ingram*	Raeford Lester*
Robert Lee	Allen Rutherford*
Clarence Rice*	Robert Sims
Isiah Salter	Irvin Salter*
Fred Sutton	Isaac Thomas*
James Thomas*	Booker T. Walker
James Turner *	Nathaniel William*
William Walker	Alphonso Williams*
Leonard Witcher*	Charles Young
Danny Young	Ed Young*
James Brown*	(* deceased)

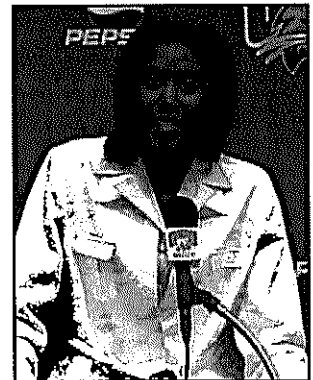
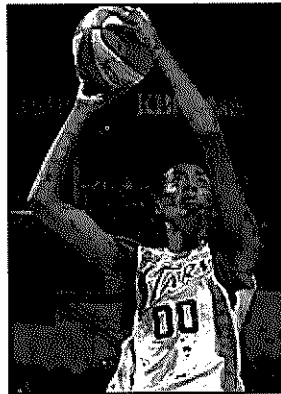
- Three-time high school all-stater (captain as senior)
 - Two-time All-American at Michigan State
 - Played in Rose Bowl
- Currently a counselor at Henry Ford High School, Detroit

*From your brother, Robert, sisters Rev. Theola
and Mayola J. and niece Patra Brown*



The Steubenville City Schools

congratulate



Sylvia Crawley

(SHS Class of 1990)



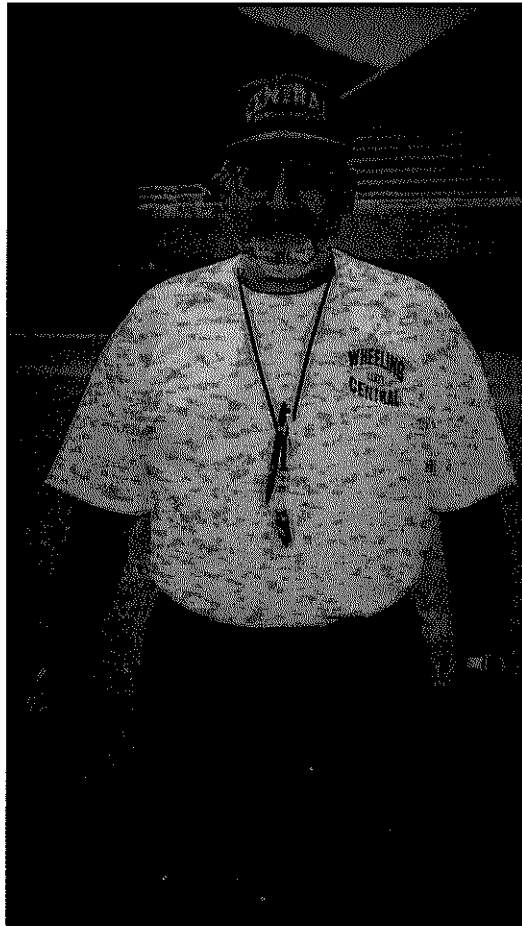
on her induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame

We are proud of you!



Congratulations

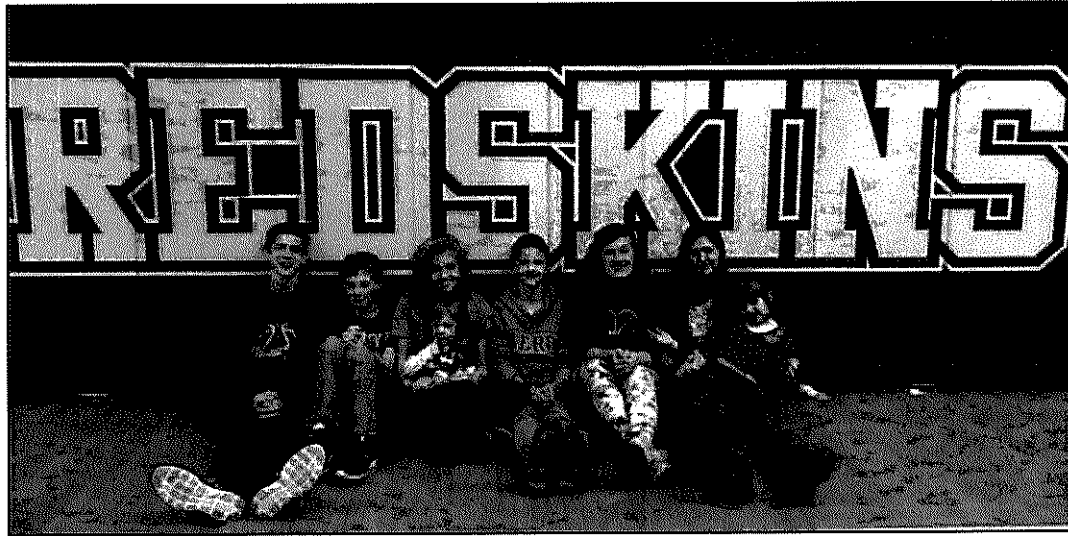
Coach Jim “JT” Thomas



OVAC Hall of Fame - Class of 2013

from
the Wheeling Central Catholic
Athletic Department

Congratulations Papaw!!



"The guy to make you smile on a bad day."

TJ

"No one could dream of a greater Papaw. He does nothing more than provide a smile to everyone who crosses his path."

Meg

"You're always willing to help us, and let us steal Swedish Fish!!"

Maddy

"He is that one person in the world that makes me laugh and smile every time I see him."

Sean

"My Papaw is my hero...He inspires me every day and one day I hope to be like him! Love you Papaw!"

Sarah

"Papaw is my hero because he works hard and helps me do the things I need to do."

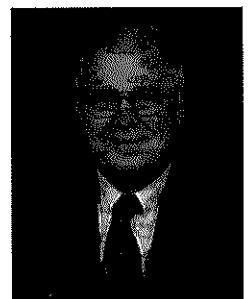
Andrew

"Papaw makes me happy because he lets me come to his house to visit all the time!"

Lizzie

"I love my Papaw. He's my friend!"

Rachel



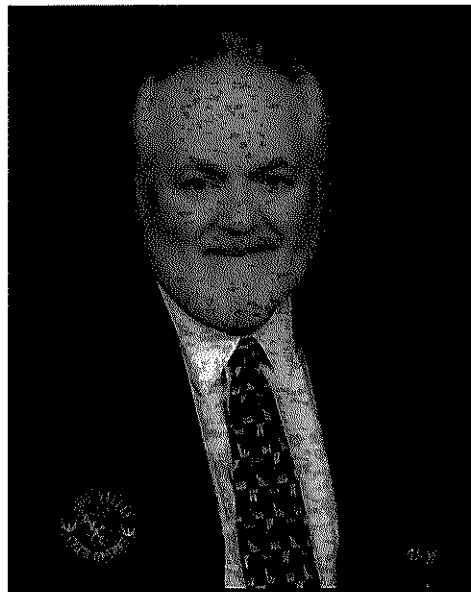


The Ohio Valley Board
of Basketball Officials



congratulates

John L. Howell



on his induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame

President - Butch Minkemeyer
President-Elect - Dale Lewis
Secretary-Treasurer - Roger Levi
Booking Secretary - Jim Schmitt
Interpreter - John Artimez

Executive Committee
Jerry Adkins
Ramsey Rahi
Mark Kerwood

★ PERI POWELL ★

Congratulations

on your induction to the

OVAC HALL OF FAME

The Whartons

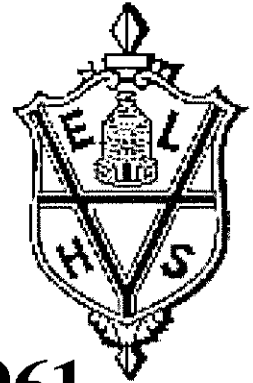
Dick, Betty, Chris, Lisa, Bill, Ann, Chuck,
Jake, Zeke, Luke, Katie, Ben, Cole & Nate

TOTAL SPORTS
TSC
CONNECTION

The East Liverpool High School Alumni Association



congratulates



Ken Cunningham, Class of 1961
Mark Emmerling, Class of 1989

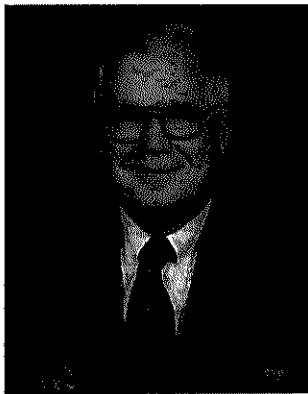
We are proud of you!



Congratulations
to



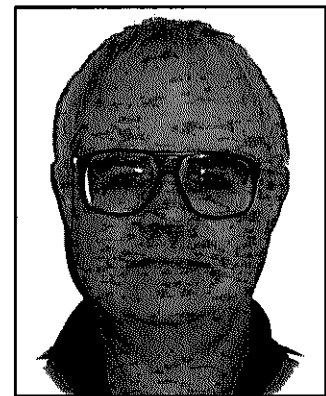
OVAC Hall of Fame Inductees



Tom Rataiczak



Mark Emmerling



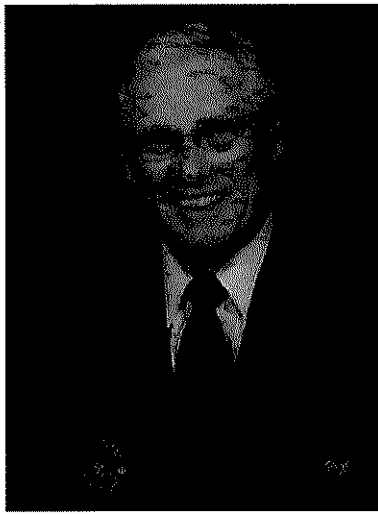
'Hoot' Gibson

The Ohio Valley Wrestling Coaches' Association
salutes and thanks you for your contribution to wrestling
in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference



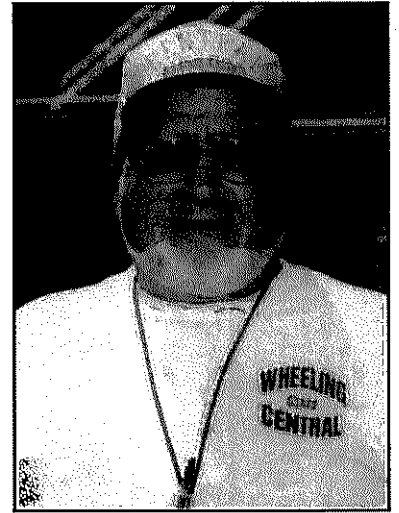


The Buckeye Local Athletic Department



Don Zinni

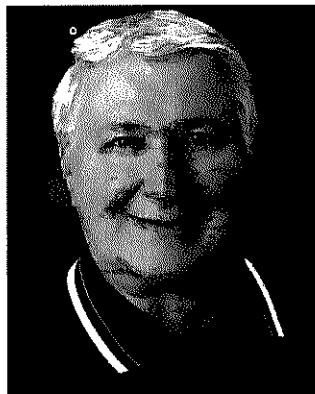
congratulates
OVAC
Hall of Fame
inductees



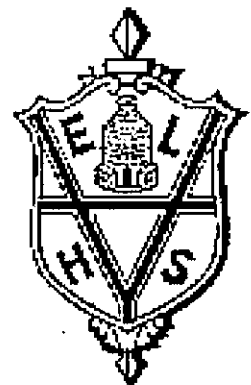
Jim Thomas



Congratulations



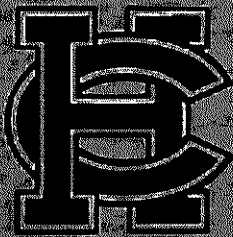
Nick Aloia



from your family
Nino and Emily Lancia



ROBERT "BOB" HUGH

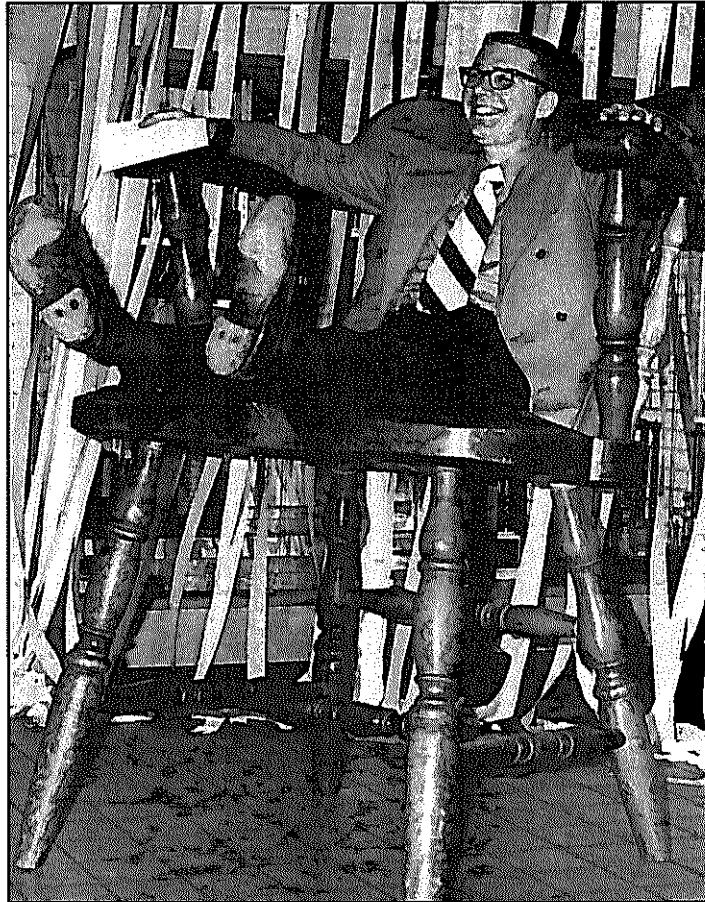


Huskies Sports Foundation

Thanks for all you did for athletics and our school district!

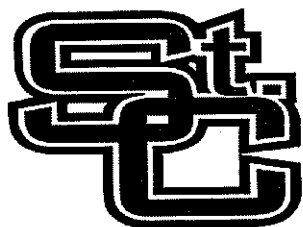
Congratulations OVAC Hall of Famer

Tom Rataiczak



You have always been a man
of great vision and leadership.
No one deserves this award more than you!
We are so proud of you!

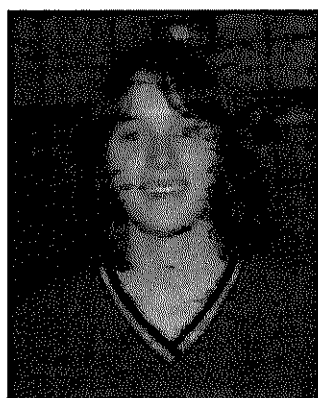
Much love,
Sheri, Mac, Terry & Sibyl



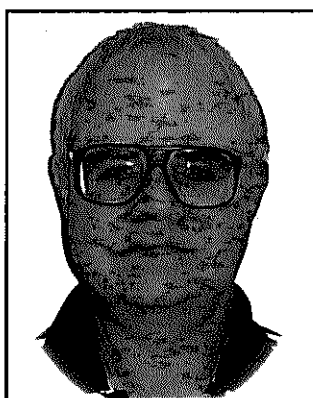
**The St. Clairsville
High School
Athletic Department**



congratulates



**Rhonda
Noble**



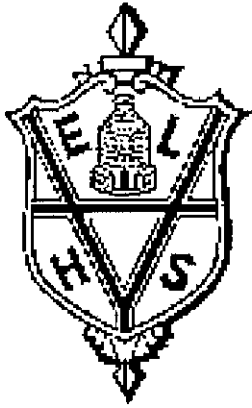
**Rich 'Hoot'
Gibson**



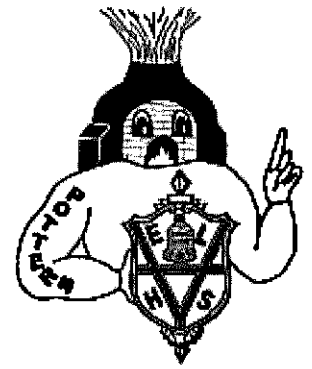
**Bethany
Piccolini**

**on their induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame
Class of 2013**



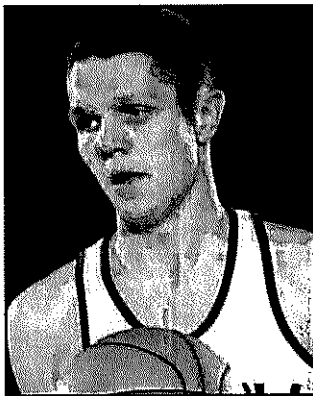


The East Liverpool
High School
Athletic Hall of Fame
proudly salutes



Inductee
Nick Aloï

Boys' Basketball Coach
23 years - 381 wins
Most wins in ELHS history



Legend

Ken Cunningham

Class A Basketball
Ohio Player of the Year 1961



Inductee

Mark Emmerling

4-time OVAC wrestling champion
Most wins in ELHS history

Officers

Rick Dieringer - Chairman
Bob Bosco - Chairman-Elect
Steve Mabbott - Vice-Chairman
Dick Wolf - Secretary/Treasurer

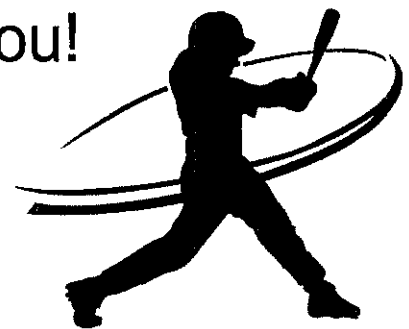
Congratulations



Rhonda Noble



We Are Proud Of You!



Love,
Mom, Keith, Char, Amy, John,
Mandy, & Steve



Steubenville Big Red Boosters



congratulate and salute



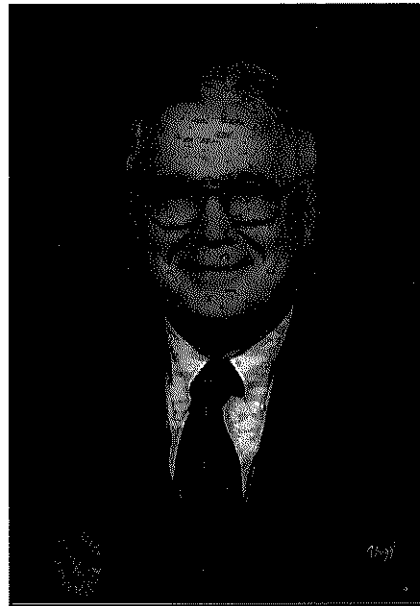
Sylvia Crawley

on her induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame
Class of 2013





The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Executive Board



**Salutes
OVAC Executive Secretary/Treasurer
Thomas E. Rataiczak**

**on his well-deserved induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame**

Thanks for your tireless work on behalf of the student-athletes of the Ohio Valley

 **Congratulations** 

PERI POWELL

OVAC Hall of Fame

We knew you would make it!

**YOU HAVE BEEN GOOD
FOR ATHLETICS**

**AND ATHLETICS HAS
BEEN GOOD TO YOU**



Love your family



Dad, Duane & Mom, Dorothy

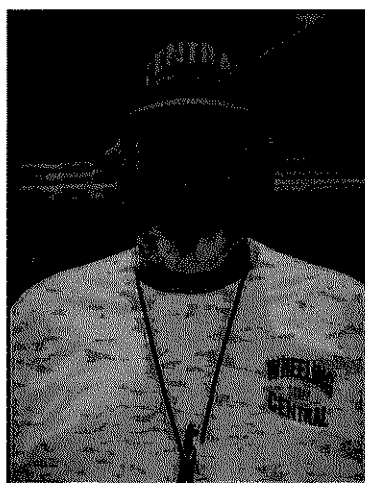
Beth, Tom, Leslie & Logan Powell

Cory & Zac Beaver

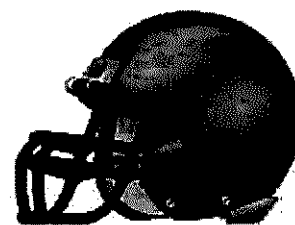
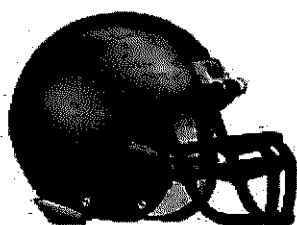


*Coach Mike Young
and the CCHS football staff
salute and congratulate*

Coach "JT" Thomas



*on his induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame*



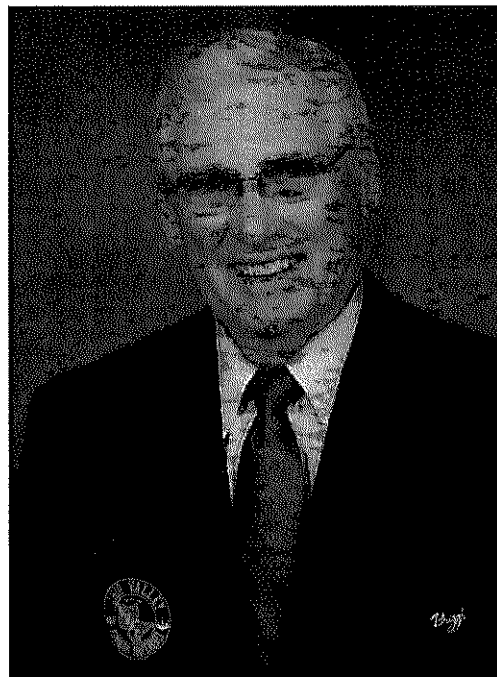
*Maroon Knights
State football champions
1979-2000-2002-2004-2005-2006-2007-2010-2011*



The Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials

congratulates

Don Zinni



on his well-deserved induction
into the OVAC Hall of Fame

Officers

Larry Rine, President
Joe Koler, Vice-President
Mike Clyde, Secretary
Jerry Ames, Treasurer
Jeff Loeffler, Past President

Executive Committee

Bruce Myers
Matt Young
Doug Costain

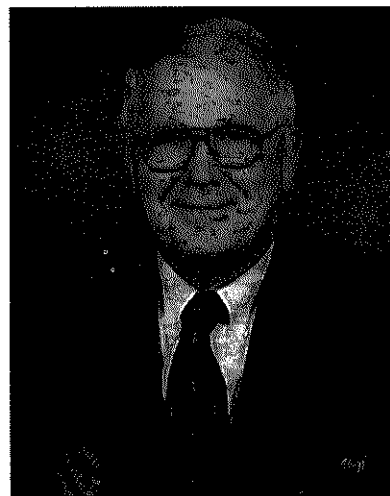


A big **Thank-You** to Tom Rataiczak



OVAC Executive Secretary/Treasurer

Beallsville
 Bishop Donahue
 Conotton Valley
 East Richland Christian
 Hundred
 Paden City
 St. John Central
 Trinity Christian
 Valley
 Weirton Madonna
 Caldwell
 Cameron
 Clay-Battelle
 Frontier
 Linsly
 River
 Shadyside
 Steubenville Catholic Central
 Toronto
 Wellsville
 Wheeling Central Catholic
 Barnesville
 Bellaire
 Bridgeport
 Buckeye Trail



Tom Rataiczak

Fort Frye
 Magnolia
 Martins Ferry
 Monroe Central
 Shenandoah
 Tyler Consolidated
 Buckeye Local
 East Liverpool
 Edison
 Harrison Central
 Meadowbrook
 Oak Glen
 St. Clairsville
 Steubenville
 Union Local
 Weir
 Beaver Local
 Brooke
 Cambridge
 Indian Creek
 John Marshall
 Morgantown
 Parkersburg South
 Wheeling Park
 University



*You truly are the hub of the nation's
 best high school conference!*



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*Wrongful Death
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THE DAILY JEFFERSONIAN

congratulates

The OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2013

especially local inductees

**Larry Marmie
(Barnesville High School)
Jed Stephen
(Shenandoah High School)**

**and 'Legend'
John 'Zip' Behen
(Cambridge High School)**



OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

10 Years!

179 Inductees!

45 Legends!

*Saluting the best of the best
high school conference
in the nation*

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*The OVAC
Hall of Fame Committee
congratulates*



Judge Frank Fregiato
*as the Denny Magruder
Distinguished Service Award
recipient for 2013*



*Judge Fregiato has served as the OVAC's
legal council since 1977*



*Past winners of the award:
Denny Magruder (2010); Bob Robinson (2011)
and Carpenters Local #3 of Wheeling (2012)*



**The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference
Hall of Fame Committee is seeking
nominations for future consideration
for induction into the OVAC Hall of Fame**



Individuals are selected in various categories (OVAC 'Family',
OVAC 'Contributor', Media, Coaches, Officials and Athletes)

To nominate an individual, please send detailed biographical information
and, if possible, a photograph, to the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee,
c/o the OVAC Office, 64962 Breezy Point Lane, Bellaire, OH, 43906.
Information should focus heavily on high school-related accomplishments
(statistics, all-star honors, etc.), but college/professional information is also requested.

*The 11th annual OVAC Hall of Fame Banquet is scheduled
on Saturday, August 16, 2014 at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling, W. Va.*



OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2013



Thomas E. Rataiczak

Thomas E. Rataiczak (Bellaire High School, Class of 1964). Succeeding the late Sam Mumley and his friend-to-all, get-it-done attitude as the guiding force of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference would not be an easy task, but it's one that Rataiczak has done with tremendous vision and class...and then some.

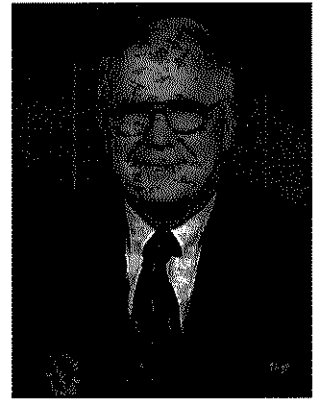
"Rat" has been the de facto head of the OVAC as Executive Secretary since 1999, and under his leadership, the bi-state conference has grown to an all-time high of 50 member schools from Ohio and West Virginia.

During Rataiczak's watch, the Conference has grown by leaps and bounds in a variety of areas. Among them have been the formation of the OVAC Hall of Fame and the OVAC Sports Museum (both located in WesBanco Arena in Wheeling); instituting boys' and girls' basketball tournaments and expanding many of the other events, most notably the revised format of the track championships; creating an All-Conference Academic Team in conjunction with Ohio University Eastern; the creation of an official OVAC website; standardizing all championship awards; developing a meet director's handbook; computerizing all financial accounts; providing countless SportsWorld speakers to the area for more than 600 school assemblies, raising more than \$250,000 to bring them in at no cost to the Conference; and placing the Conference on solid financial ground through a partnership with Scholastic Sports Marketing.

A retired Bellaire High School teacher, he served as a "Founding Father" and Director of the BHS Sports Foundation and has been chairman of the Bellaire Wall of Fame/Hall of Fame Committee for more than 20 years. Rataiczak has been the Big Reds' basketball scorekeeper for 43 years, working at more than 1,700 consecutive varsity and junior varsity games. In fact, the OVAC's Scorekeeper/Timer Award presented annually at the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic is named in his honor.

He has also served more than 30 years as the BHS record-keeper, publishing extensive media guides for both football and basketball.

The recipient of the Bellaire Alumni Association's Outstanding Alumnus Award in 1992, he graduated from West Liberty State College and obtained a master's degree from West Virginia University. He received the Robert S. McKelvey Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club in 2010 and his most recent undertaking was being elected to the Bellaire Board of Education in 2012.



Tom Rataiczak



Tim McCoy

Tim McCoy

Tim McCoy (Jefferson Union High School, Class of 1978). For a quarter of a century, McCoy has taken the lead role in expanding broadcast and internet coverage of Ohio Valley high school sports, specifically those of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference.

Those efforts have helped give thousands of area high school athletes tremendous exposure, with countless thousands of viewers able to watch the valley's best perform in the athletic realm.

Among the many highlights has been live TV coverage of various all-star contests, most notably the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic from Wheeling Island Stadium and the Ron Mauck OVAC Wrestling Championships from WesBanco Arena in Wheeling. At one time, WTOV-TV9 also aired the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic.

Other events include the football "Game of the Week" broadcasts (replays of area games following the comprehensive "Sports Friday" shows); in-depth pre-season football team previews and the "Big 22" awards banquet in December. WTOV-TV9 also has an extensive internet football supersite available.

McCoy became Vice-President and General Manager of WTOV-TV9 in 1994. Prior to that, he served as the station's Operations Manager for six years.

He began his career in television as a Production Technician at WNEO-TV in Kent from 1979-82. He first joined WTOV as a Promotion Producer from 1982-85 and then spent two years at NBC affiliate WLEX-TV in Lexington, Kentucky as Promotions and Creative Services Director where he received two ADDY awards.

He has served on various boards in the Ohio Valley, including as president and campaign chairman of the United Way of Jefferson County, the St. John Arena, the Steubenville Rotary and the Steubenville City of Murals. He is also a member of The Friends of Wheeling, the Eastern Ohio Valley Tech Prep Consortium, Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce, the Wheeling Area Chamber of Commerce, Franciscan University of Steubenville, Historic Fort Steuben and the Jefferson County WIND Team. He was named 1995 City of Murals "Volunteer of the Year"; the Community Leadership Award from the Franciscan University of Steubenville; a Community Award from the Steubenville branch of the NAACP; and the One in a Million Award from the Steubenville Million Man March Committee awards.

He was the 1997 Robert S. McKelvey Memorial Award recipient from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

Richard (Hoot) Gibson

Richard (Hoot) Gibson (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1970). He began his career in the local media in 1981 and has spent 32 years on the staff at The Times Leader, serving as a sports writer and for a brief time as Sports Editor and also as Area News Editor.

Gibson has written countless columns covering high school, college and professional sports and instituted the All-Times Leader teams in all high school sports.

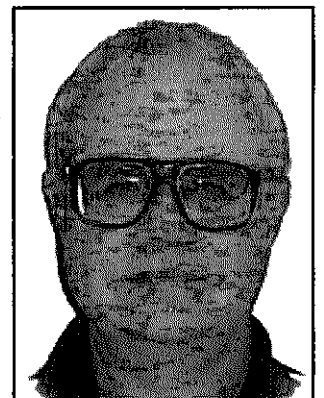
He has covered OVAC contests in nearly every sport and at most conference schools over the years, including OVAC All-Star games in every sport.

Gibson has been seen at countless sporting events not only locally, but around the country. He's covered several NCAA men's basketball "Final Four" games, many World Series and MLB All-Star Games, 10 Super Bowls and 18 college football bowl games. He's also authored countless stories on the Ohio State Buckeyes and the West Virginia Mountaineers and served one year as the beat writer for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

He received the OHSAA Media Service Award for the Eastern District in 2000 and has won several Ohio Prep Sports Writers Association awards over the years.

Gibson was also a freelance writer for several years for Basketball Weekly magazine based out of Detroit, Michigan. Gibson, who attended Harding University in Arkansas, also spent several years as a local baseball, basketball and volleyball official and served as manager of the Fairpoint-Neffs ballclub of the Ohio Valley Baseball League.

He served three years in the United States Navy (1976-78), working in communications for Command 6th Fleet Europe while stationed in Italy and touring both Europe and northern Africa.



Rich 'Hoot' Gibson



OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2013



Nick Aloï

Nick Aloï (Midland (Pa.) High School, Class of 1962). His coaching career began with a three-year stint at his alma mater, Midland (Pa.) Lincoln High, where he led the team to a state runner-up finish in 1986. He was named Class A "Coach of the Year" in western Pennsylvania in 1985.

Aloï's coaching stay at East Liverpool began in 1986 and spanned 20 years, longer than any basketball coach in school history. He compiled a career record of 326-121, an impressive winning percentage of 73%.

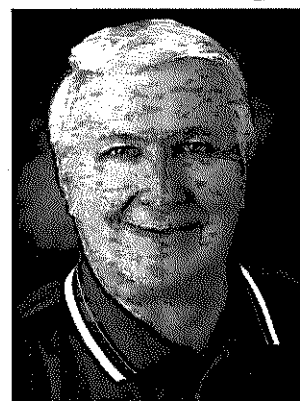
His Potter-coached teams won four Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships (1991, '94, '95 and '99); nine sectional titles; six district crowns and one regional championship with an OHSAA State "Final Four" Appearance in 1999. The '99 team finished with a 23-2 record, falling to Shaker Heights (71-63) in the Division I state semifinals.

He was selected Ohio Division I "Coach of the Year" in 1996 by the Ohio High School Basketball Association and 1999 by The Associated Press; was the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association "Coach of the Year" 11 times, Eastern District "Coach of the Year" seven times and received similar honors in Columbiana County numerous times.

He was previously inducted into the East Liverpool High School Athletic Hall of Fame, the Beaver County Sports Hall of Fame, the Midland High School Sports Hall of Fame and the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

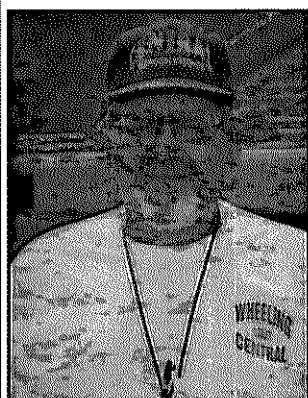
Among Aloï's attributes were consistency, continuity and commitment, evident in the fact that he never missed an open gym, practice, scrimmage or game during his playing or coaching careers. He also started the popular "Potter Holiday Classic," a tournament known for quality competition, and conducted the "Little Potters Clinic" yearly for the district's elementary and middle school students free of charge.

As an athlete, Aloï was the leading scorer, MVP and team captain of Midland's 1962 undefeated basketball team, earning All-WPIAL and All-State recognition. He then went to Bowling Green State University where he was a three-year starter and team co-captain, averaging 15 points per game. Aloï earned his bachelor's degree from Bowling Green and later obtained his master's degree from Duquesne University. He was drafted by the St. Louis Hawks of the NBA.



Nick Aloï

Jim Thomas



Jim Thomas

Jim Thomas (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1963).

The highly-regarded "JT" is the fourth-winningest coach in Ohio Valley history behind Reno Saccoccia, Jay Circosta and the fellow Hall of Famer George Strager with a 35-year record of 235-134-2. He wound up only 35 wins off of the all-time West Virginia state record for football coaching victories (267).

His first head coaching stint came at old Yorkville High where he spent three years (1968-70), guiding the Ductillites to an unbeaten season in 1970.

He then assumed the head coaching position as Wheeling Central (1971-80), and moved on to Wheeling Park for six seasons (1981-86). From there, it was back to his alma mater for a second stint, this time guiding the Maroon Knights from 1987-2004.

He coached teams to seven Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships (1974, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1990, 2000 and 2004) and four West Virginia state titles. The Maroon Knights were Class AA state champs at the first "Super Six" event in Charleston in 1979 and they won the Class A crown in 2000, 2002 and 2004. The 2000 team set a school record for wins (13-1).

He also coached the West Virginia squad four times in the Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic.

Thomas was voted the West Virginia All-Sport "Coach of the Year" for 2004-05 and the OVAC All-Sport "Coach of the Year" in both 1980 and 2003. He was also The Intelligencer's "Coach of the Year" in 1979 and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan "Man of the Year" in 2001.

He earned his bachelor's degree from West Liberty State College and a master's degree from West Virginia University. Thomas passed away in 2005 at the age of 60.

John Howell

John Howell (Lancaster Fairfield Union High School, Class of 1967). When it comes to high school basketball officials, Howell is among the most recognized individuals throughout the Ohio Valley. After all, during a 38-year officiating career, he worked in practically every gymnasium out there.

Howell became a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials in 1972. He served as secretary of the board for 14 years; as a training class instructor for 14 years; as rules interpreter for 16 years and assigned junior varsity officials for 14 years.

He served as the OVAC's Assistant Basketball Commissioner from 1983-94 and became the Basketball Commissioner in 1995, a role he still has today.

Howell worked his first varsity basketball game in 1974 (Paden City vs. St. Marys) and his final appearance on the hardwood came March 11, 2009 in a West Virginia Class AA Regional game at Phillip Barbour High School.

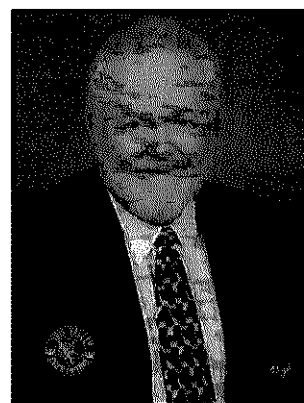
Howell worked a total of 27 state tournaments: 14 Ohio boys (1987, '88, '90, '92, '94, '95, '96, '98, '99, 2000, '02, '04, '06, '08); 5 Ohio girls (90, 91, 93, 01, 03); 6 West Virginia boys (88, 91, 94, 97, 99, 03); and 2 West Virginia girls (83, 89). He also worked a total of 75 regional tournament games over the years.

In 1993, Howell worked a W. Va. boys' state semifinal game in Charleston with Mike Coyne in morning and then Ohio girls' semifinal game in Columbus with Roger Levi later same day. He officiated the first three-man championship boys' game in Ohio in 1996 and the first 3-man championship boys' game in W. Va. in 1997.

Howell received a host of awards over the years, including NFIOA (National Federation of Interscholastic Officials Association) Official of the Year in West Virginia in 1992 and in Ohio in 1997; Ohio District 5 Official of the Year in 1991. Ohio District 12 Official of the Year in 1992; West Virginia Official of the Year in 1994 and was the 2013 recipient of the OVAC's Robert Dawson Officials' Award. He was inducted into the OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame in 2003.

In addition to basketball, Howell has worked as a track official since 1972, serving in various capacities over the years at OVAC meets as well as at the Bellaire Relays and Shadyside Relays, and he has handled the position of clerk at those meets for the last 15 years.

While not an on-field official in football, Howell served as the OVAC's Assistant Football Commissioner under Hall of Famer Evan Reese from 1983-94.



John Howell



OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2013



Don Zinni

Don Zinni (Yorkville High School, Class of 1954). He began his officiating career in 1970 as a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials, remaining active until 1991.

He officiated at the district, regional and state level in the WVSSAC playoffs from 1975-90, working the 1977 Class AAA State Championship Game.; and he worked games at the regional and state semifinal level in the OHSAA during that same time span.

Zinni officiated the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic four times (three as referee and one as back judge) and worked the OHSFCA North-South All-Star Classic in Massillon in 1982.

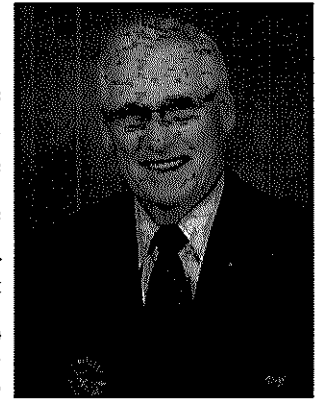
A member of the OHSAA Football Advisory Committee for four years and a Past President and Rules Interpreter of the Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials, Zinni became OVAC Football Commissioner in 1995 and held that position until retiring in 2012 as the longest-tenured individual to serve in that capacity..

While serving as OVAC Football Commissioner, the affable Zinni expanded officiating crews from four men to five; expanded the officiating base to include several areas on both sides of the river including Wheeling, Weirton-Steubenville, Mason-Dixon, Parkersburg-Marietta, Columbiana County, Cambridge-Zanesville and Columbus; established rating of crews by coaches during the season and by the Commissioner after the season; served as a clearinghouse for schools seeking opponents for schedule openings; and assigned officials to the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic by position rating.

Zinni also spent several years in the coaching ranks. He first served as junior high and freshman basketball coach from 1958-65; was an assistant football coach at Yorkville High from 1959-65; was the head coach at Yorkville from 1965-70; and then was the high school principal from 1970-72.

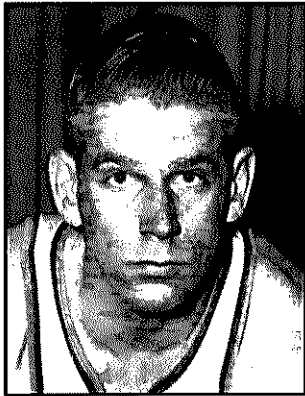
He is also a member of the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee.

As a high school athlete, Zinni was a four-year letterman in baseball, a two-year letterman in football and a one-year letterman in basketball at Yorkville.



Don Zinni

Harry (Moo) Moore



Harry Moore

Harry (Moo) Moore (Moundsville High School, Class of 1948). The 6-foot-2 forward set school career scoring records which lasted 18 years until broken in 1966 by OVAC Hall of Famer Bob Hummell. He scored 1,700 career points in four seasons and he also set the all-time Trojan single-game record of 54 points, including 25 goals, in a 101-17 rout of Cameron.

He earned first team, one-class All-State as a senior and was twice a first team All-OVAC largest Class AA honoree. He also was the first state High School Player of the Year honoree in selections made from 1948-60 by the Tri-State Independent Tournament held in Sistersville.

Moore led the Trojans to records of 15-2 in 1948 and 19-3 in 1946 when the team advanced to the W.Va. region finals.

He earned a scholarship to West Virginia University where he played on three varsity teams with a combined 60-20 record, including a Southern Conference regular season and tournament championship. Moore's 84 percent career free throw percentage ranks No. 2 all-time at WVU. He averaged 12.8 points a game as a senior and was selected honorable mention All-America.

He also was chosen in the sixth round of the 1952 NBA Draft by the Syracuse Nationals. He served in the Army infantry from 1953-55 and was selected to play in the 1954 armed forces Pan-American Games in Mexico and International Games in Germany. In 2007, he was inducted into the West Virginia University Sports Hall of Fame.

Moore, who retired in 1995 from the oil industry, resides in Moundsville.

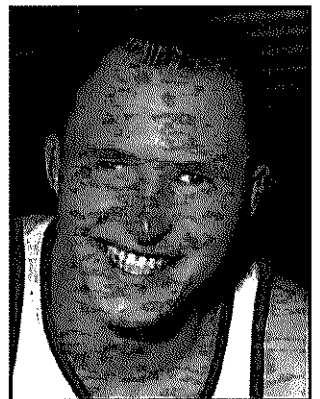
Ron (Cy) Godfrey

Ron (Cy) Godfrey (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1956). The 6-foot-5 stringbean set school scoring records which remain on the books for more than 50 years. He shattered Purple Rider career, season and single game marks set in 1944 by legendary OVAC Hall of Famer Alex Groza. His records include current standards of 1,300 career points, a 32.4 point per game norm as a senior, and twice scoring 51 points in a game against Wheeling and Benwood Union. The single-game mark has been tied, the others unbroken. He earned All-Ohio and All-OVAC honors in 1956 at the Purple Riders went 18-6 with sectional and district titles before bowing to Canton McKinley, 57-54, in regional play.

He earned a scholarship to the University of Miami, where he scored 1,384 career points as the Hurricanes went 61-18 in his three varsity seasons. The 1960 NCAA Tournament team went 23-4 and the 1961 NIT Tournament squad ended 20-7 as Godfrey earned honorable mention All-America.

He later served as head coach for four seasons of the Hurricanes before resigning in 1971. His prize protégé was future Basketball Hall of Famer Rick Barry. Godfrey has been inducted into the University of Miami Sports Hall of Fame and the Atlantic Coast Conference Legends Class of 2012 although he never played an ACC game. Miami is currently a member of the ACC.

Godfrey resides in Coral Springs, Fla.



'Cy' Godfrey



OVAC Hall of Fame

Saturday, August 17, 2013

Welcome.....Thomas E. Rataiczak, OVAC Executive Secretary

Invocation.....Pastor Dave Mills, Clarksburg United Methodist Church
Mount Zion United Methodist Church

Dinner.....

Introductions.....Thomas E. Rataiczak, OVAC Executive Secretary

Master of Ceremonies.....John Sorrenti, Former Sports Director of WEIR Radio

Legends of the OVAC.....John 'Zip' Behen, Ken Cunningham,
Russell 'Tuss' Edwards, Bob Hugh, Joel Jones

Distinguished Service Award.....Frank Fregiato

2013 Hall of Fame Inductions

OVAC 'Family'

Thomas E. Rataiczak.....

OVAC 'Contributor'

Tim McCoy.....

Media

Richard 'Hoot' Gibson

Coaches

Nick Aloï.....

Jim Thomas.....

Officials

John Howell.....

Induction Ceremony



WesBanco Arena, Wheeling, W.Va.

Don Zinni.....

Athletes

Harry 'Moo' Moore.....

Ron 'Cy' Godfrey

Ken Vargo.....

Jim Brown.....

Larry Marmie.....

Rhonda Noble.....

Peri Powell.....

Mark Emmerling.....

Blaine Rose.....

Sylvia Crawley.....

Ben Taylor.....

Bethany Piccolini.....

Jedidiah Stephen.....

Benediction.....Pastor Dave Mills, Clarksburg United Methodist Church
Mount Zion United Methodist Church



OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2013



Ken Vargo

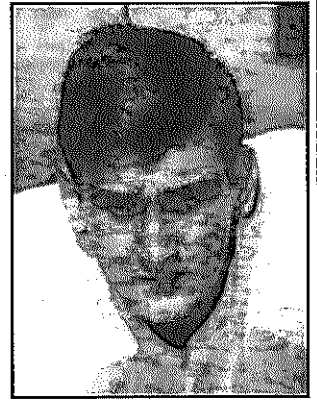
Ken Vargo (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1952). A three-sport, four-year Purple Rider athlete who was team captain in football and basketball as a senior and a track team member. A 6-foot, 184-pound center-linebacker in football, he earned first team Associated Press All-Ohio defense as a senior and was selected captain of the All-OVAC and All-Valley "Big School" honor rolls. The 1951 All-Valley selections were the first ones selecting Big and Small School teams. Vargo, a 48-minute player, also was a two-time All-Eastern Ohio selection at center.

He earned a scholarship to Ohio State University where he became a three-year regular at center and Buckeye co-captain as a senior when he earned first team All-Big Ten Conference with two teammates in the College Football Hall of Fame - Heisman Trophy winner Howard (Hopalong) Cassaday and Outland Trophy winner Jim Parker. Vargo played in the 1956 Hula Bowl.

As a junior, he was a regular on a 10-0 record team which won the Rose Bowl, 20-7, over USC and was named the AP National Champions.

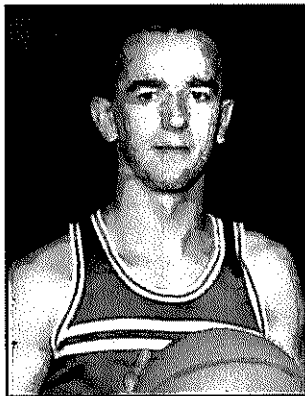
Vargo was drafted in the ninth round by the Chicago Bears of the National Football League, but opted to play in Canada with the Ottawa Rough Riders where he was Canadian Football League All-Star linebacker in his 1956 rookie season.

After his playing career, he remained in Canada and resides in Ottawa.



Ken Vargo

Jim Brown



Jim Brown

Jim Brown (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1961). A two-sport Purple Rider standout, he is the first OVAC athlete honored primarily for golf. In the OVAC all-class tournament, he improved each year to place fourth, third, second and first his four years. He also won three OVAC Ohio-side titles. He won three Ohio district crowns after placing second as a freshman. In the Ohio state tournament, he improved each season - 11th, 8th, 6th and 4th as a senior. His career match record was 43-4, including 13-1 as a senior after marks of 9-2, 11-0 and 10-1. He was medalist in 39 of 47 career matches.

In basketball, the 5-foot-11 guard was a two-time All-OVAC Class AAA choice, twice All-Eastern Ohio (co-captain as senior) and All-Ohio second and third team in two wire service selections. He was co-captain in the Ohio North-South All-Star Game.

He earned a scholarship to play golf and basketball at Ohio State and became OSU's No.1 golfer, and senior team captain, and a three-year varsity basketball letterman.

After six years coaching at Rollins College in Florida and Kent State, he returned in 1973 to become Ohio State's ninth golf coach. He remained for 36 seasons as the longest tenured coach in any sport at OSU. His teams won 17 Big Ten titles and the 1979 NCAA championship among 11 NCAA Top 10 finishes and 31 appearances. A three-time Big Ten Coach of the Year, he won national honors in 1979 and 1986. He has been inducted into the Golf Coaches of America Hall of Fame and the Ohio State Athletics Hall of Fame. Brown splits retirement time between Columbus and Florida.

Larry Marmie

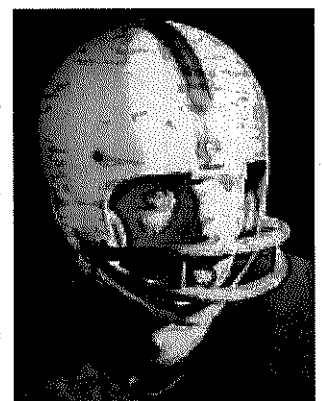
Larry Marmie (Barnesville High School, Class of 1960). An All-Ohio quarterback for the Shamrocks, he also earned All-OVAC honors in football and All-Eastern Ohio honors in basketball and football as a senior. He also was selected All-Valley "Small School" first team quarterback.

Playing for coach Bob (Smokey) Wion on a 7-2 record team as a senior in 1959, Marmie was selected to the UPI All-Ohio Class AA team and played in the 1960 Ohio-West Virginia All-Star game. The 1959 Shamrocks averaged 30.4 points a game with Marmie rushing for 626 yards and passing for 566 yards in a balanced attack.

In 1960, he walked on at Ohio State University and was a member of the freshman team before transferring for his final three years at Eastern Kentucky University. A four-year starter at quarterback, he was team captain and MVP as a senior and set seven school records.

After five college assistant coaching jobs, he joined Arizona State as defensive coordinator in 1985 and became head coach for four years from 1988-91. After stops at Tennessee and UCLA, he joined the professional coaching ranks from 1996-2003 with the Arizona Cardinals. He then joined the St. Louis Rams (2004-05) and Seattle Seahawks (2006-09). Last season was his 47th year in coaching.

He currently resides in California.



Larry Marmie



OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2013



Rhonda Noble

Rhonda Noble (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1979). She was one of the first three-sport female athletes in Ohio Valley annals. She was also one of the best.

Noble not only starred in volleyball, basketball and softball for the Lady Red Devils, but she was also just as impressive in the realm of academics. Noble's many talents helped elevate the Lady Red Devils to team success.

As a senior, she led St. C.'s volleyball team to the regional tournament. It was a milestone achievement as it marked the first time an Eastern Ohio team ever advanced to the Sweet 16. The Lady Red Devils were also crowned OVAC champions that season. Noble was voted the team's most valuable player that campaign, an honor she also landed as a sophomore. As dominating as she was in volleyball, Noble may have been even more-so in basketball. In leading St. C. to the OVAC championship her senior campaign, Noble landed every conceivable honor. She was voted, all-OVAC, all-District, all-Valley and all-Ohio. She was named the team's MVP and was chosen to play in the OVAC All-Star Game. In softball, she was a three-year letterwinner and was again named MVP as a senior.

Her St. C. career featured 10 athletic letters and being voted the school's female athlete of the year for 1978-79. She was also a member of the St. Clairsville National Honor Society. She was inducted into the St. Clairsville High School Athletic Hall of Fame in 2008.

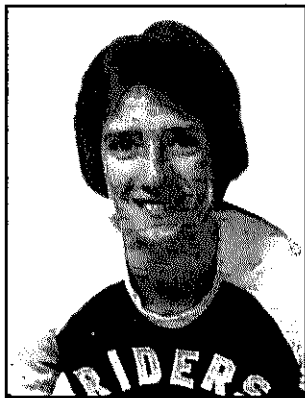
After receiving her St. C. diploma, Noble went from one hilltop to another. She chose West Liberty State College to continue her athletic and academic pursuit and she was a rare three-sport performer in college. She was an impact performer early on for the Lady Hilltoppers' volleyball program. She was named all-WVIAC as a sophomore, junior and senior. She helped lead WLSC to the conference crown in 1981. All-conference honors and Noble became synonymous. She earned all-WVIAC plaudits in basketball as a senior and as a junior and senior in softball. She was inducted into the West Liberty University Hall of Fame in 2000.

She returned as West Liberty's head volleyball coach from 1986-1995. During that tenure, she was twice (1987 & 1981) voted WVIAC Volleyball Coach of the Year. Noble is the chairperson of West Liberty's Department of Health & Human performance in the College of Education.



Rhonda Noble

Peri Powell



Peri Powell

Peri Powell (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1979). She distinguished herself as a superb college softball player. Unfortunately for Powell, her high school did not field a prep softball team.

That didn't stop her, however, from being an exceptional athlete for the Purple Riders, lettering in three sports.

Powell still rates as one of the finest basketball players, male or female, in Martins Ferry history.

She poured in 1,404 points in her prep career. In the process, the dynamite guard was accorded all-Ohio honors as a junior and senior. She was also honored as OVAC Player of the Year as a senior and was captain of the All-Valley team that same year.

Powell displayed her versatility by lettering four years in volleyball for the Ferrians while also lettering three years in track and field.

Softball came to the forefront at the next level, as Powell earned a full scholarship to the College of Steubenville. As fate would have it, the college did away with the program after two years.

Powell remained undaunted, however. She simply took her vast softball skills to West Liberty State College. It was a move that paid quick, albeit, short dividends.

Powell earned first-team all WVIAC accolades in softball for the Lady Hilltoppers. She opted, however, to leave West Liberty.

It was not the end of her collegiate exploits, as she decided to ply her trade at Wheeling College (now Jesuit University). She scripted a brilliant two-year career with the Lady Cardinals.

She gained all-WVIAC honors both seasons and was named conference player of the year as a senior. She batted .437 that year. Powell played in the NAIA national tournament in San Antonio, Texas.

Powell was voted NAIA All-American, the first Lady Cardinal athlete to ever gain that distinction. Wheeling College retired her softball jersey in 1987.

After her playing days, Powell distinguished herself in the coaching ranks. She served as Wheeling College head softball coach for two years, being named the WVIAC Coach of the Year, only to have the college discontinue the program. Powell currently serves as assistant softball coach at Martins Ferry.

Mark Emmerling

Mark Emmerling (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1989). Wrestling and Emmerling are synonymous.

He is the unquestioned greatest grappler the Columbiana County-based school has ever produced. Moreover, he is one of the most successful in Ohio Valley Athletic Conference annals.

Emmerling reached rarified air in January of 1989. That is when the talented and gritty Potter became only the second wrestler to win four OVAC mat championships, the other being legendary Hall of Famer Bobby Douglas.

Emmerling established an East Liverpool school record, chalking up 135 career wrestling victories. He also owns Potter school records for most high school tournament places (24), most pins (100) and most dual-match victories (92).

His fourth OVAC Tournament title also brought him the coveted David Bierkorte Award, emblematic as the tourney's MVP.

Emmerling captured three sectional championships, three district crowns and a regional crown. His state tournament hopes were dashed by injuries as a junior and senior.

His mat success was widely embraced by the East Liverpool community. He received the Lou Venditti Award as the school outstanding wrestler while also being honored by the city's mayor with "Mark Emmerling Day" on Feb. 6, 1989.

His prep prowess led him to West Virginia University where he earned two mat letters for the Mountaineers.

He also performed well in cross country, earning four letters for the Potters, and excelled in the classroom, being inducted in the school's National Honor Society.

Emmerling, who previously served as Beaver Local's head wrestling coach, is currently a teacher and assistant mat coach with the Beavers.



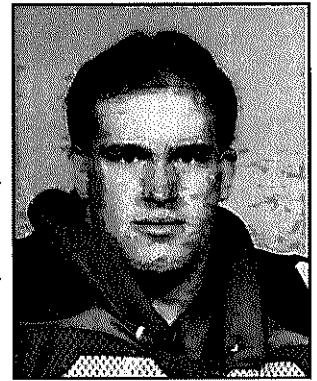
Mark Emmerling



OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2013



Blaine Rose



Blaine Rose

Blaine Rose (Stanton High School, Class of 1984). In its heyday, Stanton boasted some of the premier athletes in the Ohio Valley, but none were better than Rose. He was a three-sport standout, who possessed decathlete-like talents in track while also skilled enough to earn a Division I football scholarship.

Rose could virtually do it all, whether on the gridiron, basketball court or in the track arena. When the dust settled on his success-laden prep career, Rose opted to continue his athletic and academic career at the University of Maryland, where he enjoyed a superb football career.

The 6 ft. 5, 210-pounder was Stanton's only three-sports all-Valley first-team selection. He was also selected by *The Intelligencer* as the 1983-84 Ohio Valley All-Sports athlete of the year.

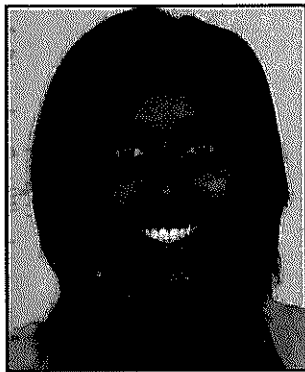
Rose was a three-year starter in football, starring as a tight end and defensive end. He was selected as captain of the all-Valley Small School team as a senior, a season in which he collected more than 100 tackles and caught 23 passes for four touchdowns in a ground-oriented offense.

Rose used his great size and athleticism to sparkle in basketball, finishing his career with 1,052 points. He was accorded first-team all-OVAC and all-valley plaudits while being named third-team all-Ohio. He averaged 18.1 points and 14.9 rebounds that campaign as Stanton finished with a sparkling 17-4 mark.

Rose earned the rare distinction of being a three-year all-Valley track selection. He excelled as a discus thrower, pole vaulter, high jumper while lending his speed to Red Raiders' relay teams. He was a 13-foot pole vaulter which was remarkable for his size while also tossing the discus 145 feet, winning multiple OVAC titles in those events.

After picking up his Stanton diploma, Rose matriculated to Maryland, lettering four years for the Terrapins. He was the backup tight end his first two years before landing the starting spot as a junior. By the time he was a senior, Rose had blossomed into a 6 ft. 5, 260-pounder which resulted him moving to a starting guard slot. The move paid dividends as it earned him entry into the NFL. He was on the New England Patriots' taxi squad in 1990 and the Miami Dolphins' taxi squad in 1991. Rose's pro football days ended in 1992 when he played for the Orlando Thunder of the World Football League.

Sylvia Crawley



Sylvia Crawley

Sylvia Crawley (Steubenville High School, Class of 1990). Utilizing her 6 ft. 4 frame, there wasn't much this Big Red product couldn't do on a basketball floor.

Playing primarily at center, Crawley developed into one of the best post players Steubenville and the Ohio Valley has ever seen. A three-year letterwinner, Crawley enjoyed her finest campaign as a senior when she averaged 17.9 points a game and led the Ohio Valley with 19.4 rebounds and an astounding 7.3 blocked shots. Crawley, who also lettered in track and field, ended her prep career with 978 points, 966 rebounds and 358 blocked shots.

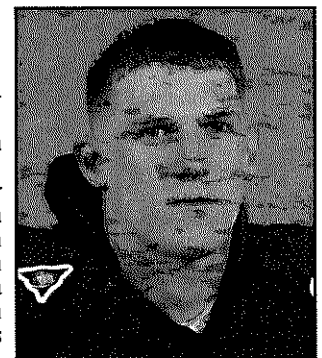
For her efforts, Crawley was twice named to the all-OVAC Class AAA first team and she captained the Ohio-side all-Valley squad as a senior after earning second team honors as a junior.

While scoring, rebounding and blocking shots at will, the recruiting picked up steam for Crawley, who received offers from North Carolina State, Indiana, Texas A&M, Minnesota and numerous others, but she settled on the University of North Carolina. For the Tar Heels, Crawley scored 1,158 points, grabbed 582 rebounds and blocked 123 shots, while starting 101 career games. Her crowning achievement, however, came as a senior when she was named team captain and helped lead UNC to a 33-2 record and the NCAA National Championship. Crawley averaged 13.6 points and 5.2 rebounds per game that season. Crawley was named ACC Defensive Player of the Year three times. She was an alternate for the U.S. Olympic Team in 1996 and played on the national team for the 1999 U.S. Pan-Am Games and in the World

University Games. North Carolina retired Crawley's number (00) and it's just one of 11 jerseys to hang from the rafters in Carmichael Arena.

Crawley's hoop career continued professionally. She played 12 seasons in 16 different countries. She played in the now defunct ABL for five years and then after playing in Europe, she played three seasons in the WNBA. During her time with the Portland Power in the ABL, Crawley won a slam dunk contest with a blind-folded dunk. After her playing career, Crawley got into coaching. She served as an assistant at UNC and Fordham before being hired as the head coach at Ohio University. She held that post for two seasons and then accepted the Boston College job, resigning in March of 2012 citing health reasons.

Ben Taylor



Ben Taylor

Ben Taylor (Bellaire High School, Class of 1997). There's tough and then there's the way this Big Reds' all-Ohioan played throughout his career.

It didn't matter what side of the ball, Taylor was heavily involved in the success of the Big Reds' football program in the mid 1990s. During Taylor's career, in which he earned three letters, the Big Reds compiled a 35-3 record.

Two of those three losses came in the Ohio Division IV State Championship Game. During those seasons, Taylor saw time at linebacker, safety and wide receiver for Coach John Magistro's squad. Taylor, who was a first team all-Ohioan and a "Mr. Football" finalists as a senior, finished his career with 348 tackles and 12 interceptions on defense. He was also a mainstay in the passing game, catching 130 passes for 1,679 yards and 12 touchdowns in his career. He was also an outstanding punter. He also owns the Bellaire single-season record for receptions in a season (70) and career. His career tackle number ranks third in Bellaire history and his 192 tackles in a season ranks second. His receiving yardage is fourth. Taylor was chosen for the Ohio North-South All-Star Game and was chosen as a team captain. He also took part in the OVAC All-Star Game and captained that squad.

He landed a scholarship at Virginia Tech and shined for four years. The Hokies were 39-9 during Taylor's career in Blacksburg. En route to being named a semifinalist for the Butkus Award, which goes to the nation's premier collegiate linebacker, Taylor recorded 318 tackles and seven career sacks. He was twice named all-American and all-Big East. After finishing the regular season undefeated in 1999, Taylor and the Hokies (who had Michael Vick at quarterback) played in the Sugar Bowl for the BCS National Championship against Florida State. The Hokies lost, 46-29. Taylor was chosen for the East-West Shrine Game after the 2001 season. He was then drafted in 2002 by the Cleveland Browns in the fourth round. He spent four seasons at linebacker with the Browns and then signed with the Green Bay Packers in 2006, but injuries ended his professional playing career. All told, he recorded 218 career tackles in the NFL and had one interception.

Along with Taylor's football abilities, he was a member of two OVAC Championship basketball teams coached by OVAC Hall of Famer Gene Ammirante. The 1997 Big Reds' hoop squad won the district title. Taylor also played baseball early in his prep career and then ran track as a sprinter.

Taylor was inducted to the Bellaire High School Hall of Fame in 2005.



OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2013



Bethany Piccolini

Bethany Piccolini (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 2001). It didn't matter the sport, this Lady Red Devils' product shined. A mainstay in basketball and a state champion in track and field, it was in volleyball where Piccolini really left her mark on the Lady Red Devils' athletic program.

Piccolini was a four-year letterwinner for the Lady Red Devils, earning the team's Most Valuable Player honor both as a junior and senior. Leading the Lady Devils in nearly every statistical category, Piccolini was named first-team all-Ohio as a senior. On top of the honor, Piccolini was named the District 12 Player of the Year and was a first team all-OVAC selection. She also captained the inaugural all-Times Leader team as a senior. As a junior, Piccolini earned first-team District 12, all-OVAC first team and honorable mention all-Ohio.

Her prowess in volleyball earned her a scholarship to Eastern Michigan University where she was a four-year letterwinner. She ranks 13th in EMU career rankings in both kills and attempts and is eighth in block assists. Her hitting percentage of .778 ranks third and she once had 10 blocks in a match, which is tied for 11th.

In track, Piccolini utilized her jumping ability as a high and long jumper. She won the Division II state title in both events. She was a long jump champion as a junior and finished second that season in the high jump. Piccolini's all-time best high jump of 5 ft. 9 is still the Division II, Region 7 record as well as the best-ever in the Ohio Valley. As a senior, Piccolini brought home the state gold in the high jump, clearing 5 ft. 7. Her mark of 18 ft. 1/2 in., which ranks third all-time in the Ohio Valley, was good enough for third place. She also qualified to the state meet in the 400 once and ran on sprint relays for the Lady Red Devils that also qualified for the state meet. Piccolini was also a five-time OVAC champion.

She was chosen to take part in the prestigious Midwest Meet of Champions, placing second in the long jump, fourth in the high jump and sixth in the 400. While at EMU, Piccolini joined the Eagles' track team and finished fifth in the Mid-American Conference Outdoor Championship Meet in the high jump.

On the basketball court, Piccolini scored more than 1,000 points in her career and earned first-team all-Ohio as a senior when she scored 18 points a game. She was first-team all-OVAC as a senior and she was also chosen for the OVAC All-Star Game. While earning four letters, she was twice named team MVP.

Piccolini graduated from Eastern Michigan in 2006 with a degree in Sports Medicine-Exercise Science. She then earned a doctorate of Physical Therapy from Wheeling Jesuit University in 2008.



Bethany Piccolini

Jedidiah Stephen



Jedidiah Stephen

Jedidiah Stephen (Shenandoah High School, Class of 2002). There isn't a sport you can name that this former Zep didn't shine in during his high school career. While earning all-Ohio in football and basketball, it was on the baseball diamond where Stephen experienced his greatest success.

A four-year starter for the Zeps, Stephen was one of the finest hitters the Ohio Valley has ever seen. He led the Zeps in hitting as a senior at .541, which still stands as the school's all-time best. For his career, Stephen batted .475. He also had significant pop in his bat as evidenced by the 12 home runs he hit as a senior, which ranked second in Ohio that season.

Stephen made an impact early in his baseball career, leading the Zeps in home runs (6) and average (.474) as a freshman. He was named to the all-Eastern District team three times and earned first-team all-Ohio as a senior. Along with that, he was named all-OVAC and all-PVC numerous times during his career. As a senior, he was named OVAC Class AAA Player of the Year and was chosen for the Mizuno All-Star Team. He was a four-time recipient of the "Golden Bat Award."

Stephen signed a baseball scholarship with The Ohio State University and made an instant impact. A four-year letterman, he started 195 games at third base and shortstop and batted .286 for his career. He had 135 hits, 18 home runs, 95 RBI, scored 83 runs and drew 40 walks. A multiple-time all-Academic Big Ten selection, he was named second team all-conference as a senior. He had a brief stint as a professional. He was drafted in the eighth round of the Major League Baseball Draft by the Baltimore Orioles.

Before settling strictly on baseball, Stephen was a four-year letterman in football. An outstanding punter and defensive back, Stephen had a brilliant senior season at quarterback, earning first-team all-Ohio, all-OVAC, all-PVC and an invitation to both the North-South and OVAC All-Star Games. He finished his prep career with 4,110 yards and 42 touchdowns passing. He ran for 1,992 yards and 32 touchdowns. On the defensive side, he picked off 19 passes.

On the basketball court, Stephen helped guide the Zeps to a 50-17 record during his career. He filled it up for 25 points a game as a senior and finished his career with 1,278 points. He scored 549 of those during his final campaign, including a single-game high of 55. Stephen was a first-team all-Ohioan as a senior and earned Ohio Division III State Player of the Year honors to go along with Eastern District Player of the Year, all-OVAC and all-PVC. He was also the Eastern District nominee for "Mr. Basketball" and took part in both the North-South and OVAC All-Star Games.

- Football
- Volleyball
- Boys' Cross Country
- Girls' Cross Country
- Girls' Tennis
- Golf
- Boys' Soccer
- Girls' Soccer
- Boys' Basketball
- Girls' Basketball

Ohio Valley Athletic Conference



OVAC



- Boys' Swimming
- Girls' Swimming
- Cheerleading
- Wrestling
- Baseball
- Softball
- Boys' Track
- Girls' Track
- Boys' Tennis

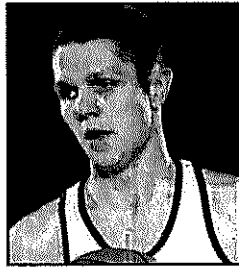
Ohio Valley Athletic Conference



LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2013



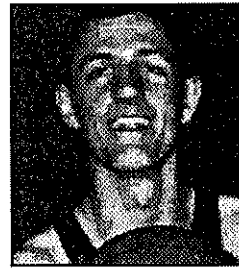
**John 'Zip'
Behen**



**Ken
Cunningham**



**Russell 'Tuss'
Edwards**



**Bob
Hugh**



**Joel
Jones**

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

John 'Zip' Behen (Cambridge High School, Class of 1918). The former Bobcat was one of the first 1,000-point scorers in Ohio, and Ohio Valley, hoops history. He finished his four-year high school career with 1,271 points, which still ranks fifth on the all-time Bobcat scoring charts.

In his senior season, Behen rewrote school and Ohio Valley records by scoring 68 points against Woodsfield. The mark remains as the Bobcats' single-game school record and was the standard for Ohio Valley schools until Yorkville's Ken Alessi, a charter member of the OVAC Hall of Fame, broke the record with 70 points in 1949 versus Shadyside.

Behen wound up with 454 points as a senior while leading the Bobcats to a second straight 18-2 record.

As a junior, he scored 386 points. His sophomore total for a 10-10 record team was 302 points. He started his career as a freshman with 129 points for a 16-2 record squad. During his four-year career, the Bobcats posted a combined 62-16 record.

Behen played one season at West Virginia University, lettering as a freshman forward and scoring 123 points for an 8.2 per game average.

In 2007, Cambridge High School retired Behen's jersey number 18.

Ken Cunningham (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1961). A three-sport Potter athlete, he earned All-Ohio honors in basketball and football and was the Ohio High School Basketball Player of the Year selection for 1960-61 by The Associated Press, the only Potter ever accorded the honor. He also was selected to the Scholastic Coach All-American team.

During his prep career, Cunningham became the Potters' all-time leading scorer in basketball, including a school-record 41 points in a game while scoring 439 season points for a 24-point per game average. He also led the Potters in scoring as a sophomore and junior.

In football, he was a quarterback-defensive back and earned All-Ohio and team Most Valuable Player honors in 1960 while also being honored on the All-Eastern Ohio and All-County selections. He also played three baseball seasons for the Potters.

He accepted a basketball scholarship to the 1961 NCAA national champion University of Cincinnati and the Bearcats repeated as titlist in 1962 when he was a freshman. As a sophomore on the varsity, Cincinnati went 26-2 and finished as NCAA runner-up to Loyola-Chicago.

Cunningham led the Bearcats in assists as a junior and the three-year letterman was elected team captain as a senior.

He later returned to Cincinnati as an assistant coach and was head coach at Akron University for three seasons before leaving the coaching ranks. He currently resides in Stow, Ohio.

Russell 'Tuss' Edwards (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1923). He was an honored, record-setting Purple Rider athlete who served as team captain of football, basketball and baseball as a senior. He was an All-Valley halfback as a senior after two years as an All-Valley end. In his senior season, he set record which was listed as an Ohio Valley record for several years. He scored 56 points on eight touchdowns plus eight conversion kicks in an 81-0 blanking of Coshocton.

Edwards enrolled at Washington & Jefferson College, then a "major college" football power under coach John Heisman, for whom the Heisman Trophy is named. He played his final three years as a regular end for coaches Allie Miller and Andy Kerr. As a senior, he was All-East and earned some second team All-America honors.

After rejecting an offer to play pro football with the Philadelphia Yellow Jackets, he returned to the Ohio Valley to coach high school at Adena, Warwood and Linsly. At Adena, his 1927 football team went 10-0, the girls' basketball team was 18-0 and the boys' hoop team had a winning season. He coached OVAC Legends honoree Jim (Monk) Moscrip, a Stanford University All-American who started in three Rose Bowls, at Adena. His 1930 Linsly boys' basketball team took a 21-0 record to Chicago to compete in the National Scholastic Basketball Tournament. The Cadets won two games before bowing in the quarterfinals.

He helped found the Wheeling Midget Baseball League in 1950 and served as president from 1953-68. He was named Wheeling Jaycees' Citizen of the Year in 1956. In 1984, he was inducted into the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame.

Bob Hugh (Scio High School, Class of 1950). The most honored athlete in Scio High history, he set school and Harrison County basketball scoring records which remain six decades later. He was the second Eastern Ohio athlete to twice earn first team, five-player Associated Press All-Ohio Class B honors (the first was one year earlier by OVAC charter Hall of Famer Ken Alessi of Yorkville). He was the second-leading Ohio Class B scorer both his junior and senior years. He scored 744 points in 30 games as a junior, second best in Ohio to Alessi. Hugh scored 1,386 points in 55 games for an average of 25 points during his last two seasons.

The 6-foot-3 forward scored a school, and current Harrison County, record 60 points in a 96-50 win over New Athens. He also scored 50 in an earlier 96-36 rout of New Athens.

In his senior season, he led the Panthers to their best-ever season of 24-1. Scio won its first 24 games, and the Harrison County and sectional tournaments, before bowing to Strasburg in the district. In his four seasons on the varsity, Scio went 88-13 with records of 24-1, 26-4 and a regional tourney berth, 22-5 and 16-3.

Hugh also played on the Scio six-man football team which went unbeaten (9-0) in 1949 and 8-0 in 1947. The four-year record was 26-5-1.

He played freshman basketball at Ohio University.

Joel Jones (Weirton Dunbar High School, Class of 1954). The first graduate of a segregated high school to be honored by the OVAC, he was a three-season football standout for the Raiders before competing in the Big Ten Conference as a member of a nationally-ranked Michigan State University team.

At Dunbar, the 6-foot-1, 215-pound Jones was a fullback for Coach Jim Wares from 1950-53 and served as captain of the once-beaten 1953 teams which defeated the other Ohio Valley segregated school, Lincoln of Wheeling, twice by 28-6 and 19-0. He was the team's leading scorer and ground-gainer his last two seasons and was a multiple-year all-star.

In an era when many college athletic teams were segregated, his talents were noticed by scouts from Penn State, Indiana and West Virginia State, then a national contender in the black college ranks. He enrolled on his own at Michigan State and walked on to the football team. In his four seasons at the school, the Spartans played in two Rose Bowl games including the 17-14 win over UCLA on Jan. 1, 1956 with Jones at defensive end. He lettered two seasons and played guard and tackle in the fall of 1956 when he earned some all-star recognition.

The Spartans were 9-1 in 1955 and 7-2 in 1956 with Jones in the lineup.

After college, he remained in Michigan, where he currently resides, as a high school educator and was a counselor at Henry Ford High School in Detroit.



MINIMUM ENTRY LEVELS FOR OVAC HALL OF FAME



1. MINIMUM ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS FOR COACHES:

Cannot be inducted until you have been retired or are deceased
Only wins achieved at OVAC schools counts in totals
Wins/titles can be in boys and girls combined, but must be in the same sport.

- Baseball: 250 wins
- Basketball: 250 wins
- Cheering: 5 OVAC titles
- Cross Country: 5 OVAC titles
- Football: 125 wins
- Golf: 5 OVAC titles
- Soccer: 125 wins
- Softball: 250 wins
- Swimming: 5 OVAC titles
- Tennis: 5 OVAC titles
- Track: 5 OVAC titles
- Volleyball: 250 wins
- Wrestling: 5 OVAC Class Tournament Titles

2. MINIMUM ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFICIALS:

Cannot be inducted until you have been retired or are deceased
25 years of service

3. MINIMUM ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS FOR MEDIA:

Can be inducted anytime
25 years of service
Contributions to the OVAC

4. MINIMUM ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS FOR OVAC FAMILY:

Executive Board, officers, meet directors, etc.
Open-ended

5. MINIMUM ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTRIBUTORS:

Includes people who have financially backed Conference as well as people who have been successful in the college/pro ranks but don't meet the criteria in other categories
Open-ended

6. MINIMUM ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS FOR ATHLETES:

Must be out of school 10 years
Primary consideration focuses on accomplishments in the OVAC; however, college and professional accomplishments will enhance the athlete's resume

- BASEBALL:** Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
- BASKETBALL:** Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
- CHEERING:** Performance on multiple OVAC and/or State championships
- CROSS COUNTRY:** Multiple individual OVAC and/or State championships
- FOOTBALL:** Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
- GOLF:** Multiple individual OVAC and/or State championships
- SOCCER:** Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
- SOFTBALL:** Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
- SWIMMING:** Multiple individual OVAC and/or State championships
- TENNIS:** Multiple individual OVAC and/or State championships
- TRACK:** Multiple individual OVAC and/or State championships
- VOLLEYBALL:** Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
- WRESTLING:** Multiple individual OVAC and/or State championships





OVAC Hall of Fame



Gallery of Previous Inductees

Dan Abramowicz (Class of 2012)
Ken Alessi (Class of 2004)
Gene Ammirante (Class of 2012)
Tim Anderson (Class of 2009)
Sam Andy (Class of 2007)
Wendy Baker (Class of 2006)
Ashley Battle (Class of 2011)
Frank Baxter (Class of 2010)
Tom 'Bear' Bechtel (Class of 2012)
Nick Bedway (Class of 2007)
Joanna Bernabei (Class of 2010)
Paul 'Bud' Billiard (Class of 2006)
Rick Boron (Class of 2011)
David Bosley (Class of 2009)
Less Browne (Class of 2010)
Fred Bruney (Class of 2010)
Ed Burgy (Class of 2006)
Bob Burton (Class of 2005)
Burdell 'Jimmy' Carey (Class of 2012)
Gene Cattane (Class of 2007)
Mark Cisar (Class of 2008)
Willie Clay (Class of 2011)
Plennie Clutter (Class of 2011)
Marty Coyne (Class of 2009)
John Craig (Class of 2008)
Suzie Dailer (Class of 2008)
Harold 'Doc' Daugherty (Class of 2009)
Bill Davies (Class of 2010)
Dee Davis (Class of 2005)
Jose Davis (Class of 2007)
Mike Dawson (Class of 2009)
C.R. 'Dick' Dei (Class of 2011)
Rick DeLuca (Class of 2010)
Randy Donahue (Class of 2011)
Charles 'Red' Donley (Class of 2012)
Doug Donley (Class of 2004)
Bobby Douglas (Class of 2004)
Connie Doutt (Class of 2008)
Larry Duck (Class of 2010)
Richard 'Dick' Edge (Class of 2009)
Amber Ellison (Class of 2012)
Chris Enochs (Class of 2007)
John 'Fuzzy' Filliez (Class of 2005)
Don Fleming (Class of 2007)
Gene Ford (Class of 2009)
Geno Ford (Class of 2004)
Joe Fortunato (Class of 2007)
Jim Foti (Class of 2004)
Bob Gain (Class of 2006)
Joey Galloway (Class of 2005)
Amy Gamble (Class of 2004)
Matt Gaudio (Class of 2005)
Cal Giffin (Class of 2006)
Chester Grossi (Class of 2005)
Alex Groza (Class of 2005)
Richard 'Lefty' Hall (Class of 2006)

John 'Streaky' Haloszka (Class of 2010)
Melissa Hammond (Class of 2010)
Jim Hanna (Class of 2009)
Mitch Hannahs (Class of 2004)
T.J. Hannig (Class of 2011)
John Havlicek (Class of 2004)
Bob Hedmond (Class of 2008)
Art Hehr (Class of 2012)
Walter Heil (Class of 2005)
Bill Hinegardner (Class of 2007)
Allan Hornyak (Class of 2004)
Kenny Howell (Class of 2012)
Chuck Howley (Class of 2005)
Doug Huff (Class of 2005)
Bob Hummell (Class of 2006)
Jennifer Hyland-Brown (Class of 2007)
Bob Jeter (Class of 2011)
Bill Jobko (Class of 2009)
Henry Josefczyk (Class of 2010)
Donna Joseph (Class of 2007)
Eudie Joseph (Class of 2012)
Tom Keane (Class of 2008)
Charlie Keenan (Class of 2009)
Dick Kerwood (Class of 2012)
Bob Kettlewell (Class of 2008)
John Kirker (Class of 2011)
George Kovalick (Class of 2004)
Mike Kovalick (Class of 2008)
Bob Kelley (Class of 2007)
Bill Kennedy (Class of 2008)
Earl Klevins (Class of 2007)
Henry 'Hank' Lazasz (Class of 2009)
John Leon (Class of 2007)
Joe Maroon (Class of 2012)
Edgar Martin (Class of 2011)
Ron Mauck (Class of 2006)
Bill Mazeroski (Class of 2004)
Bo McConaughy (Class of 2007)
Jim McCormick (Class of 2011)
Lance Mehl (Class of 2005)
Craig Miller (Class of 2011)
Dick Miller (Class of 2005)
Pat Miller (Class of 2011)
Dr. Vince Monseau (Class of 2009)
Tim Moxley (Class of 2009)
Nick Mumley (Class of 2008)
Rudy Mumley (Class of 2005)
Samuel A. Mumley (Class of 2004)
A. Wilson Murrar (Class of 2004)
Boyd Nelson (Class of 2006)
Joe Niekro (Class of 2010)
Phil Niekro (Class of 2006)
Bill Paolisso (Class of 2009)
Lee Patrone (Class of 2006)
Stephanie Petho (Class of 2004)
Jay Peterson (Class of 2008)

Joe Pettini (Class of 2008)
Charles E. Petty (Class of 2011)
Cal Pokas (Class of 2004)
Richard L. 'Dick' Potts (Class of 2004)
Warren Pugh (Class of 2006)
Vicki Pullie-Stokes (Class of 2004)
Anthony Reed (Class of 2007)
John Reger (Class of 2007)
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Don Sutherin (Class of 2010)
Dennis Swearingen (Class of 2006)
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Brian Swisher (Class of 2005)
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Mark Thompson (Class of 2009)
Richard 'Dick' Thurnes (Class of 2011)
Agnes Timmons (Class of 2005)
Bill Van Horne (Class of 2004)
Sharon Vincent (Class of 2011)
Shawn Vincent (Class of 2012)
John Vrotsos (Class of 2005)
Charles 'Chuck' Watt (Class of 2010)
Alex Welker (Class of 2012)
Billy West (Class of 2006)
Denver Williams (Class of 2012)
Ron 'Fritz' Williams (Class of 2004)
Harry Wilson (Class of 2006)
Quincy Wilson (Class of 2011)
Otis Winston (Class of 2009)
Mike Wright (Class of 2010)
Tom Yakubowski (Class of 2008)



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Class of 2004

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

George Kovalick (OVAC 'Family')

George E. Kovalick (Bridgeport High School), recognized as the "father" of high school wrestling in the Ohio Valley. Kovalick previously has been honored with membership in numerous halls of fame, including those at Kent State University; the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association; Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Club; West Liberty State College; Ohio Athletic Directors and the Ohio Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Kovalick was selected as the first recipient (1976) of the prestigious OVAC Wrestling Committee's prestigious "Mr. Mat Award," an honor given annually to an individual for outstanding contributions to the sport of wrestling.

Kovalick directed championship teams in football, baseball and wrestling at both the intercollegiate and interscholastic levels during an enormously-successful 28-year coaching career.

Among the athletes he tutored in high school or college were all-time Ohio Valley greats John Havlicek, Phil and Joe Niekro, and Bobby Douglas. In baseball, Kovalick coached the Hilltoppers to the 1964 NAIA baseball championship, the only national title ever captured by the school. He also had West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championship teams at West Liberty in football, wrestling and baseball.

Kovalick not only was one of the founders of the OVAC Wrestling Tournament, but his Bridgeport grapplers won the first seven conference championships. In 1959, Kovalick's Bulldogs made history by becoming the first school outside the Cleveland area since 1942 to win an Ohio state wrestling title since 1942 to win an Ohio state wrestling title since.

Kovalick's other OVAC coaching stops were at Moundsville, Bellaire and Weir high schools. His 1973 Weir High football team was a state runner-up, losing to East Bank in the Class AAA state final. He retired from coaching in 1978 but then served as athletic director at Bellaire until the time of his death in 1984.

He was OVAC Baseball Director for many years and also directed the conference's mat championship event. Along with his great coaching knowledge, Kovalick was also recognized as a marvelous competitor, meticulous organizer and a man with an enormous capacity for work.



Samuel A. Mumley (OVAC 'Family')

Samuel A. Mumley (Benwood Union High School) served two terms — covering a total of 32 years — as executive secretary of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference. During the second term which lasted until his death in 1999, Mumley helped resurrect the bi-state league from the brink of bankruptcy to its current standing as one of the great high school conferences in the entire country.

Some of the many highlights from his stewardship included: Helping to establish the OVAC Foundation as a major fund-raising arm for the conference; Securing NCAA certification for the Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic; Attracting major financial sponsors to support all of the OVAC programs, including the Banquet of Champions, an awards dinner that honors more than 1,000 athletes each spring and provides more than \$20,000 annually in scholarships; Establishing the all-star basketball game which was later renamed as the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic.

Mumley's response to a call of duty went beyond the OVAC as he was one of the founders of the Wheeling Super Six Committee, which has hosted the West Virginia state championship football games at Wheeling Island Stadium since 1994. He also helped secure the West Virginia state soccer championships for the city. Five years after his death, the fruition of another one of his dreams occurred when an artificial grass playing surface was installed at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Although awards were never important to Mumley, he was the recipient of numerous honors. The major awards presented to him included: The National Federation of Officials Outstanding Service Award; Dapper Dan Man of the year; OVAC Man of the Year; and Outstanding West Virginian.

He was a basketball official for 23 years, an assistant coach, athletic trainer and athletic director at several area schools, including Cameron, The Linsly School and St. Clairsville. He was also a trainer at his college alma mater, the University of Maryland, along with the Washington Redskins and Philadelphia Eagles. Mumley served on the state of Ohio Board of Equity, was a member of the St. Clairsville Board of Education and a special liaison for the Mental Retardation Board and School of Hope.



Bill Van Horne (Media)

Bill Van Horne (Martins Ferry High School), was the dean of Ohio Valley sports-writers during a legendary newspaper career that spanned 53 years.

Van Horne was sports editor of *The Times Leader* for 25 years and the *Wheeling News-Register* for 28 years, during which time he was recognized by his peers as the most informational and influential writer in Ohio Valley history.

His work with the OVAC over the years was especially instrumental in the success of the wrestling, track and field and cross-country. Van Horne was the second recipient of wrestling's "Mr. Mat" Award in 1977 and he also received the Calvin Giffin Memorial Track Award.

His columns, "Van Horne on Sports," were masterpiece chronicles of the lives of others. A giant in his field and a role model for aspiring writers, Van Horne was admired and respected for his integrity, dedication, fairness, knowledge and compassion.

Van Horne's coverage and support for events like the Wheeling Distance Race (now The Ogden Newspapers 20K Classic), the West Virginia Tennis Open and the (now defunct) Wheeling LPGA Classic helped those events reach prominence in our area. His backing also was a factor in the popularity enjoyed by the Wheeling Ironmen, Wheeling Blues and Wheeling Thunderbirds (now the Wheeling Nailers), professional football, basketball and hockey teams.

Numerous awards and honors were bestowed on Van Horne. The Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club named him Man of the Year in 1993; he was selected as the West Virginia Sportsman of the Year three times; received the Gene Morehouse Memorial Award for contributions in sportswriting throughout the Mountain State; and he was inducted into numerous halls of fame. Among those were the Wheeling Hall of Fame; the Lou Holtz Upper Ohio Valley Hall of Fame; Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame, Minor League Pro Football Hall of Fame and the Wheeling-Oglebay Tennis Club Hall of Fame. He served as president of the West Virginia Sports Writers Association and was a member of the Football Writers of America. Bill was the first sports-writer from West Virginia to be elected to the Football Writers Board of Directors. He also served as state chairman for the Heisman Trophy selection committee.



Cal Pokas (Media)

Cal Pokas (Bellaire High School) was another giant in the sports writing profession who cut his eye teeth under Bill Van Horne and developed into one of the area's true newspaper greats in his own right.

Pokas, who died in 2000, was employed for 40 years at *The Times Leader*, including 29 memorable years for Ohio Valley sports fans as the sports editor. He also was assistant sports editor, a courthouse and political reporter and Martins Ferry City Editor. Even after his retirement, Cal continued to contribute to his newspaper's sports pages with his weekly "Eye on the Bucks" column about Ohio State football. Pokas also personally saw to it that many of the so-called minor sports such as cross-country, track and volleyball, received their share of coverage in his newspaper.

Pokas was deeply interested in the OVAC throughout his career and he devoted much of his spare time to serving on committees for the Rudy Mumley Charity Football All-Star Classic, along with compiling standings for the football and basketball championship races. He also served on a media relations committee for the bi-state league.

Pokas had a term as president of the Ohio Prep Sports Writers Association, and was commissioner of the Ohio Valley Baseball League for 23 years. His interests in the community went beyond the world of sports as Pokas served on an advisory board for the Salvation Army; was Belmont County Chairman of the Multiple Sclerosis Association; and filled a seat on the Martins Ferry Civil Service Commission for 32 years until his death.

Pokas' honors were numerous. In 1960 he was presented a Community Service Award by United Press International. The Ohio Prep Sports Writers Association named him Sports Writer of the Year in 1976 and he was given a Distinguished Service Award from the Ohio Association of Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches.

Cal was selected to the Ohio Prep Sports Writers Hall of Fame and the UPI Sports Editors Association Hall of Fame. He also received service awards from the Ohio Valley Golf Coaches Association, the OVAC, Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association, Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame; and he was honored to be presented the first Sportsmanship Edits and Integrity Award for the Eastern District from the OHSAA. Pokas was a "Mr. Mat" award honoree at the OVAC Wrestling Tournament, along with being selected for Bellaire High School's Wall of Fame. He was named as the Honorary Referee for the Wheeling Park Track Classic because of contributions to Ohio Valley youth.



Richard L. 'Dick' Potts (Coaches)

Richard L. "Dick" Potts finished his career as the Ohio Valley's all-time winningest basketball coach with 589 career victories.

Inducted into the Ohio High School Hall of Fame in 1983 by the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association, Potts coached a total of 40 seasons, all of which were spent in Monroe County. He began in 1951 at Bethel High School. His 1957 Blackhaws came out of the Monroe County hills at tournament time and advanced all the way to the Ohio Class A state finals where they lost by a single point. At the time the school had just 13 boys in grades nine through 12 and all but one of the male students was on the basketball team.

In seven years at Bethel, his teams won more than 20 games five times, including the 27-2 miracle team that played in the state tournament.

When the school was taken into the Skyvue consolidation after the '58 campaign, Potts was named coach of the Golden Hawks where he spent four years before moving on to River High in 1963. He remained at the Pilots' helm through the 1991 season.

The former Hannibal High School athlete was named in 1981 as the recipient of the prestigious Ohio Paul Walker Award, given in memory of Jerry Lucas' high school coach at Middletown, Ohio. Walker was the Buckeye State's all-time winningest coach.

The navy veteran, Potts was the first OVAC coach to reach the 500-win plateau in basketball, reaching that goal with a win over Monroe County rival Woodsfield in 1983.

Considered a master strategist and teacher of the game, Potts may have been at his best during critical situations in post-season play. His teams won seven overtime tournament games, including a nine-OT win achieved by River against Morgan in Class AA sectional play.



Jim Foti (Coaches)

Jim Foti was a basketball coach for 38 years and a head football mentor for 20 seasons. He already has been inducted into the City of Wheeling, West Virginia Sports Writers Association, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and John Carroll University's Halls of Fame.

Foti, a native of Jamestown, N.Y., came to the area in 1942 after having coached at Erie (Pa.) Prep. He coached basketball at Warwood, Wheeling Central Catholic and Bellaire. Overall, Foti posted 466 varsity basketball victories, all but 26 coming at OVAC schools. He coached Warwood High to seven West Virginia regional championships and his 1967 Viking squad won the state title. In 1976, his final year as a head coach and the last season before the Ohio County consolidation, Foti's Vikings advanced to the state tournament semifinals before being eliminated. The 1975 team played in the state championship game. He had five W.Va. Catholic title-winning teams at Wheeling Central and guided his squads to OVAC championships in three divisions.

In 1943, Foti had a 24-3 record team at Central, which lost by a point while playing in the Eastern Catholic championships held at Newport, R.I.

Foti's football coaching career produced another 124 victories, including a 90-106-3 record at Warwood, where the Class AA school was saddled with playing one of the most competitive schedules in the area. His 1943 Wheeling Central football team went 9-1 and gained a Steel Bowl berth, where it lost a 20-19 thriller to Rochester, Pa., at Steubenville.

Foti also coached semi-professional basketball for two years as he directed the Wheeling Puritans in 1947 and '48.

Foti coached several outstanding athletes during his distinguished career. Among the Central standouts were James "Dubie" Dailer and Bill Gompers, both of whom went on to play at Notre Dame; Jack McConville, Alabama; Pete Schuetz, Duquesne; and Paul Schuetz, Northwestern. At Warwood he had a role in the development of Chuck Howley, former WYU and Dallas Cowboys' great; Bob Dunlevy (WVU), and basketball standouts Bob Ayers (VM), Bill Kennedy (Arizona State) and Greg Church (Army).



Evan Reese (Officials)

Evan Reese (Follansbee High School) served as an area high school and college arbiter for more than 50 years. He also officiated football in the Canadian League, the United Football League and the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

Reese was OVAC Commissioner for both football and basketball officials and he was president of the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WVIAC) officials in both sports. He worked numerous state and conference tournament championship events throughout his long and storied career.

Reese also was a member of the West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission Advisory Board and he was secretary of the Eastern District Board of Football and Basketball Officials. For many years, he was on the basketball rules committee in the Eastern District.

Today's Ohio Valley officials remember Evan as someone who had a tremendous influence on up-and-coming referees.



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

A. Wilson Murray (Official)



A. Wilson Murray (Wheeling High School) officiated high school basketball, football, baseball and track for 30 years, from 1946 through 1975. He actually began his officiating career in 1942, the year after he graduated from Wheeling High School. Murray entered the service in 1942 and did not return home until the after World War II had ended.

He worked numerous sectional, district, regional and finals in Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania. He also officiated basketball for 12 years in the Mid-American Conference and the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Murray was a referee in the old United Football League in the days of the Wheeling Ironmen professional football team.

He served on the OVAC Executive Board and served for 10 years as the commissioner of the bi-state league's basketball officials. He later was appointed the OVAC's commissioner of football officials, a post he held from 1977 until retiring in 1985. In 1977, he was elected treasurer of the Ohio High School Athletic Association's Commissioners.

Murray officiated six West Virginia state tournaments and two WVAC tournaments. The former City of Wheeling Treasurer was a three-year football and basketball letterman at Wheeling High School. He played on the Wildcats' 1940 state championship basketball team.

Among the awards he was presented were: Ohio High School Athletic Association's Meritorious Award (1970); a West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission Award for his contributions to officiating in the Mountain West; Honorary Life Membership in the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials (1981); OVAC Exemplary Service Award (1981), and an Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club Achievement Award (1982). In 1989, he was selected as the first recipient of the Bobby Dawson Basketball Officials' Award presented at the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC Charity Basketball Classic.

Ken Alessi (Athlete - 1940s)



Ken Alessi (Yorkville High School) was a 5-7, 155-pound basketball guard from 1947-49. He still holds two all-time OVAC scoring records—1,142 points in 32 games as a senior and a career per-game point average of 31.0 for 66 games.

He was the first OVAC player to score 2,000 career points (2,047) after averaging a then-record 35.7 points a game and setting a mark of 70 points, including 31 goals, against Shady-side as a 1948-49 senior. That effort prompted the national exposure in "Ripley's Believe-It-Or-Not."

He also scored 65 points vs. Adena and 55 points vs. Dillonvale in back-to-back games. In one game, he converted 16 straight free throws. As a junior, Alessi scored 845 points in 30 games.

A two-time All-OVAC Class A and All-Ohio Class B honoree, he was the leading vote-getter in '49 when he was selected Ohio's Class B Player of the Year.

A three-spot prep standout, he was an All-Eastern Ohio football player as a two-way back and kicker, and he was a shortstop-pitcher in baseball.

Recruited by West Virginia University, he played three seasons (1950-52) and was the starting point guard two years. He led the team in assists as a sophomore while playing with 6-9 All-American Mark Workman.

In 1951, he scored 23 points in a home win over Wake Forest and tallied 18 in a 77-73 loss at Duke, which featured All-America guard Dick Groat, a future Pittsburgh Pirate infielder.

Alessi served as head basketball coach the final 12 seasons (1961-72) for alma mater Yorkville High before consolidation. His best team went 18-3 in 1962 and his 1970 team won an OVAC Class A crown. The '70 team featured Chuck Saus, who would surpass Alessi's career point total.

John Havlicek (Athlete - 1950s)



John Havlicek (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1958) was a three-sport high school honoree for the Bulldogs who later became one of Ohio State's basketball greats and was selected one of the 50 greatest NBA players.

In high school, the 6-5, 180-pounder was a two-time All-OVAC Class AA basketball performer as well as All-Ohio Class A. The Bulldogs won the OVAC AA crown in 1958.

An excellent rebounder and passer, he also scored 1,594 career points in 59 games and averaged more than 30 points per game the last two seasons. He led the OVAC in scoring as a junior with a 31.9-point norm, including a school record 53 in a 103-101 overtime win over Cadiz.

He played in the Ohio North-South All-Star game with Jerry Lucas. The two later led Ohio State to three straight NCAA championship games including a title their sophomore season of 1960.

He was an All-Eastern Ohio shortstop on two OVAC championship baseball teams and batted over .400. He also starred in American Legion baseball and later played first base for Ohio State.

In football, the All-OVAC quarterback was recruited by several colleges including Ohio State and West Virginia.

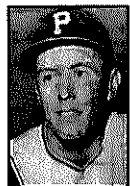
At Ohio State, the Buckeyes were 78-6 during his three varsity basketball seasons and he twice earned All-Big Ten Conference honors.

Havlicek was the No. 1 draft choice of the NBA Boston Celtics and was also selected by the NFL Cleveland Browns even though he never played in college. He played a few exhibition games as a wide receiver with the Browns before reporting to the Celtics, where he would become team captain and have his No. 17 jersey retired.

Nicknamed "Hondo", Havlicek retired in 1978 after 16 NBA seasons including eight Celtic championships. A 13-time All-Star, he is the Celtics' all-time leading scorer (26,395 points) and was the first NBA player to score 1,000 points in 16 consecutive seasons and, when he retired, Havlicek had played more regular season games than anyone in history. His career game averages were 20.8 points, 6.3 rebounds and 4.8 assists.

Besides the Basketball Hall and National High School Hall, he is a member of the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan and Ohio State Halls of Fame.

Bill Mazerowski (Athlete - 1950s)



Bill Mazerowski (Warren Consolidated High School, Class of 1954) is best known for his baseball feats, but the 5-11 basketball center also led the OVAC in scoring with a 27.6 per game average as a senior and was a two-time All-OVAC roundball selection and three-year basketball starter. He earned second team All-Ohio Class A recognition as a senior.

A four-year baseball standout as a shortstop-pitcher, Mazerowski led Warren Consolidated to the 1953 Ohio Class A (largest class) baseball finals before falling, 2-1 to Cincinnati Purcell. Mazerowski pitched a four-hitter in a losing cause.

The athlete, known as "Catfish" as a youth and "Maz" during his pro playing days, led Warren Consolidated to four straight OVAC Ohio-side baseball titles. The team was coached by Al Burazio.

Signed by the Pittsburgh Pirates out of high school and summer, sandlot baseball, the Rush Run native was in the major leagues in 1956 and became a 10-time All-Star second baseman from 1956-72 with the National League team. He won eight of the first 10 second base Gold Glove fielding awards.

He played in 2,163 games and collected 2,016 hits but his best known feat is hitting game seven 1960 World Series winning home run versus the New York Yankees. He still holds some major league fielding records for double plays and assists. The Pirates retired his jersey No. 9.

Mazerowski was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 2001 and also is enshrined in the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall, the Ohio Baseball Hall and the Pennsylvania Sports Hall.

Buckeye Local High School, a consolidation which includes Mazerowski's alma mater, named its high school field in his honor and a section of Route 7 near his Rush Run childhood home north of Tiltonsville is known as "Bill Mazerowski Highway."

Bobby Douglas (Athlete - 1960s)



Bobby Douglas (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1961) was a three-sport high school standout and the first wrestler to win four OVAC individual championships. He became the first black athlete to win an Ohio state mat crown (1959) when he emerged as the 112-pound titlist. He then finished third in the 1960 state tournament and won the 127-pound crown as a senior.

An All-OVAC football player and the conference Class AA captain as a 140-pound running back in 1960, Douglas also was a starter in baseball.

He wrestled two years at West Liberty State College, winning an NAIA championship and placing second in the NCAA. He then transferred to Oklahoma State, where he won the Big Eight Conference 147-pound title. The team never lost a dual meet with Douglas in the lineup and captured a pair of conference titles along with the 1964 NCAA team title.

Also as a competitor, he won five national championships and a pair of U.S. Olympic Trials titles. He had a fourth-place featherweight finish at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and he captained the U.S. freestyle team at the 1968 games in Mexico City. Named the nation's outstanding wrestler in 1970—the year he retired—Douglas compiled a career record of 303-17-7 (953). He was runner-up at the World Championships that year.

Still recognized as one of the nation's outstanding wrestling coaches, Douglas has been at the Iowa State University helm for 14 years and became just the fourth Division I mentor to reach the 400-victory plateau in January of 2003. He coached the Cyclones to 10 top-10 at the national finals. He also had runner-up teams in 1996, 2000 and 2002. In 2000, he was selected the National Wrestling Coach of the Year. He has produced six national champions, 17 conference titlists and 25 All-Americans at Iowa State. Before taking over the Cyclones' program, Douglas built a dynasty at Arizona State. From 1975-92, he guided ASU to nine conference titles and nine top-10 NCAA team finishes, including the school's first national championship in 1988. While with the Sun Devils, he had three national individual title winners, 37 conference champs and 58 All-Americans.

He was head coach of the 1992 U.S. Olympic freestyle team that competed in Barcelona, Spain. All 10 of his wrestlers placed among the top 10 in their respective weight classes. Douglas has been on the U.S. coaching staff for five other Olympics.

Douglas was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame, the NAIA Wrestling Hall of Fame, the Ohio Hall of Fame and the Arizona State Hall of Fame.

Allan Hornyak (Athlete - 1960s)



Allan Hornyak (St. John Central High School, Class of 1969) was best known as a record-setting 40-point per game scorer his last two basketball seasons, but the lefthander also was a three-spot standout performer as a football quarterback and first baseman-pitcher in baseball.

A 6-1, 185-pound long-range shooting guard in the era prior to the three-pointer, Hornyak led the OVAC and the state of Ohio in scoring his last two seasons with an all-time OVAC record 42.7 average as a junior plus a 41.95 senior norm.

As a junior, he scored 812 points in 19 games, including 295 goals and 222-of-272 free throws. In his senior year, he tallied 923 points in 22 games with 346 goals and 231-of-296 free throws.

The two-time All-OVAC and All-Ohio cager set the OVAC record of 86 points, including 40 goals, in a 1969 win over Tiltonsville and he scored 61 points the next night against rival Bellaire.

He scored at least 50 points in a game 14 times and ended his 80-game career with a then OVAC record 2,385 points. The Irish won back-to-back OVAC Class AA basketball titles including a 20-2 overall record in 1969.

His scoring efforts resulted in articles in *Sport* magazine, the *New York Times* and *Sports Illustrated* "Faces in the Crowd." Hornyak earned *Scholastic Coach* All-America honors and his No. 20 home basketball jersey was retired by the school.

In football, St. John's also won an OVAC crown with a 9-1 record in 1968, with Hornyak as an All-OVAC quarterback. He passed for 14 touchdowns that season.

Recruited for basketball by numerous colleges, he opted for The Ohio State University where he led the Buckeyes in scoring three straight years and earned All-Big Ten Conference honors each year and All-America recognition as a senior.

He left OSU as the school's fourth all-time career scorer with 1,572 points in 69 games and is a member of The Ohio State University Sports Hall of Fame.

Hornyak was the second round pick, and 26th overall, of the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers. He was also drafted by the ABA Indiana Pacers in the fifth round, but didn't compete in the pro ranks.

Ron 'Fritz' Williams (Athlete - 1960s)



Ron 'Fritz' Williams (Weir High, Class of 1964) was a four-year, three-spot standout for the Red Riders. He led Weir to three straight state Class AAA title games including an unbeaten 1962 regular season, two state runner-ups and a state title in 1963 (a three-year record of 62-8). The three-year All-OVAC and All-West Virginia Class AAA basketball player was also an All-OVAC and All-West Virginia football end in 1963 and the OVAC and West Virginia Region 1 sprint champion in the 100, 220 and 440-yard events in 1964.

The 6-3, 185-pound Williams was the first African-American to be named first team All-West Virginia in basketball and only the fourth person in history to be named first team all-state three times. He scored 2,203 career points—then an OVAC 'big school' record—and averaged 30.9 as a senior and 30.1 as a junior. He scored a school-record 55 points against East Liverpool. He was named All-America by *Parade* and *Scholastic Coach* magazines.

Williams was a regular end on the 1961 Class AAA state championship football team and was all-state and *Scholastic Coach* All-America as a senior.

He played on two OVAC Class 3-A title basketball teams (1962 and '64) and the 1962 OVAC track championship squad. The first African-American recruited to play basketball at West Virginia University, he still holds season and career assist records while averaging 20.1 points for his career—sixth best in history and leading the team in scoring and assists three years. Only two WVU players—Jerry West and "Hot Rod" Hundley—combined for more points and assists than Williams, a three-time All-Southern Conference honoree and a second team All-American.

The two-time team captain is a member of the All-Time WVU team (1966-75 era) and has been inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame as well as the West Virginia Sports 'Hall' and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan 'Hall'. He was the ninth overall NBA draft pick in 1968 by the San Francisco Warriors and was also drafted in the ABA fifth round by the New Orleans Buccaneers. Despite not playing college football, he is one of only two OVAC products to be drafted both by the NBA and NFL (Dallas Cowboys, 14th round).

Williams played eight NBA seasons—five with the Warriors, two with the Milwaukee Bucks and one with the Los Angeles Lakers. He scored 4,797 career points and had 1,818 career assists. He died, at age 59, on April 4, 2004 at his home in California. The road near his Weirton childhood home named "Ron (Fritz) Williams Boulevard."

Doug Donley (Athlete - 1970s)



Doug Donley (Cambridge High School, Class of 1977) was a three-sport standout, excelling in football, track and basketball and earning the nickname "White Lightning" for his blazing speed.

On the gridiron, Donley was a three-year letterman at running back for the Bobcats, finishing with a career total of 2,572 rushing yards. He also had 226 yards receiving and 1,028 yards in kick returns for a career all-purpose yardage total of 3,826 yards to go with 31 TDs.

Donley's football accolades included first team All-Ohio Class AAA (1976) by both *The Associated Press* and *United Press International*; Eastern District Class AAA "Player of the Year" (1976); and first team All-OVAC Class 4-A (1976).

In track, Donley won the OVAC Class 4-A championship in the long jump as a junior (1976) with a leap of 21 ft. 2.5 in. and was a double-winner at the conference meet as a senior (1977)—winning the long jump (21-10.75 and the 220-yard dash (22.4 seconds), helping the Bobcats to the OVAC team title.

He earned All-Eastern District in the 100-yard dash and was recognized as a high school All-American in track.

Also a standout in basketball, Donley was hampered by a shoulder injury but still managed to score 10 points per contest and had a school-record 17-assist game.

Widely recruited for football, Donley attended The Ohio State University and earned first team All-Big Ten and honorable mention All-America accolades at wide receiver (1980). He ranks among the Buckeyes' all-time leading receivers in several categories, including career yards per catch (21.2, second); yardage (2,252, fourth); touchdowns (16, fifth); and receptions (106, tied for ninth). He led the team in receptions from 1978-80.

Donley was a second round draft choice of the Dallas Cowboys in 1981, playing four years in the NFL. He caught 55 passes for 898 yards and four TDs.

Inducted into the Cambridge High School Hall of Fame, Donley is president of Advantage Golf Tournament Services in Addison, Texas.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Tim Spencer (Athlete - 1970s)



Tim Spencer (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1979) ranks with the greatest running backs ever to grace Ohio Valley high school gridirons. Spencer — who plied his trade for legendary coach George Strager — rushed for some 3,144 yards and 50 touchdowns. He scored 338 points during his Red Devil grid career.

As a senior, the *Parade* All-American gained 1,670 yards and scored 28 touchdowns while his junior numbers totaled 1,280 rushing yards and 18 touchdowns. Spencer's top prep game came as a senior when he rushed for 306 yards and scored six touchdowns against Martins Ferry. All told, he scored 40 points in that contest.

He was awarded All-OVAC and All-Ohio football honors following his junior and senior seasons.

Spencer also played basketball and ran track for the Red Devils, excelling in the 100- and 200-meters. After his prep days, Spencer matriculated to Columbus to play for Coach Earle Bruce's Ohio State Buckeyes.

The 6-1, 210-pounder was a three-year starter for the Buckeyes. He finished his career with 3,553 yards which still ranks third on Ohio State's all-time rushing charts.

Spencer led the Big Ten in rushing as a senior with 1,371 yards, eighth best in the nation. He was accorded All-Big Ten honors twice and was a second-team UPI All-American selection as a senior.

He served as the Buckeyes' co-captain as a senior and was voted the team MVP that year. He was also named MVP of the Holiday Bowl as he rushed for 167 yards and two TDs in OSU's 47-17 win.

Spencer was the second player selected in the United States Football League (USFL) draft by the Chicago Blitz. After a three-year USFL stint, he signed with the San Diego Chargers where he started for four years at fullback.

He gained more than 5,000 rushing yards and scored 45 touchdowns as a professional.

Spencer served as Ohio State's running backs coach from 1994 through the 2003 season. He left the Buckeyes for an assistant's role with the Chicago Bears.

Amy Gamble (Athlete - 1980s)



Amy Gamble (John Marshall High School, Class of 1982) is one of the Ohio Valley's greatest female athletes of all time. Gamble excelled in three sports — basketball, track and women's handball.

She became Marshall County's first Olympian when she competed with the U.S. Women's Handball Team in the 1988 Games held in Seoul, Korea. Earlier, the U.S. Women were crowned as champions of the Pan American Games.

Gamble was selected as the West Virginia Women's Basketball Player of the Year in 1982 after leading John Marshall to the state Class AAA championship. She averaged 23 points and 18 rebounds on a 22-1 record team which avenged its only loss by defeating Elkins in the state finals. Captain of the All-State Team, Gamble was a two-time Class AAA first-team honoree. She was chosen All-OVAC and All-Valley three straight years.

She was the first JMHS girls' basketball performer to score more than 1,000 points and the initial Monarch athlete to have her jersey retired. She scored 1,498 career points. Gamble was ranked as the No. 4 girls' basketball player in the country her senior season when was named to the *Parade*, *Street & Smith* and *USA Today* All-American teams.

Recruited by Tennessee, she played as a backup on the 1983 Lady Vols' squad that finished as the NCAA tournament runners-up, losing to the Cheryl Miller-led Southern Cal powerhouse. She left Tennessee at the end of that season and transferred to West Virginia University but played just one season before deciding to try team handball.

After her appearance in the Olympics, Gamble returned to basketball and enrolled at the University of Arizona. Despite having just one season of eligibility remaining, Gamble was the team's leading scorer and she earned Pacific-10 Conference player of the week laurels.

Her high school track career was also brilliant, as Gamble set numerous invitational meet and OVAC records in the shot put and the discus. She established all-time OVAC standards in both events and was a West Virginia state champion in both events. She was a three-time All-Valley honoree.

Mitch Hannahs (Athlete - 1980s)



Mitch Hannahs (Skyvue High School, Class of 1985) was the epitome of a winner in high school as the two-sport, four-year letterman sparked the tiny Golden Hawks to the state tournament in both basketball and baseball.

In basketball, Skyvue made the OHSAA state tournament in Hannahs' junior and senior seasons, finishing as the Class A runner-up in 1984-85. He was selected first team All-Ohio as a senior and second team as a junior and was a two-time first team All-Eastern District, All-OVAC and All-Pioneer Valley Conference honoree. He also participated in the Ohio North-South All-Star classic following a senior season where the 5-10 guard averaged more than 22 points per game.

In baseball, the consistent-hitting and sure-handed shortstop helped the Hawks to the Ohio Class A state championship as a senior (1985) as well as the OVAC and PVC titles. He earned first team All-Ohio, All-Eastern District, All-OVAC and All-PVC honors and was selected for the Ohio Baseball All-Star Series.

He also received All-Eastern District, All-OVAC and All-PVC accolades following his sophomore (1983) and junior (1984) seasons.

After graduation Hannahs pulled off a rare "double" when his college team - Indiana State University - advanced to the NCAA Division I College World Series in 1986 and that same season, he played for the Maynard Post 666 team which advanced to the American Legion World Series. Hannahs was voted MVP of the regional tournament that season and won the Louisville Slugger Award for the highest batting average in tournament play.

At Indiana State, Hannahs was a three-time All-Missouri Valley Conference performer (1987-89) and was an NCAA Division I All-American following his senior year (1989).

He was a 16th round draft pick of the Milwaukee Brewers, playing in their farm system from 1989-93. Hannahs is currently athletic director and head baseball coach at Lincoln Trail College in Robinson, Illinois. He previously coached for seven years at his alma mater - Indiana State University.

Vicki Pullie-Stokes (Athlete - 1980s)



Vicki Pullie-Stokes (Wellsville High School, Class of 1987) is believed by many Wellsville residents to be one of the greatest athletes in the school's history, attested to by her induction as a member of Wellsville High School's Athletic of Fame inaugural Class of 2004.

During her high school career, Pullie-Stokes collected 15 first-place finishes at the annual Cal Giffin OVAC Track Championships and she was selected as the area "Track Athlete of the Year" three times. She also earned both All-Valley and All-Eastern District laurels four times each. She was a two-time long jump champion at the Ohio high school state meet and was a runner-up in the 200 meters.

In volleyball, she was twice selected as the team MVP and earned All-Area (three times), All-Eastern District (twice), and All-OVAC (twice). Three times she was named to the All-Columbiana County team.

In basketball, she led the 1987 Lady Tigers to the state finals. Her 27-1 record Wellsville team ended one of the nation's longest basketball streaks at 108 when the Tigers defeated West Holmes in tournament play. She scored more than 1,400 points and collected more than 800 rebounds while helping the Tigers to a three-year record of 66-8. Pullie-Stokes was chosen OVAC "Player of the Year" that season and was a two-time All-Ohio honoree. She also earned All-Valley and All-Area recognition three times each on the hardwood.

All told, she won 11 varsity letters and was selected as the American Legion 1987 Ohio State "Athlete of the Year". She went on to play collegiate basketball at Ohio State and was a member of the 1989 Buckeyes' squad that won the Big Ten Conference championship. She gained personal honors when in 1990 she was selected as Ohio State's best defensive player, team MVP and Big Ten honorable mention. Twice, she was designated as the conference's player of the week.

Additionally, Pullie earned a gold medal with the North Team in the 1989 U.S. Olympic Festival, held in Norman, Okla.

Geno Ford (Athlete - 1990s)



Geno Ford (Cambridge High School, Class of 1993) achieved the ultimate honor of a high school basketball player in the state of Ohio when he was selected "Mr. Basketball" following his senior season.

The 5-8 sharpshooter finished a stellar four-year career with the Bobcats as Ohio's second all-time leading scorer with 2,680 points which also stands as the OVAC's all-time high-water mark.

Ford's name also appears in the OHSAA record book in the following categories: 288 free throws made in a season (1991-92), first all-time; 697 free throws made in a career (1989-93), first all-time; and 928 points in a season (1991-92), seventh all-time.

Playing for his father, highly-successful Cambridge coach Gene Ford, Geno earned All-Ohio Division II first team accolades following both his junior and senior seasons. He was also a two-time All-Eastern District Division II "Player of the Year" and two-time All-OVAC Class 4-A first team pick.

Ford went on to become a four-year letterman at Ohio University, earning All-Mid American Conference second team honors as a junior (1996) and first team plaudits as a senior (1997). He is the fifth all-time leading scorer at OU with 1,752 points. One of the most popular players at OU, Ford helped the Bobcats to one NCAA and one NIT appearance during his career.

Following graduation, he served as a graduate assistant (1998-99) and assistant coach (1999-2001) at Ohio University; was head coach for one season at Division II Shawnee State University (2001-02), leading his team to a 22-10 record and earning American Midwest Conference "Coach of the Year" honors; served as an assistant coach at Kent State University since the 2002-03 season.

Stephanie Petho (Athlete - 1990s)



Stephanie Petho (St. John Central, Class of 1992) remains the measuring stick for female basketball greatness in the OVAC.

The Fighting Irish three-sports luminary re-wrote the St. John Central and OVAC scoring books during her career on Guernsey Street. The 5-7 sharpshooter finished her four-year career with 2,667 points which is first in conference annals and still ranks sixth in the state of Ohio.

Petho was accorded first-team All-OVAC all four years. The Bellaire native earned All-Ohio honors three years, culminating by being named the state's Division IV "Player of the Year" following a season in which she averaged a staggering 37.1 points a game.

As a junior, she tallied 35.9 points per game in leading her Lady Irish teammates to a 22-3 record a berth in the OHSAA regional tournament. She was named first team All-Ohio after scoring 910 points that winter alone. Petho twice cracked the 50-point plateau in a game, scoring 57 against Shadyside and 56 against Toronto.

The two-year starter at the University of Pittsburgh carried St. John Central to four OVAC championships in basketball and an overall 75-16 record. Petho was no one-sport wonder, also starting in volleyball and track during her prep career. She earned All-OVAC in volleyball her junior and senior years.

In track, Petho is one of the valley's all-time great throwers, earning five OVAC gold medals in the weight events — three in the discus and two in the shot put. Petho tossed the platter a school-record 121-7 en route to a regional championship and a third-place showing in the state meet as a junior.

She capped her high school career by being named co-valedictorian of her senior class and she went on to become an Academic All-American at Pitt. While there, she led the team in scoring in the 1994-95 season, became the career free throw percentage leader (81.4) and is 14th on the all-time scoring list.

Rudy Mumley (OVAC 'Family')



Rudy Mumley (Wheeling High School, Class of 1936). If Rudy Mumley's heart was measured by the size of his love for his fellow men and women, it never could have fit inside his body.

Mumley, an educator, administrator, humanitarian, dynamic organizer and charity fund-raiser, served the OVAC and the rest of Ohio Valley in many different, but special ways. He was a two-time president, charter member of the conference's Foundation Board, served on the football and basketball committees and was the organizer and long-time game director of the Ohio-West Virginia Charity Football Classic. The mid-summer all-star football clash was renamed in his honor in 1986. He also served as OVAC president during the 1967-68 school year. To help the game get off the ground, Mumley once mortgaged his home to achieve the financing needed for the inaugural OVAC-sponsored contest in 1972. He also was a great supporter of the OVAC wrestling tournament.

A graduate of old Wheeling High School and West Liberty State College with a master's degree from WVU, Mumley served in the Air Force during World War II and was recalled during the Korean conflict. He taught at Powhatan, Shadyside and Smithfield High Schools before being appointed principal at Warren Consolidated High in Tiltonsville in 1964. Rudy later served as principal at Yorkville High. Later, when the Buckeye Local School District was formed, he became principal at Buckeye South and remained there until his retirement in 1979.

Mumley, who was born in 1918 and died in 1999, also provided great service to the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and his college alma mater, West Liberty State. Rudy was a member of the Dapper Dan Board of Directors for some 25 years and was banquet co-chairman six times. At West Liberty, he earned a rare honor as a non-athlete when he was inducted into the school's Athletic Hall of Fame in 1985. He was president of the Hilltoppers' Alumni Association and the Foundation. Among the numerous honors he received include: the Robert McKelvey Award and Man of the Year honors from the Dapper Dan Club; WLSC Gold and Black Achievement Award and the College President's Award, along with the Warwood Lions Club's Citizen of the Year Award in 1981.



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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Agnes Timmons (OVAC 'Family')



Agnes Timmons (Scio High School, Class of 1942). This Octogenarian started coaching pickup girls' basketball teams at Barnesville High School in 1946 when there were no school-sanctioned girls' programs for member schools of the OVAC. She was a girls' physical education teacher at the time, after having graduated from Denison University in Granville, Ohio.

Timmons considered it part of her job as a physical education teacher to organize whatever athletic teams she could because she wanted the girls to have some competition and experience the fun of playing organized sports. She would join with teachers from other schools in the area interested in doing the same thing to schedule games. They also had to hire their own officials and provide transportation to the game sites.

Timmons left teaching after 1948 to begin raising a family. After having four children, she returned to her teaching and coaching career at Barnesville in 1962. Timmons coached volleyball and basketball even though it wasn't until June of 1972 that Title IX was enacted, demanding equal sports opportunities for girls. She was asked by then OVAC executive secretary Sam Mumley to host and serve as director of the first conference volleyball championship tournament which was held at Barnesville High. Timmons coached basketball and track until well into the 1980's, but continued her duties with the volleyball team until her retirement from teaching in 1991. She also coached softball for one year when her daughter played because the talented youth also wanted to compete as a member of the track and field team. The school district would only permit that to happen if Timmons coached both sports, which she did.

Even today, Timmons remains close to the Barnesville athletic program. Through this past season, she served as the announcer for the Shamrocks' boys and girls basketball games, as well as for the home volleyball matches. She also has been the announcer and part of the committee for the OVAC volleyball tournament for over 30 years. Last winter, the then 80-year-old Timmons was called back into the coaching ranks when Barnesville needed someone to help out with the volleyball squad. Agnes coached the jayvees and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Her track teams were perennial contenders for OVAC titles and several volleyball teams advanced to the district.

Doug Huff (Media)



Doug Huff (Magnolia High School, Class of 1961). This native of New Martinsville has been writing sports since the age of 12, his first "job" being with the *Weir Democrat*, a weekly paper in his home town. Huff joined *The Intelligencer* as associate sports editor in 1967, a position he held until 1978 when he was named as that paper's sports editor, remaining in that position until his retirement in 1999. He previously was sports editor of the *Fairmont Times* and worked on the sports staff of the *Dominion News* in Morgantown.

While the sports chief of *The Intelligencer*, Huff originated All-Valley Boys Basketball and Baseball selections in 1968, plus the OV All-Sports School and Athlete Awards and the All-OV Scholar-Athlete selections. He compiled Ohio Valley and West Virginia records for football, basketball and baseball, along with historical material on OVAC schools, coaches and athletes. Since 1979, he has been the Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the W.Va. Sports Writers Association after having previously served as the president and football all-state board chairman. Huff also is on the Board of Directors of the Football Writers Association of America and the National Sponsors & Sports Writers Association.

Among the numerous honors he has achieved include: induction into the National High School Sports Hall of Fame (1999); state sports writer of the year nine times; West Virginia University School of Journalism P.I. Reed Life Achievement Award (1999); Magnolia High School Athletic Boosters Life Achievement Award (1990); W.Va. Sports Writers Association Gene Morchouse Award (1992); Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Robert McKelvey Award (1994).

He is the author of *Sports in West Virginia, "A Pictorial History" (1979)* and also of the National High School Football and Basketball Record Books (2001-2002). Doug also co-authored "How to Watch Sports on TV...And Enjoy It." Since 1975, he has been a high school contributing editor of *Street and Smith* magazine and compiles their pre-season schoolboy All-America teams for football, boys' basketball and baseball. Although retired from *The Intell*, he continues to submit a much-read and enjoyed weekly column. Doug also serves as the national rankings and records editor for Student Sports Inc., and coordinates football and boys basketball selections for Parade and EA Sports.

Bob Burton (Coaches)



Robert W. (Bob) Burton (Magnolia High School, Class of 1957) coached several sports at Paden City High School, but is most remembered for a sparkling 38-year career as head boys' basketball coach (1963-2001) where he amassed a record of 554-327.

During his tenure, the Wildcats won 21 sectional championships; eight regional titles; finished as state runner-up twice (1972 and '82) and captured the West Virginia Class A championship twice (1973 and '87). Paden City had 28 winning seasons under Burton, including nine 20-win campaigns, and won five OVAC Class A championships (1971, '75, '92, '93 and '94).

Burton received the West Virginia "Coach of the Year" honor in 1986 and was selected to coach in the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic several times as well as the West Virginia North-South All-Star Game in 1987. He was a member of the West Virginia Basketball Coaches Association, the State Coaches Committee and the OVAC Basketball Committee.

Burton also served as an assistant coach in football at Paden City for 18 years, serving on the Wildcats' staff during two state championship seasons (1970 and '79); coached track for more than 30 years, winning several OVAC Class A and Intra-State League championships; coached cross country for two years and golf for one season; was assistant baseball coach for three years; and spent more than a decade as athletic director.

As an athlete, Burton was a three-sport athlete at Magnolia, earning all-West Virginia honors in football in 1955. At the college level, he was also a three-sport performer, playing football at Kent State University and then football, basketball and tennis after transferring to West Liberty State College where he graduated in 1961. He then received a master's degree in education from West Virginia University in 1968.

George Strager (Coaches)



George Strager (McKeesport, Pa. High School, Class of 1943) has often been called the "dean" of Ohio Valley high school football coaches thanks to a highly-successful career that spanned some 38 years (1950-87) at five different schools. He posted a career coaching record of 246 wins, 115 losses and 15 ties which stood as the all-time valley record until eclipsed in 2004 by Jay Cirsto of Woodsfield/Monroe Central.

Strager's coaching career began in 1950 at tiny Sistersville High School, compiling a 42-22-3 record in seven seasons there and leading the Tigers to the West Virginia Class A state championship in 1953. He moved on to Clarksburg Notre Dame High for four years as head football and basketball coach (1957-60), going 24-10 on the gridiron and leading the basketball team to the West Virginia Class A state semifinals. Next came a three-year stint at Wheeling Central Catholic (1961-63) which featured two undefeated regular seasons and a mark of 21-9-1. The 1962 team lost to Charleston Catholic in the inaugural West Virginia Catholic State Championship game, but the next year Strager's team averaged that loss to win the crown. Up next was a five-year stay at Cambridge High (1964-68), posting a 25-23-2 record.

He then began a legendary 10-year run at St. Clairsville High in 1969, turning his trademark "belly series" to a record of 134-51-9 there. His Red Devil teams posted three undefeated seasons (1969, '77 and '85) and the 1983 squad earned the school's first-ever trip to the OHSAA playoffs and the 1986 team advanced to the state semifinals before losing a heart-breaker to Chargin Falls Kenston.

Strager's top honors included induction into the Ohio High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame in 1998; Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1991; selection as OVAC Coach of the Year in 1979 and '87; and recognition by the Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley in 1992. He also coached in the OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic twice (1972 and '87).

A graduate of Salem College, Strager passed away in 1990, but his memory lives on in the form of the George Strager Memorial Football Camp and Scholarship Program as well as the "George Strager Evening with the Stars" dinner held in conjunction with the OVAC Charities All-Star Football Classic.

John 'Corky' Vrotsos (Coaches)



John 'Corky' Vrotsos (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1946) not only initiated the sport of wrestling at his alma mater, he quickly established himself as one of the premier mat coaches in conference history.

Vrotsos guided the Purple Rider grapplers from 1957-68, leading his team to seven consecutive OVAC Tournament championships (1961-67) along with six straight Ohio District Tournament titles. His teams finished ranked in the top 10 in the state four times (1959, '60, '63 and '64) and the best finish at the state tournament was a fifth place effort in 1960.

During his tenure, Vrotsos coached 41 OVAC champions and 41 Ohio State Tournament qualifiers, including 10 state place-winners and one state champion (175-pounder John Scordos in 1964). Ferry's dual meet record during the Vrotsos years was 85-20-1, including unbeaten seasons in 1964 and '67.

The initial inductee into the Martins Ferry High School Wrestling Hall of Fame in 1994 and the 1978 recipient of the OVAC Wrestling Tournament's "Mr. Mat Award", he served as tournament director for the OVAC, sectional and district tournaments after yielding the coaching post.

In addition to serving as head wrestling coach, Vrotsos was also an assistant in football and track for the Purple Riders. He was on the football staff during Ferry's run of three consecutive undefeated seasons (1959-61) and four OVAC championships (also 1963).

As an athlete, he was a three-year letterman in football and basketball at Martins Ferry. In football, he was a center-linebacker under legendary coach Fred Thomas, playing center and linebacker on the 1944 and '45 OVAC championship squads, earning all-conference "AA" honors as a senior. He played guard in basketball under coaches Floyd Baker and Ralph Gartrell. After serving in the army, Vrotsos then attended West Liberty State College, graduating in 1951. He was a three-year varsity football player for the Hill topplers and a member of two undefeated teams that played in bowl games. (Smokey Mountain Bowl and Pythian Bowl).

Chester Grossi (Officials)



Chester Grossi (Weir High School, Class of 1940) began officiating in 1942, claiming to be "drafted" into officiating by fellow honoree Walter Heil because many officials had been lost due to the military draft.

His love of sports saw him enter the world of officiating, not only in football, but also in basketball and baseball. He retired from officiating in 1987 after 45 years. During those years, he worked many district and regional tournament games as well as 14 state tournaments in basketball and 12 state finals in football. He also worked several West Virginia Catholic State basketball and football playoff games as well as games in the West Virginia Interscholastic Athletic Conference and the United Football League. He is a life member of the Ohio Valley Board of Officials and the West Virginia Football and Basketball Officials' Association. He was the 1997 recipient of the OVAC's Robert Dawson Officials' Award and was honored by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

As an athlete at Weir, Grossi played football for coach Carl Hamill from 1936-39 and during that time, the Red riders won 27 straight games. He received a football scholarship to West Liberty State College where he played for Coach Joe Bartell in 1941 and after World War II.

He graduated from West Liberty with a bachelor's degree in political science, returning to Weir High School as a teacher and assistant coach. He left the education field to enter into the investment and insurance business in 1960. He remains active in many civic, fraternal and service organizations. He is president of the Weirton Lodge of the Italian Sons and Daughters of America, serves on the Board of Directors of the Fraternal Association and is an honorary national president of ISDA; a member of the board of the Upper Ohio Valley Italian Heritage Festival; the Weirton Council 3734 Knights of Columbus and an officer of their Fourth Degree; a life member of Post 10 of the American Legion; board member of Camp Fire USA; the Weirton Elks; and is a member of the West Liberty State College Foundation's Finance Committee, Hall of Fame Committee, Hilltoppers Athletic Club and a life member of the Alumni Association. He was inducted into the West Liberty State College Hall of Fame and was honored by the West Virginia Northern

Walter Heil (Officials)



Walter Heil (Bellaire High, Class of 1923) was regarded as one of the deans of Ohio Valley officiating thanks to a career that spanned some 38 years and involved three sports.

He began as a baseball umpire in 1926 then added football in 1928 and basketball in 1929, working countless games until finally hanging up his whistle at the age of 62.

Heil officiated football and basketball at the high school, collegiate and professional levels. He worked five West Virginia High School State Tournaments, five West Virginia Catholic High School State Tournaments and three West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Tournaments. He also officiated in the semi-professional Continental Football League, which featured the Wheeling Ironmen.

He was a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Officials, the West Virginia Officials Association and the International Association of Approved Basketball officials and was honored for length of service by each of these organizations.

After retiring as an active official, Heil assumed the role of commissioner of both basketball and football officials for the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, a position he held from 1965-70.

He was a charter member of the Bellaire High Athletic Wall of Fame and the 1998 recipient of the OVAC's Robert Dawson Officials' Award.

Heil worked for Weirton Steel Corporation and was a resident of Yorkville until his death in 1970.

Alex Groza (Athlete - 1940s)



Alex Groza (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1944). This 6-foot-7, 220-pounder led the Purple Riders to two straight undefeated regular seasons in basketball and to the Ohio state tournament both years. Martins Ferry finished 24-1 in 1943 and 26-1 the following season. The Purple Riders won the first OVAC Class AA basketball championship in 1944 as Groza scored a valley record 628 points (a mark later broken by 2004 OVAC Hall of Fame inductee Ken Alessi). Groza scored 41 vs. Tiltonsville. He was an all-conference and all-Ohio first-team selection.

Alex was the top scorer and rebounder on the University of Kentucky's "Fabulous Five," which won back-to-back NCAA titles in 1948 and '49, with Groza being named the tournament MVP both years. He was a three-time all-Southeastern Conference choice and a two-time consensus All-American. He set 22 individual SEC records. Groza still ranks seventh on Kentucky's all-time scoring list with 1,744 points. Alex's jersey number (15) was retired by the school. Groza and four of his UK teammates — Ralph Beard, Wallace Jones, Cliff Barker and Kenny Rollins — won a gold medal as U.S. Olympians at the London Games in 1948. Groza, in 1949, was named the Helms Foundation Basketball Player of the Year. In a 1950 Associated Press nationwide poll of sports writers selecting the leading athletes of the half-century, Alex was chosen as one of the five top-rated basketball players.

In the NBA, Groza averaged 22.5 points in 130 pro games with the Indianapolis Olympians in 1950 and '51. He coached Bellarmine (Ky.) College from 1959 through 1966. The school had never won a basketball championship before Groza's tenure. He led the Knights to the Kentucky Intercollegiate Athletic Conference regular season and tournament title in 1963, after which he was named the league coach of the year.

Groza later served as business manager and then assistant to the president of the ABA's Kentucky Colonels before becoming general manager of the San Diego Conquistadors until the franchise folded. He then served as GM of a professional volleyball team for one year before joining Reynolds Metals in 1977 as a regional sales manager.

Groza died of lung cancer at his home in San Diego on January 21, 1995.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Chuck Howley (Athlete - 1950s)

Charles L. "Chuck" Howley (Warwood High School, Class of 1954) was a first team all-West Virginia and all-OVAC tackle in 1953. He lettered in football, basketball and baseball. As a teenager, he also competed for an independent All-America boys gymnastics group.

The West Virginia University graduate is still the only Mountaineer athlete to letter in five sports — football, gymnastics, wrestling, track and swimming. In football he played guard, center, and linebacker while earning All-Southern Conference laurels three straight years. Also the long snapper on special teams, Howley was selected as a third-team All-American his senior year. Howley, at 6-2, 220 pounds, was considered to be one of the fastest linemen in WVU history. He started in three college all-star games — East-West Shrine Game, Senior Bowl and the College Football All-Star Game. He lettered for the Mountaineers on the trampoline in gymnastics, a heavyweight in wrestling, sprinter and weightman in track and a diver in swimming. In 1957, Howley was selected as the West Virginia Amateur Athlete of the Year.

He was an NFL first-round draft choice (1958) of the Chicago Bears — only the third Mountaineer selected in the opening round. He played a year and a half in Chicago before being sidelined by a serious knee injury. Howley was back home in Wheeling working at a gas station in 1961 when the expansion Dallas Cowboys traded two draft picks for him. The ex-Bear decided to give it one more try and wound up starting at outside linebacker 12 years for the Cowboys, earning all-pro laurels six times. He starred in two Super Bowls. The 1971 game saw Howley intercept two passes and recover a fumble to earn MVP honors in a 16-13 loss to the Baltimore Colts. He remains the only player on a losing team to be selected as the Super Bowl's most valuable player. In 1972, he helped the Cowboys win Super Bowl VI over the Miami Dolphins by intercepting a Bob Griese pass to set up a touchdown.

Howley is a member of the West Virginia Sports Writers Association, WVU, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and City of Wheeling halls of fame.



Dick Miller (Athlete - 1950s)

Dick Miller (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class 1952) was a first-team all-state and all-OVAC performer in basketball three straight years while performing for the Maroon Knights. Miller led Central Catholic to the conference and West Virginia Catholic championships all three seasons, scoring 1,593 points during a stellar high school career. His three-year scoring average was 21.4 points per game. His career point total stood for 51 years until it was bested by David Contraguero, a four-year letterman for the Maroon Knights. Contraguero's record was later topped by a Central girls' basketball great, Kayleen Fitzsimmons. Miller also had a game high of 30 points in a West Virginia-Kentucky All-Star Game, leading the Mountaineer team to an 81-80 victory at Williamsport, twice (1951 and '52). Miller was chosen as the state's basketball player of the year. He also was a standout performer in football and baseball in high school. He was a "T" formation quarterback as a football performer and a shortstop/pitcher on the baseball team.

Recruited by the University of Wisconsin on a basketball scholarship, Miller was the Badgers' starting point guard for two years. Nicknamed "The Cat" because of his quickness, Dick averaged 19 points per game in Big Ten play, topping the 30-point mark three times during his career. In 1956, he set a conference record for the most consecutive free throws made, converting 29 in a row over two consecutive games. Miller also excelled as a floor leader and defensive player. He was voted as the team MVP his senior year. Although drafted by the New York Knicks in 1956, Miller chose to play AAU basketball. He was voted to the AAU All-America team after participating in the National Tournament held in Denver where he led the Milwaukee Allen Bradley Team to a fourth place finish. Miller played two seasons with the Phillips Oilers in the National Industrial Basketball League and one season in the Tidewater Basketball Association where he averaged 22 points per game and was voted the league's MVP for the 1962-63 season.

Miller played baseball one year at Wisconsin, hitting .333 and playing second base. Because a shoulder injury in high school limited his throwing ability, he gave up baseball after one season to concentrate on basketball. His athletic career then continued in a different sport as he took up handball (four-wall) and in his first year, he won the North and South Carolina Open Singles Championship. He went on to win numerous singles titles throughout the Southeast, including two national singles age group championships. He finally ended his competitive career in 1996 at the age of 62.



Mike Sherwood (Athlete - 1960s)

Mike Sherwood (Bellare High School, Class of 1967). This soft-spoken athletic great rates with Bellare High's all-time stalwarts in both football and basketball.

He quarterbacked the 1966 Big Reds to a 9-1 season as a senior for coach Don Ault. It remains arguably one of the best prep grid teams in Ohio Valley history. Sherwood led the OVAC with 29 TD passes that fall as he completed 73 of 110 passes for a 66.4 percentage and amassed more than 1,400 yards with only four interceptions. He was just as impressive on the hardwood for legendary coach Claire Cribbs. The sweet-shooting 6-1 guard was a two-year starter for the Big Reds and surpassed the 1,000-point plateau while earning All-Ohio honors. He averaged 25.3 points a game in leading the Big Reds to a 17-4 record. As a junior, he averaged 25 points per game. He poured in a career-high, and school record, 59 points against Guemsey Street rival St. John Central. He was also selected for the Ohio North-South Basketball Classic.

Following his illustrious prep career, Sherwood accepted a football scholarship to West Virginia University, where his father earlier played. After competing on the freshman team, he started at quarterback for three seasons. As a sophomore, he paced for some 2,000 yards while establishing a school record with 416 yards against rival Pitt, completing 27 of 37 passes. He finished the year ranked 11th in the nation, averaging 198 passing yards a game. The Mountaineers went 7-3 that fall. Sherwood led the Mountaineers to a 25-7 record in his three years, including a 10-1 mark and a Peach Bowl win his senior season. He still ranks among WVU career leaders in total offense, passing yards, pass completions and attempts, TD passes, passing efficiency and completion percentage. He was selected to play in the 1970 Blue-Gray Game and won the Ira E. Rodgers Award the same year. Sherwood was also selected All-East by UPI in 1970. A member of the All-Time WVU 1950-69 Era team, Sherwood was inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame in 1997.

After graduation, he stayed on at WVU and was a graduate assistant for Bobby Bowden and Frank Cignetti. He went to Bethany College to serve as offensive coordinator from 1974-78 under his high school coach, Don Ault. Sherwood returned to his prep alma mater, serving as the Big Reds' head coach from 1980-84, registering a 26-12-2 record. He was named Eastern District Coach of the Year in 1982. He became the school's athletic director in 1984 and is currently the high school principal.



Terry Snively (Athlete - 1960s)

Terry Snively (Powhatan High School, 1966). This all-round athlete starred in four sports for the Indians. He established an Ohio Valley football modern single season record by amassing 222 points, including 33 touchdowns, his senior season. The quick-footed running back finished with 398 career points. Snively was named Ohio's UPI Class A Back of the Year in 1965. He was an All-OVAC honoree as a junior and senior while gamering All-Eastern Ohio and All-Valley laurels.

Captain of the Indians' football, baseball and track teams. He also was a four-year letterman in basketball, starting his last three seasons. Snively averaged better than 24 points a game in each of his final two seasons and finished his career with 1,146 points. He was third team All-Ohio as a senior and first team All-OVAC as a junior and senior. Springtime at Powhatan saw Snively do double duty, starting in baseball and track. He was a talented pitcher and outfielder in the diamond sport for four years. He helped the Indians to a pair of Ohio state tournament berths, including winning the state Class A crown in his freshman season when he batted .315 as leadoff hitter. Powhatan High launched a track program in his sophomore season. He was the OVAC 100-yard, 200-yard and long jump champion as a junior and qualified for the state meet in the 100. He holds the school records in the 100 (10.2), 200 (23.4) and long jump (19-5).

After his storied four-sport prep career, he accepted a football scholarship to West Virginia University, where he was an impact player in the defensive backfield as a three-year starter. He was selected to the All-Time WVU 1950-69 Era team.

After earning his WVU diploma, he opted to remain in athletics in his native Ohio Valley. Snively cut his coaching teeth at Bellare High. During his six-year stint with the Big Reds, he was a football aide to Jake Olsavsky and served as head basketball and baseball coach for five years. He led Bellare to a pair of sectional crowns in hoops while gaining a district title (1974) and OVAC championship (1976) in baseball. Snively matriculated to Shady-side High as head basketball coach for two years. His 1976-77 team won a district title and OVAC crown. In that season, he was named district coach of the year. Snively left Tigertown for River High, where he served as head football coach for 25 seasons. During that quarter of a century, his 1997 team went 10-4 and won an OVAC title while his teams made the Ohio playoffs in 1993 and 1997. Snively coached in the OVAC All-Star Game twice while also coaching the Ohio North-South Game in 1994. In 2004, Snively received the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Carl Hamill Award.



John 'Fuzzy' Filliez (Athlete - 1970s)

John Filliez (Magnolia High School, 1973). The first OVAC athlete to earn All-W. Va. first team honors in football, basketball and baseball also set an NCAA pass receiving record at Marshall University.

Nicknamed "Fuzzy" because of his bushy red hair, the Blue Eagles' wide receiver-defensive back led the Ohio Valley in pass receiving yards his last two seasons and ended his career with 81 catches for 1,434 yards and 16 touchdowns in regular season play. In his senior season, Magnolia went 10-2 with a state Class AA runnerup finish to Ravenswood.

He teamed with Magnolia's all-state quarterback Brian Book to lead the W. Va. All-Stars to a victory over Ohio in the annual OVAC All-Star game at Wheeling Island.

In basketball, the guard averaged 19 points a game and earned all-state honors after the Blue Eagles were state "AA" runnerup to Gary.

In baseball, the outfielder batted .352 and completed his all-star trifecta with All-Valley, and all-state honors in three sports.

Recruited for football by Marshall, West Virginia, Virginia Tech, Pitt and Penn State, the 5-11, 175-pounder signed early with WVU, but opted for Marshall where he led the Thundering Herd in pass receiving for four straight years and set school records with 169 catches for 1,954 yards and 14 TDs. His reception total ranked, at the time, eighth among all-time NCAA Division I receivers. Starting four years, he set a then-NCAA record by catching passes in 42 straight games. He broke the mark set by Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Rodgers from Nebraska. Automobile bumper stickers supporting the police showed up at Herd games, where they had a different meaning. They read, "I Love the Fuzz." The team co-captain was a two-time All-America honorable mention choice and a first team National Independent All-Star honoree.

Filliez also was selected as the state Amateur Athlete of the Year in 1976. In 1985, he was inducted into the Marshall Athletic Hall of Fame. Filliez currently resides in Delaware, Ohio.



Lance Mehl (Athlete - 1970s)

Lance Mehl (Bellare High School, Class of 1976). A three-sport team captain for the Big Reds, Mehl was also an All-Valley football linebacker and baseball first baseman as well as a center in basketball.

He earned All-Ohio football honors for coach Jake Olsavsky while serving as co-captain of the 1975 team which went 9-1. He played in the Ohio North-South game in Columbus and turned in a sparkling defensive effort for the South all-stars.

Recruited by Penn State University for football, he was cited by coach Joe Paterno and defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky as "one of the best inside linebackers" ever to play for "Linebacker U".

Mehl was the leading tackler for the unbeaten 1978 Nittany Lion team which bowed to Alabama, 14-7 in the Sugar Bowl and probably cost PSU from being declared national champion. In that game, he led Lion defenders with 17 stops, including 11 unassisted tackles.

After that junior season, he was named the "Man of the Year" by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and is one of only three college athletes to receive that honor.

The PSU defensive co-captain also led the Lions in tackles as a senior and earned second team All-America honors by The Associated Press and United Press International.

Mehl was drafted in the NFL's third round by the New York Jets and played nine years before his career was cut short with a recurring knee injury.

He was the Jets' leading defender from 1982-86 before a knee injury. The Jets' defensive signal-caller recorded 172 total tackles (105 solos and 67 assists) in 1984. In 1983, he intercepted seven passes and picked off 15 career interceptions.

Mehl was selected to the Pro Bowl after the 1985 season when he recorded 115 tackles, 43 assists and three pass interceptions.

After his NFL career ended, he returned to the Ohio Valley and resides in St. Clairsville.



Dee Davis (Athlete - 1980s)

Dee Davis (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 1981). The first OVAC girls' athlete to earn first team All-W. Va. honors three times set Ohio Valley and state scoring records which remain on the books after a quarter of a century. Overall, she set three OV and three W. Va. scoring standards.

A three-year Wheeling Park standout, she scored a school record 1,854 points including 716 for a 32.5 average as a senior. She was named state "Player of the Year" and captain of the Class AAA all-state team for the 1980 season. She scored a school-record 55 points vs. Weirton Madonna and set a state tournament Class AAA scoring record which remains on the books after 27 years. She tallied 43 points vs. Greenbrier East as a sophomore in 1978. In two state tournament games that year, she scored 76 points including 13 of 14 free throws.

Davis led Park to a state Class AAA runner-up spot as a senior when she also charted 104 steals, 71 assists and 87 rebounds. After the season, she was MVP in the state North-South game where she scored 30 points. She earned All-America mention in Street & Smith's and Converse magazines.

At Park, Davis also starred as a pitcher-shortstop on the first varsity softball team and earned all-state recognition from the W. Va. Coaches Association.

She signed a basketball scholarship to Tennessee Tech where she played for two seasons before finishing her college career at West Virginia University. In her two seasons with the Mountaineers, she served as team co-captain in 1986 with Georgeann Wells, the first woman to dunk in a college basketball game. In Davis' junior season, WVU recorded its second-ever 20-win season with a 20-10 record.

She also played basketball with a U.S. All-Star team in England and scored 150 points for a 21.4 average.

Davis has completed her 13th year as head girls' basketball coach at her alma mater Park. She has guided the Patriots into six state tournaments and won back-to-back Class AAA championships in 1998-99 and became the first female to win the all-sports "OVAC Coach of the Year" award. The Wheeling resident also coaches softball.



Brian Swisher (Athlete - 1980s)

Brian Swisher (Sistersville High School, Class of 1982). The 5-7, 145-pound dynamo became the first three-time first team All-W. Va. football honoree in Tyler County as he led Sistersville High to back-to-back state Class A championships in 1980 and '81.

Swisher led the Tigers to a 13-0 record in 1981 as he set an Ohio Valley and W. Va. record for scoring by a lineman with 26 touchdowns (receiving, rushing, returns) and 156 points. He was runner-up for the Kennedy Award as state player of the year and was awarded the Hunt Award as state Lineman of the Year.

He set season and career pass receiving marks in the Ohio Valley and averaged 39.2 yards on kickoff returns and 20.2 yards on punt returns. He also was productive on end-around rushing plays. Swisher, who set an OV record by catching passes in 36 consecutive games — every game he started. His career regular season totals were 126 receptions for 2,174 yards and 23 TDs.

He led the OV in regular season pass receiving yards for 1980 (681 yards on 47 catches) and 1981 (906 yards and 14 TDs on 53 receptions). As a sophomore, he landed 26 passes for 582 yards.

Swisher was a three-time All-OVAC and All-Valley honoree as well as All-West Virginia three times. In the spring, he competed in track as a 100 and 200-meter sprinter, long jumper and relay member. He won eight individual medals in three state Class AA meets — a first in the 100 as a sophomore, six seconds and a third, and was a member of a first place 4x100 relay team. He tied a state meet AA 100-meter record with a 10.9-second mark in the 1981 trials.

He signed a football scholarship with Marshall University and played four seasons, including three years as a starting wide receiver. He landed 106 passes from 1982-85 for 1,617 yards and 14 touchdowns. He was Marshall's leading receiver in 1983 with 32 catches for 560 yards and three scores. He also was a Herd track sprinter.

Swisher currently resides in Lewis Center, Ohio.



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Joey Galloway (Athlete - 1990s)



Joey Galloway (Bellaire High School, Class of 1990). This Big Reds' four-sports performer has excelled on the prep, collegiate and professional levels.

The mercury-heeled wide receiver was an All-Ohio grinder for coach John Magistro before a sparkling career at Ohio State University. After his Scarlet & Gray days, Galloway was a first round draft pick by the Seattle Seahawks of the National Football League.

Galloway rewrote the Ohio Valley record books for pass receiving yards with 2,332 and touchdown receptions with 27. He ended with 108 career catches. The 5-9 explosive game-breaker helped lead the Big Reds to the OVAC 3-A football title his junior year, playing an integral role in the 9-1 campaign. He landed 43 passes for 973 yards and 13 TDs that fall. Galloway was a three-time All-OVAC and All-Valley honoree and was named All-Ohio second team in Division III as a senior.

In basketball, he was just as dominating as a point guard. Galloway was a starter for three straight OVAC championship teams for coach Gene Ammirante. He earned All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-Ohio honors.

The springtime saw Galloway serve the Big Reds as an infielder on the baseball diamond, but it was on the oval where he made an even bigger impact. Galloway claimed the state Division II 100-meter and 200 state sprint titles as a senior.

The Bellaire Bullet then took his amazing athletic skills to Columbus, starring for John Cooper on the gridiron. He was honored as an All-Big Ten wide receiver as a junior—a season in which he grabbed 47 passes for 946 yards. His career totals at Ohio State were 108 receptions for 1,894 yards and 19 TDs. Galloway finished with 2,754 all-purpose yards and was the team's co-captain in 1994. He was an All-Big Ten Academic honoree in 1991, 1993 and 1994 while earned the National Football Foundation Scholarship in 1994. He earned a degree in business/marketing.

Galloway was the eighth overall pick in the 1994 NFL Draft. He played five seasons with the Seahawks, catching 283 passes for 4,457 yards and 37 TDs. In his best season in Seattle, he collared 72 passes for 1,049 yards and 12 TDs. He left Seattle for the Dallas Cowboys and is now a member of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Matt Gaudio (Athlete - 1990s)



Matt Gaudio (Brooke High School, Class of 1991). This fluid athlete dominated the West Virginia prep hardwood as he was a four-year starter for the Bruins.

He concluded his sparkling Brooke career by being named the W. Va. "Player of the Year" as well as the Gatorade state "Player of the Year" in 1991. The 6-7 forward paced Brooke to records of 19-4, 22-4, 16-7 and 18-7 for a four-year career mark of 75-22.

Gaudio was a two-time all-state Class AAA honoree and twice named to the all-state tournament team. He averaged 17.9 points and 10.1 rebounds as a sophomore and followed that up with a state Class AAA-best 24.8 scoring norm as a junior while averaging 11 rebounds.

Gaudio capped his superb prep career with a brilliant senior campaign. He averaged 24.3 points and grabbed 13.4 rebounds to repeat as All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-W. Va. honors while being accorded honorable mention All-America. He was the first Bruin to earn first team all-state in boys' basketball. Gaudio surpassed the 1,000 mark in career points (1,874) and career rebounds (1,108), both Bruin records.

He opted to continue his academic and athletic career at Penn State University, where he was plagued by chronic back problems which required surgery. In spite of the medical woes, Gaudio endured to turn in a solid career. During his redshirt sophomore season, he averaged 9.4 points and 4.7 rebounds a game and was named recipient of the Lou Lamie Most Inspirational Player Award.

The following year, he served as student assistant coach while completing his liberal arts degree with an emphasis on architecture. He returned to play as a senior and was second on the team in scoring with a 13.1 averaged while collected 6.4 rebounds a game during a 21-7 record season.

Cal Giffin (OVAC 'Family')



Cal Giffin (Bellaire High School, Class of 1947). One of the legendary figures involved in the sport of high school track and cross country in the OVAC.

During his 17 years employed as a teacher and coach in the Bellaire City School District, Giffin was one of the founders and the director of the famed Bellaire Relays. During its 52-year history, the Bellaire Relays attracted many of Ohio's greatest athletes to the Nelson Field. At one time, the Bellaire Relays was recognized as the second-largest track event in the Buckeye State. His teams won five OVAC and district track championships. During his reign, the Big Reds won 58 dual/triangular track meets. Also while at Bellaire, he served as an assistant coach in football and basketball.

Giffin's time-consuming work and contributions to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference included a term as president (1973-74) and commissioner of the football and basketball officials. He directed many major OVAC track meets and to honor his efforts, the league championships in track and field were renamed as the OVAC Cal Giffin Classic. He was a member of the Eastern District of the Ohio Athletic Board, the Ohio High School Coaches Association, the Ohio Football Coaches Association and the National Collegiate Track and Field Coaches Association. He was voted into the Ohio State Track Coaches Hall of Fame in 1972. Giffin was presented two awards of merit from the OHSAA and, following his death in 1975, he was selected for a posthumous Alumni Achievement Award by West Liberty State College. Giffin served the Eastern Ohio Coaches Association as president as well as being the state vice president for the Ohio Association of Track Coaches.

Athletically, Cal was a three-sport letterman (football, basketball and track) at Bellaire High. He played on the first Big Reds' football team to win an OVAC championship (1946). He also played in the Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Football Game in 1947. Giffin's career also led him to the Martins Ferry School District where he was the superior of elementary and secondary education. From there, he became the principal of St. Clairsville High School and later served as superintendent of the St. Clairsville-Richtland School District. He received his B.A. in Education from West Liberty in 1951 and his Master of Arts Degree in school administration from WVU in 1967.

Boyd Nelson (Media)



Boyd Nelson (Bellaire High School, Class of 1945). Nelson spent 41 years as a photographer with *The Times Leader* in Martins Ferry. Fellow staffers and friends have called him a pioneer, a legend and, perhaps, the greatest goodwill ambassador in the newspaper's history. His work behind the camera, according to many area high school coaches, help bring the sports world alive to the readers of *The Times Leader*.

Nelson, a quiet, unassuming man, let his camera do his talking for him. No assignment was too big nor too menial for Nelson, who had the opportunity to take pictures of seven U.S. presidents from Harry Truman through Ronald Reagan. Nelson chronicled nearly every major happening throughout the Ohio Valley and was a familiar and much-welcome face at high school, college and professional games and matches from the start of his career in the late 1940s until his retirement in 1988. As was pointed out at the time of his death in 2003, there wasn't a gymnasium, football field or baseball diamond in *The Times Leader's* coverage area where Nelson didn't capture the exploits of athletes of all ages and abilities. Among the future professional greats he covered included baseball hall of famers Phil Niekro and Bill Mazeroski; basketball hall of famer John Havlicek, Joe Niekro, Tim Spencer, Olympic wrestler and coach Bobby Douglas and Allan Hornyak, just to mention a few.

Boyd's devotion to his work also made him a role model and an inspiration to aspiring and seasoned photographers alike. Nelson shunned the limelight throughout his life despite the urgings of co-workers and admirers to enter his pictures in statewide competition. As a result, he was bypassed for many awards that easily would have come his way. However, United Press International began presenting awards to newspaper and magazine photographers in the early 1970s and the very first honoree was none other than Boyd Nelson. When *The Times Leader* published a pictorial history of Eastern Ohio in 1999, the book was dedicated to Nelson, a lifelong Belmont County resident. He began his career following a stint in the U.S. Navy. He served a stint in the Philippines during World War II. After returning home, Nelson attended Ohio University for a year. However, after being hired as a summer intern by *The Times Leader*, he never returned to college and made photography his lifetime profession.

Richard 'Lefty' Hall (Coaches)



Richard "Lefty" Hall (Barnesville High School, Class of 1959). Hall was one of the most successful two-sport coaches (baseball/golf) in OVAC history, compiling a whopping 1,116 victories over a 34-year span.

He began his baseball coaching career at Powhatan High School for a year before taking the same post at St. Clairsville High School. In his 33 years with the Red Devils (1969-2001), his teams amassed an outstanding 515-320 record.

With "Lefty" calling the shots from the dugout, St. Clairsville won seven OVAC championships and made five Ohio High School Athletic Association regional tournament appearances (1978, 1982, 1986, 1990 and 1997). The Red Devils advanced to the state tournament "Final Four" in 1997. St. Clairsville also won five Eastern Ohio Baseball League titles under Hall's guidance.

Hall as named OVAC Coach of the year in 1991 and received the same accolade from the Eastern District three times, 1990, 1995 and 1997. He also served as one of the coaches in the Mizuno All-Star Series in 1997. A true baseball "junkie," Hall was inducted into the Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame in 1996 and was named the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame "Man of the Year" in 1999.

Hall coached six players who signed professional baseball contracts, the list including Jerry Craft, Gene Cattane, Ted Rose, Scott Barnhouse, Joe Slavik and Joe Dudek.

In golf, "Lefty" coached St. Clairsville for 27 years (1974-2000), finishing with a 601-123 record. He had three unbeaten teams and also tutored three squads that advanced to the Ohio state tournament. The Red Devils also collected 14 OVAC golf championships.

Hall, a life-long resident of Barnesville, lettered in baseball and track while performing for the Shamrocks. He graduated from Ohio University.



Class of 2006

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Ron Mauck (OVAC 'Family')



Ron Mauck (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1958). Educator, administrator, community leader. Mauck has been director of the OVAC Wrestling Tournament, one of the largest high school events of its kind in the entire country, since 1979. This highly-regarded championship was renamed as the Ron Mauck OVAC Wrestling Tournament in 2006.

A pupil of the late George Kovalick, an OVAC Hall of Famer and considered to be the patriarch of high school wrestling in the Ohio Valley, Mauck also established the conference's dual meet championship standings in 1971 and directed five W.Va. state tournaments at the Wheeling Civic Center (now WestBanc Arena). Three times, he served as a volunteer on the staff for NAIA and NCAA Division II championships (hosted by West Liberty State College) held in Wheeling. In addition to his duties with the conference mat tournament, Mauck was a long-time member of the Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic. He was assistant game director and later served as game director from 1993 through 1998.

The Bridgeport High and West Liberty State College graduate, who earned his master's in safety education, began his teaching and coaching career in 1965 at Follansbee High School where he started the school's varsity wrestling program and coached the school's only individual state champion (Lou Daly). While at Follansbee, Mauck coached John Craig, a first-time wrestler as a senior in 1965 who went on to become an All-American at West Liberty and later was one of the area's outstanding coaches before becoming an administrator. When the consolidated Brooke High School opened in 1968, Ron was named to coach the wrestling team where he tutored the Bruins' first West Virginia mat champ in Jim Suddoth. Before retiring after a 34-year career in education, Mauck served Brooke as director of the school's Driver's Education Department, Physical Plant Director, Assistant Athletic Director and Athletic Director. In addition to having the OVAC Wrestling Tournament renamed in his honor, Mauck also was presented the "Mr. Mat" Award in 1985. He was named the W. Va. Wrestling Coaches Man of the Year (1987), and received recognition awards from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club (1985 and 1997); W. Va. Athletic Director of the Year (1995). Mauck twice was selected Warwood Lions Citizen of the Year, winner of the H.V. Corcoran, Sr. Award (2001) and a member of the Brooke County Wall of Fame (2006). He is past president of the W. Va. Safety Association, the Bridgeport Alumni and Warwood Junior High Athletic Association.

Paul 'Bud' Billiard (Coaches)



Paul "Bud" Billiard (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1959). Head coach at Brooke High School for 23 seasons (1979-2001) where he compiled a record of 185 wins, 79 defeats and 1 tie. During this span, Billiard's Bruins won three West Virginia Class AAA state championships — 1985, 1987 and 1990. His 1987 and '90 powerhouses recorded perfect record seasons and both were nationally ranked. The 1987 team finished 25th in the country while the 1990 squad ended up in 23rd place. In 1994, Brooke also ended the campaign with a 10-0 record but lost in the state playoffs. Fifteen of his 23 Bruin teams participated in the post-season playoffs and seven made the state championship game. Also, Billiard coached the green and gold to seven OVAC Class AAAA Division championships. He coached in two Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football games and in three West Virginia North-South Games. He was among the founding members and past president of the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association for whom he also was chairman of the group's annual awards dinner. He also assisted in organizing the OVACA's Clinics and Prospect Nights. Billiard's Brooke coaching career also included eight years as an assistant in football, two years as a wrestling assistant, six years as head wrestling coach and three years as head track coach. Prior to Brooke, he spent four years as an assistant in football at Wheeling Central, two years as a volunteer assistant in wrestling and three years as head track coach.

While attending Wellsburg High School, he played four years of football and lettered three years, serving as team captain in 1958. He played baseball three years, earning two letters. At West Liberty State College, Billiard was a four-year varsity letterman in football playing on both the offensive and defensive lines. After his junior season, he earned first-team All-WVAC laurels.

Among his awards are: Ohio Valley, OVAC and West Virginia Coach of the Year; Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Man of the Year; Carl Hamill Coaching Award; Steubenville Moose Lodge Coach of the Year; West Liberty State College Athletic Hall of Fame; 2005 Ohio Valley Football Coaches Hall of Fame inductee; H.V. Corcoran Sr. Award for the Brooke football program bringing national attention to the Ohio Valley; and a 2005 recipient of the West Virginia Athletic Coaches Association's Retired Coaching Award.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Warren Pugh (Officials)

Warren "Nookie" Pugh (The Linsly School, Class of 1920). The Wheeling Island resident who died in 1983 at the age of 81 served the coaching and officiating profession very well and also was an outstanding contributor to his committee.

As an official, Pugh served as a football and basketball referee for over 40 years. In football, he worked in both high school and college, including the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and West Virginia University, Pitt and Penn State. A basketball official for more than 40 years, Pugh officiated high school and college contests. In 1933 and 1934, he worked the entire West Virginia state high school basketball tournament, his partners being Judge Paul Camilletti the first year and Dink Westfall the second year. Pugh and John Gott of Bluefield blew the whistle for all 11 games of the first WVAC tournament held in 1935 at Fairmont. Pugh served as president of both the Ohio Valley Board of Football and Basketball Officials. He also was the referee of the famed Bellaire Relays for many years and was later named as the meet's honorary referee. He was also honored for his service by the Shadyside Relays and the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission. Pugh conducted officials' clinics in several sports and wrote a newspaper series on officiating. Pugh also was a Red Cross instructor in water safety and life-saving for over 50 years. In his youth, he was recognized as a tri-state diving champion and was known to many people in Wheeling for diving off the Suspension Bridge into the Ohio River. He performed that feat for the first time on Labor Day during the state fair held when he was a teenager. He repeated that dive on several other occasions during his youth. He coached swimming at his alma mater, The Linsly School for nearly three decades, guiding the Cadets to 26 OVAC championships, including 25 in a row.

Pugh was also a tremendous athlete, especially as a football player. He attended Alderson-Broaddus College in Philippi for two years and played football before transferring to Davis & Elkins College where was a stellar fullback and center for Hall of Fame Coach Cam Henderson. Since eligibility rules never really existed in those days, Pugh played four years at D&E. His community service included 15 years as Wheeling's Recreation Director, two terms as Ohio County Sheriff and six years as an Ohio County Commissioner. Pugh was inducted into the West Virginia Sports Hall of Fame (1988), the Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame (1984) and now the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Hall of Fame.



Bob Gain (Athlete - 1940s)

Bob Gain (Weir High School, Class of 1947). An all-time great on the high school, college and professional levels, he started his football career for the Red Riders and twice earned first team All-OVAC honors as a lineman and was honored on the 1946 All-W.Va. selections.

In 1969, he was selected as a 'Modern Era' defensive tackle on an All-Time Ohio Valley football team selected by The Intelligencer newspaper. In 2005, he was honored on an All-Time W.Va. high school team selected by The Fairmont Times newspaper.

At Weir High, he was the largest all-state honoree at 6-2, 210-pounds and was a two-way tackle as well as handling punting and kickoff duties. His late coach Carl Hamill never singled out his best Red Rider football product but always started his list with Gain, a four-year starter and his most honored protégé.

Gain is regarded as the greatest lineman in University of Kentucky, where he was a three-time All-Southeastern Conference honoree and a two-time first team All-America choice in 1949 and 1950. As a senior, he won the Outland Trophy as the nation's outstanding lineman, the first from the SEC so honored, and one of only two from the Ohio Valley. The other Outland Trophy honoree was the University of Iowa's Calvin Jones from Steubenville High. Playing for the legendary Paul "Bear" Bryant at Kentucky, the Wildcats were 33-10-2 in Gain's four seasons and he was co-captain of the 10-1 record team that upset national champion Oklahoma in the 1951 Sugar Bowl. Gain was the No. 5 choice — the highest ever for an OVAC athlete — in the first round of the 1951 NFL Draft by the Green Bay Packers. However, he opted for Ottawa in the CFL before starting a 12-year NFL career with the Cleveland Browns. The five-time Pro Bowler was a starter on three NFL championship teams under legendary coach Paul Brown in 1954, 1955 and 1964.

The Cleveland area resident has been inducted into seven Halls of Fame — College Football, West Virginia Sports, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan, University of Kentucky, Cleveland and Akron Halls and Cleveland Browns' Legends Hall.



Phil Niekro (Athlete - 1950s)

Phil Niekro (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1957). The Baseball Hall of Famer got his athletic start with the Bulldogs where he was a three-sport performer. Besides baseball, he was a football end and basketball forward and a teammate of fellow OVAC Hall of Famer John Havlicek.

Nicknamed "Knuckie" because of his staple pitch, the knuckleball, which he learned from his father, Niekro was a four-year Bulldog pitcher with a 17-1 career record. His only loss was 1-0 to Titonsville in 1954, his freshman year, when fellow Baseball and OVAC Hall of Famer Bill Mazerowski hit the game-winning home run. The 1955 Bulldog team shared the East Ohio League title with Martins Ferry. In a 9-4 Ohio sectional tournament win over St. John's, Niekro won the game in relief and belted a two-run single. Bridgeport, however, was halted in the finals by Shadyside, a team twice defeated by the Bulldogs. In 1956, Niekro and the Bulldogs defeated Steubenville Central, 7-1, in the Class A district tournament after sectional wins over Barnesville and St. Clairsville. Bridgeport bowed in East Liverpool in the district finals. As a senior, Niekro tossed a four-hitter and struck out 10 in a 4-2 win over Steubenville Central for the OVAC Ohio-side title. He earlier hurled an 8-2 win over East Liverpool in the Class AA district semifinals. Unbeaten Steubenville Central halted Bridgeport, 6-1 in the finals.

Niekro, who also played for the Bridgeport Legion team and Blaine in the summer Twilight League, was signed by the Milwaukee Braves for a \$500 bonus at a 1958 tryout camp in Bellaire.

In 1964, he started a 24-year major league career with the Braves, New York Yankees, Cleveland Indians and Toronto Blue Jays. He had a 318-274 career record while appearing in 864 games and striking out 3,342 batters, eighth on the all-time charts. He hurled a no-hitter and won five Gold Gloves and was named to five All-Star teams. The Braves honored him by erecting a bronze statue in front of their home stadium and, in 1997, he was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. He resides in the Atlanta area.



Lee Patrone (Athlete - 1950s)

Lee Patrone (Bellaire High School, Class of 1956). For 50 years, Patrone was the all-time leading career scorer in Big Reds' history with 1,842 points in three seasons. He led Bellaire High to three straight sectional titles with won-loss marks of 18-4, 20-3 and 19-4 while averaging 23.5, 26.7 and 32.9 points per game each season. His 27.1 point career average remains a school record.

The two-time first team All-OVAC honoree, and an All-Ohio first team honoree by The Associated Press as a senior, he was a scoring machine with 57 career games over 20 points, including all 23 as a senior, and he had 28 straight games in which he scored at least 20 points.

He tallied 54 points twice in a game in 1956, including his final game while playing with an injured led against Martins Ferry in the district tournament title game. Ferry prevailed, 91-87, while surviving a limping Patrone's heroics. Earlier, against a Bridgeport team featuring Basketball and OVAC Hall of Famer John Havlicek, he converted 25 goals. His 299 goals in a season remains a school standard.

After a brief stay at Ohio State, the stocky 6-0 guard enrolled at West Virginia University in 1957 and led the 1958 freshman team in scoring with a 20-point norm. A member of the 1959 NCAA runner-up team led by All-American Jerry West, he was second to West in 1960 team scoring with a 14.2 per game norm and was named to three all-tournament teams: NCAA regional, Southern Conference and University of Kentucky. A Virginia sportswriter described him as "good enough to be cocky and cocky enough to be good."

As a senior, he was a third team All-America honoree by Helms Foundation. He ended his career with 1,028 points — then seventh best in WVU history.

After graduation, he taught and coached five seasons at Wintersville High School where his first 1969 team went 14-4 and 1972 team was 16-4. After retiring, he relocated to his current home in Florida.



Bob Hummel (Athlete - 1960s)

Bob Hummel (Moundsville High School, Class of 1966). This 6 ft. 3 guard was a scoring machine for Moundsville High School before taking his vast hoop talents to West Virginia University.

Hummel finished his stellar four-year prep career with 1,941 points, good for a 22.6 per game average. That average still ranks sixth among Class AAA players in the state.

His senior year was one for the record books at the Marshall County school. He poured in 897 points in 25 games for a 35.9 average, which is tied for the highest average in Class AAA archives.

Moreover, his scoring antics translated into team success as Moundsville finished as state runnerup in Class AAA, the school's first state final since 1920. Hummel torched Richwood for 45 markers in the state semifinal game. He established the Moundsville single-game scoring mark with 53 points in a win against Follensbee. Hummel was chosen as the West Virginia "Player of the Year" by the Morgantown Touchdown Club while also being named captain of the Class AAA all-state team, all-OVAC and Scholastic Coach All-America. He also was a top-notch baseball player for Moundsville, earning second-team all-state honors as a pitcher.

Following his glorious stay at Moundsville, Hummel joined the WVU hoop squad and he wasted no time in making his presence felt. Hummel led the WVU frosh team in scoring with a 24.2 average, including a 45-point outburst against Maryland and 41 against Duquesne. In those days, freshman were ineligible by NCAA rules from playing on the varsity level.

He went on to average 12.9, 15.5 and 14.0 points a game the following three seasons, all of which he served the Mountaineers as a starter. Hummel was the team's captain in senior season.

Hummel totaled 1,137 points in his WVU career, placing him seventh in school annals at the time his career ended in 1970. He was an adept free throw shooter, hitting at an 80.7 clip for his career. Hummel — who had 14 games of 20 or more points — was selected to the 1966-75 all-time WVU hoop team.



Harry Wilson (Athlete - 1960s)

Harry Wilson (Steubenville High School, Class of 1963). This former Big Red star ranks with the elite running backs in OVAC history.

His gridiron career at Steubenville was nothing short of spectacular. His ability to carry the football took him to a starring role at the University of Nebraska and a short stint with the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles.

The 5 ft. 11, 190-pounder was also a safety and kick returner for Big Red, but rushing the football is what Wilson did best.

He carried the Big Red to a 9-1 mark his senior season, a campaign in which the Jefferson County charges pocketed a prized 14-8 win over heralded Massillon. Wilson paced the Ohio Valley in both rushing yards and scoring with 1,756 infantry stripes and 23 touchdowns. The former standard is a modern day school record for a 10-game campaign.

His achievements garnered him Ohio "Back of the Year" designation by both the AP and UPI in Class AA, which was the largest class back then. He was named first team all-Ohio and a Scholastic Coach All-American. Wilson was almost as dominating his junior year. The "Steubenville Stumper" rushed for 1,586 yards and scored 28 touchdowns and 168 points in 10 games. He was selected first team all-Ohio by AP as a safety while also earning all-OVAC and all-Valley laurels.

Wilson — who was also nicknamed "Lighthouse" — enjoyed a sparkling career at Nebraska. He led the Cornhuskers in rushing his junior and senior seasons, finishing his career with 1,702 yards and a stellar 5.0 per carry average.

He was named unanimous all-Big Eight as a senior and honorable mention All-America by UPI. He has the distinction of playing in three major bowl games — Cotton, Orange and Sugar.

After his playing days in Lincoln, Wilson was selected in the third round of the 1967 NFL draft by the Eagles. He spent three years with the team as a backup running back and kick returner.



Ed Burgy (Athlete - 1970s)

Ed Burgy (Bellaire High School, Class of 1971). This former Big Reds' star remains the measuring for prep baseball greatness in the Ohio Valley.

While also starting in football and basketball at the Guernsey Street school, Burgy distinguished himself as arguably the premier prep baseball player in OVAC annals. While his baseball statistics are staggering, he accomplished them in just three seasons as Bellaire High did not start a baseball program until Burgy's sophomore season. Known for his overpowering pitching prowess, Burgy was also a tremendous shortstop and powerful hitter. Burgy etched his name in Bellaire High, Ohio Valley and OHSAA record books. The three-year All-Valley first-team honoree completed his prep career with a 20-5 record, still the most wins ever by a Big Reds' pitcher. He owns the career strikeout mark with 326 (in just 175 innings) and the single-season strikeout standard of 128. While possessing nearly-unhittable heat, he also owned great control. The talented right-hander walked just 31 batters in his career and went eight straight games without issuing a base on balls. He carved out state records with a minuscule 0.13 ERA for a season and an 0.63 ERA for a career. His third OHSAA record was for hurling 16 shutouts. Burgy also set an Ohio Valley mark with 23 strikeouts in a 10-inning no-hitter versus River. He was also a deadly hitter. Burgy owns Bellaire High records for hits in a game (6), triples in a season (8) and career triples (12).

Burgy also was a stellar, four-year football performer for coaches Rudy Sharkey and Jake Olsavsky. He was a slashing running back until his senior season. Olsavsky opted to switch Burgy to quarterback, a move that paid big dividends. Burgy helped guide the Reds to an 8-1-1 season, losing only to Marietta (12-0) while tying Wintersville (0-0). He was joined in the backfield by Ron Lee, who went on to fame with WVU and the Baltimore Colts. Burgy was a multi-talented hooper. Starting for three seasons, he poured in 1,197 points, a total that still ranks seventh on the all-time school scoring card. It was second only to legendary Lee Patrone when Burgy hung up the Big Red sneakers. He was a first-team All-Valley Big School honoree his sophomore and junior seasons. He exploded in his senior campaign for a 21.2 per game average.

Burgy was a sixth-round draft choice of the New York Mets and spent three years in the Mets' farm system, first in Virginia followed by a stop in Pompano (Fla.) and Memphis. He had 13 wins in one season and fanned 20 in one game.



Bruce Smith (Athlete - 1970s)

Bruce Smith (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1976). He is at the top of the list when it comes to distance running as a four-time Ohio state champion who set countless meet, valley and school records along the way.

In cross country, Smith was a three-time All-Ohioan (1973, '74 and '75), capturing first place at the state meet in both his junior (9:43.0) and senior (9:33.4) seasons after placing seventh (10:05.0) as a sophomore. His time in 1975 was the state record at the time.

As both a junior and senior, he also finished first in the sectional, district, OVAC and Belmont County meets and finished undefeated both years. As a sophomore, he was second in the sectional, district and county meet and third in the OVAC.

He was a three-time All-Eastern District and All-Valley honoree in cross country as well.

In track, Smith earned All-Ohio status two times (1975, '76), winning the state championship in the two-mile run both years. He posted a time of 9:11.1 as a senior after winning in 9:31.1 as a junior. He also placed seventh at the state event as a sophomore (9:39.9).

He finished first in the sectional and district meets all three years, winning the county event twice and finishing as runner-up once. In OVAC meets, he won the OVAC one-mile run and finished third in the 880-yard run as a senior, and captured the two-mile run as both a sophomore and junior.

Smith garnered All-Eastern District and All-Valley laurels three times in track. In the two sports at Martins Ferry, Smith was part of four undefeated teams, three sectional and district championship teams, one OVAC championship team and three OVAC runner-up teams.

Smith was also a long-time competitor in most area road races, including several years as the top local runner in the Elby's Distance Race (now the Ogden 20K Classic).



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Wendy Baker (Athlete - 1980s)

Wendy Baker (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1989). A two-sport standout for the Lady Putters, excelling in both basketball and softball.

On the court, she was a four-year varsity performer, becoming the first player in school history to exceed 1,000 career points, finishing with 1,127 tallies. As a senior, she averaged 21.5 points per game. Baker also excelled defensively, posting 291 career steals including 135 as a senior.

As a senior, she was a second team all-Ohio Division I selection who was selected to play in the McDonald's All-Star Classic in Columbus. She was also OVAC Class 4-A, District 5, Division I and All-Columbiana County "Player of the Year". She was also an All-OVAC and All-Eastern District first team choice as a junior and an all-District honorable mention pick as a sophomore.

On the diamond, Baker's career pitching numbers included 49 victories and 226 strikeouts and .400-plus batting average. Her senior season numbers included a lofty .477 average along with some impressive pitching numbers — 19 victories, 117 strikeouts and a 0.54 E.R.A. She batted .483 as a junior with 32 RBI and had 109 pitching wins, registering 109 strikeouts and a 1.77 ERA. As a sophomore, she hit .422.

Baker's softball all-star honors included two-time All-Ohio (first team as a senior, second team as a junior); and two-time All-OVAC Class 4-A.

She attended Wheeling College and played basketball for two seasons, scoring 882 points and posting 182 steals during that time. She gained first team All-West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference honors as a sophomore after gaining honorable mention as a freshman.



Dennis Swearingen (Athlete - 1980s)

Dennis Swearingen (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1982). He earned 10 varsity letters in four sports, making his biggest marks in football and basketball.

In football, he was a three-year letterman as starting quarterback/defensive back, amassing 1,616 yards passing and 890 yards rushing while leading the Purple Riders to a combined 21-9 record, including a spotless 10-0 mark in his sophomore season. Ferry's first perfect record in 20 years. On defense, he was credited with 125 tackles and had 11 pass interceptions. He was a two-time first team AP All-Ohio Class AA defensive back, earning second team all-star honors from UPI both years as well. He also garnered first team All-OVAC Class AAA, All-Eastern District Class AA and All-Valley honors twice. Following his senior season, Swearingen was named a Centenary Prep All-American, an Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club special honoree and participated in the OVAC Charity All-Star Football Game.

In basketball, Swearingen was a three-year starter and 1,000-point career scorer and he was a key member of Ferry's squad which posted a 20-5 record and advanced to the Ohio Class AA regional finals in Athens in 1982. Scoring 14.7 points per game as a senior, he was named first team All-OVAC Class AAA (captain), All-District 12 and All-Valley as well as second team All-Eastern District Class AA. He played in both the OVAC and District 12 All-Star Games. As a junior, Swearingen averaged 18.9 points per game and was named first team All-OVAC Class AAA and All-District 12, second team All-Eastern District Class AA and third team All-Valley.

Swearingen also was a three-year letterman in baseball, earning All-OVAC Class AAA honors twice. He also lettered in track as a senior.

Swearingen went on to a stellar four-year football career at Ohio University, graduating in 1986 and positioning himself in the top five on the Bobcats' all-time passing list in 10 categories (through 2005). He is second in pass attempts in a game (57) and season (383); third in pass completions for a game (31) and season (195) as well as TD passes for a season (13); fourth in yards passing for a game (355), season (2,056) and career (3,267) as well as pass attempts (569) and completions (312) for a career; and fifth in career passing yards (3,267).



Jeff Snedegar (Athlete - 1990s)

Jeff Snedegar (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 1995). He put up lofty numbers during his four-year gridiron career, culminating in his selection as the AP All-Ohio Division V Offensive Player of the Year and finishing as runner-up in the voting for Ohio's "Mr. Football" award following his senior season.

A 6 ft. 3, 210-pound four-year letterman at quarterback and linebacker for the Warriors, he racked up 7,000 yards offensively and registered 673 tackles on defense. He also earned second team All-Ohio following his sophomore and junior years and was a three-time All-Eastern District and All-OVAC selection.

As a senior, he led Trail to its first and only OHSAA playoff appearance (the Warriors finished with an 11-2 overall record, winning two games before losing in the Division V state semifinals to Wellsville). That year, he passed for what was then a school record 1,769 yards while rushing for 1,621 yards for a combined total of 3,390 yards. He participated in 212 defensive stops as a senior.

Snedegar was also a three-year letterman in basketball (he didn't play as a junior), finishing fourth on Trail's all-time scoring list with 834 points and third in career rebounding with 561. He averaged 16.1 points per game as a senior, earning special mention AP All-Ohio as well as first team All-Eastern District and All-OVAC.

The 2000 Buckeye Trail Hall of Fame inductee went on to a stellar career at the University of Kentucky (1996-99), earning four letters as an outside linebacker. As a freshman, he had 42 tackles, started three games and was named the outstanding special teams' player and he followed that up with 97 tackles as a sophomore. Snedegar had 63 tackles and four sacks as a junior, helping Kentucky to an Outback Bowl berth where he recorded 11 tackles in a loss to Penn State University. In his final year at UK, he had 84 tackles, four sacks and two interceptions, earning him defensive MVP honors. He was selected to the All-Southeast Conference squad and was named to the All-American Farm Football Team by Successful Farming Magazine.

Snedegar was signed by the Miami Dolphins of the NFL in 2000 as an undrafted free agent.



Bill West (Athlete - 1990s)

Billy West (Buckeye Local High School, Class of 1993). He made his biggest impact on the football field, earning All-Ohio honors three times, including twice as a first team selection.

West also was a three-time All-OVAC selection (1990, '91 and '92) and a three-time All-Eastern District pick (first team in '91 and '92, second team in '90). He also participated in the Rudy Mumley/OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic following his senior season.

After starting as a freshman at Buckeye North, where he rushed for 900 yards despite missing two-plus games due to injury, he put up some ultra-impressive numbers at the newly-consolidated Buckeye Local High School.

He finished with what still stands as a school-record 4,658 yards, including a single-season effort of 846 yards as a senior. He also had 1,719 yards as a junior and 1,993 as a sophomore. He also owns six of the top seven individual game rushing records at Buckeye Local, headed by a whopping 335-yard game against Martins Ferry in 1991 (second all-time).

West scored 352 points on the gridiron, including 152 in his final season.

During his three years with the Panthers, the team compiled a 28-4 combined record (9-2 in 1990, 10-1 in 1991 and 9-1 in 1992), making the playoffs twice and narrowly missing on a third.

West also lettered three years in track and two in basketball for the Panthers.

He was a four-year letterman at the University of Pittsburgh, starting for three years and earning All-Big East "Offensive Player of the Year" honors as a sophomore (1994) after replacing All-American tailback Curtis Martin in game two and rushing for 1,358 yards, fifth on the all-time single-season rushing list. A Panther tri-captain as a senior, West finished as the school's fourth all-time leading rusher with 2,803 yards.



Class of 2007

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Nick Bedway (Media)

Nick Bedway (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1958). One of the area's most versatile and prolific newspaper sports journalists for five decades, he has been on the scene for numerous OVAC events since 1960.

After attending West Liberty State College for one year, he joined the Wheeling News-Register as a copy boy in 1960. Later that year, he joined The Intelligencer staff as a sportswriter. In 1967, Bedway joined the News-Register staff headed by Bill Van Home and was promoted to Associate Sports Editor in 1971. Bedway became N-R Sports Editor in 1995 and was named Executive Sports Editor of The Intelligencer/News-Register in 2000, a position he held until he retired in 2005. He authored daily and Sunday newspaper columns entitled "Nick's Notebook" and also wrote columns on area golf, bowling, college sports, outdoors and the Wheeling Nailers' hockey team. The OVAC media guide was dedicated to Bedway in 1999. He served as co-publicity director of the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Game from its inception in 1972 until 1990. Bedway also served as the OVAC standings' statistician in football, boys and girls basketball and baseball for more than 25 years.

Bedway served one term in 1977 as president of the W. Va. Sports Writers Association and received the Gene Monchouse Award in 1990 from the organization. He was inducted into the Ogden Newspapers 20K Classic Hall of Fame in 2006 and the Media Wing of the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame in 1996. He twice was selected to serve as the Honorary Referee for the W. Va. Super Six Class AA state championship football games held at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Bedway was the inaugural recipient of the Father John Lester Award for a lifetime of support to local sports and youth of the Ohio Valley and received the Spirit and Leadership Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club. He also has received awards from the Wheeling Soccer Association, Allegheny Mountain District U. S. Tennis Association, Wheeling Post 1 American Legion Baseball Team, Oglebay Park Men's Golf Club, and the Ohio Valley Golf Association. A past member of the Wheeling Hall of Fame Committee and current member of the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee, Bedway also is active with the Wheeling Lions Club and received, in 2005, the Leonard Jarrett Award, the highest Lion honor bestowed in West Virginia. Currently the chapter secretary and Board of Directors' member, he has served as media relations director, chapter president, first vice-president and Till Twister. Married 45 years to the former Judy Katona, the Bedways had four children and have five grandchildren.



Donna Joseph (OVAC 'Family')

Donna Joseph (Shadyside High School, Class of 1964). A leader in the OVAC track and cross country community for three decades, she also coached girls track and boys and girls cross country at alma mater Shadyside High School from 1983-98.

A registered track and cross country official for 30 years, she started working Cal Giffin OVAC Track Meets in the early 1970s and continues to serve as director of the Class A-AA meet, a position she started in the mid-1980s.

She currently is chairperson of the OVAC Track Committee with over 15 years on the board and is co-chairperson of the OVAC Cross Country Committee with over 20 years of service with the group.

A recipient, along with husband Butch Joseph, of the Cal Giffin OVAC Track Service Award, she also has been active with the Ohio Association of Track and Cross Country Coaches.

She is presently the secretary and membership chairperson of the OAT&CCC and serves on the Executive Board of the statewide organization. Donna and Butch handle the registration for the annual track clinic attended by an estimated 1,700 coaches.

She served as Meet Manager for the Midwest Meet of Champions when Ohio hosted the event at Ohio Wesleyan College and also served as Ohio coach when the meet was contested in Indianapolis, Ind. The Josephs were awarded the Ed Barker Award this year from the OAT&CCC.

Besides track and cross country, Donna also has served on the committees and worked the annual Sam Mumley OVAC Basketball All-Star games and the Rudy Mumley OVAC Football All-Star games. She also assisted with the OVAC Volleyball Tournaments and team standings. The 1964 Shadyside High graduate earned her degree from Ohio State University in 1968 and her master's degree in 1983 from Ohio University. She was a mathematics instructor at Shadyside from 1968-98.



Earl Kleivins (Officials)

Earl Kleivins (Warwood High School, Class of 1934). One of the Ohio Valley's most prominent football and basketball officials during a 35-year career from 1938 to 1973.

Kleivins attended Wheeling High School for one and a half years before transferring to Warwood High, from which he graduated in 1934. He played high school basketball at both schools.

Earl attended Bethany College where he played football and basketball along with competing in track under legendary coach John Knight.

Kleivins officiated in his first basketball game in 1938 at the Madison gymnasium. The opponents on that occasion were Wheeling High and Bridgeport and his officiating partner was another OVAC Hall of Fame member, the late Walter Heil. Thirty-five years later when he hung up his whistle, Kleivins had officiated in more than 1,300 basketball games and 570 football games on the high school and collegiate level.

Along with serving as an OVAC official, Kleivins officiated games in the Southern Conference, the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and at many other colleges in the tri-state area.

He also played professionally with the Wheeling Blues basketball team and was a long-time participant in local independent leagues and tournaments.

Kleivins was a long-time standout on the area tennis courts, winning many local, regional and national tournaments. In 1975, Earl and his partner won the United States national doubles title in the 75- and up age bracket. The tournament was held in Myrtle Beach, SC. At age 45, he won the West Virginia state singles title and teamed with the late Lorain Mercer for doubles honors in their age group. Earl also won numerous Oglebay Park Tennis Club championships through his mid-80s at which time he retired from competitive tennis.

The committee for the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC Basketball Classic presented Kleivins with the Robert "Bobby" Dawson Officials Award. Earl and his wife Lucy have been married for more than 70 years. They raised three children: Earl Jr., Judy and Robert. They have been blessed with four grandchildren and five great grandchildren.



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Sam Andy (Coaches)



Sam Andy (Wheeling High School, Class of 1958). The winningest coach in Ohio Valley high school boys' basketball history with 611 wins over a 39-year career, Andy surpassed a record set by charter OVAC Hall of Fame inductee Richard L. "Dick" Potts.

Andy's head coaching career included two seasons at Frazeyburg (O.) High School (1964-1966), seven years at Wheeling High School (1969-1976) and the last 30 years at Wheeling Park High School (1976-2006).

Second all-time for victories in West Virginia's big school class, Andy's teams won three Class AAA state championships (1976 at Wheeling High, 1980 and 1995 at Wheeling Park). The 1995 state final was one of the memorable championship games in W.Va. boys' basketball history as Andy's Patriots defeated Beckley Woodrow Wilson 99-96 in a triple-overtime masterpiece.

He also had one other Patriot squad finish as the state runner-up (1997) and four semifinalist teams (1988, 1990, 1998 and 2000). Andy coached in 922 games and his clubs experienced only three losing seasons. Under his direction, Wheeling High and Wheeling Park qualified for an OVAC record 20 state tournaments. In 37 years at the two Ohio County schools, Andy produced 31 sectional championship teams, 28 Region One titles and six Ohio Valley Athletic Conference division peasant winners.

Through most of his career, the Wheeling Wildcats and Park Patriots dominated their rivals in the conference, winning 78 percent of their games against OVAC opponents. They also annually played a schedule that included many of the top basketball powers in the state. Andy coached four West Virginia Player of the Year standouts and had 31 players earn college scholarships, including several Division I stalwarts.

He twice was honored as the OVAC Coach of the Year (1976 and 1995). In 2004, he was selected as the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Co-Man of the Year along with Monroe Central Coach Jay Circoza. In 2007 he was the recipient of the Earl Haberland Coaches' Award presented by the committee directing the annual Samuel A. Monkey OVAC Basketball Classic. A 1958 graduate of Wheeling High School, Andy graduated from West Liberty State College in 1963. He was a basketball starter and letterman at both schools.

Bill Hinegardner (Coaches)



Bill Hinegardner (Meadow Bridge High School, Class of 1960). Referred to by the late Bill Van Home as W.Va. Wrestling's "Man of Character," Hinegardner received his bachelor's degree from Concord College in 1965 and master's degree from West Virginia University in 1968. The former Concord basketball and baseball player entered the Mason County School System as a mathematics teacher in the 1964-65 school year. He served as an assistant coach in wrestling and football at Mountaineer High for three years before taking over the head wrestling position when the consolidated John Marshall High School opened its doors at the outset of the 1968-69 school year. During his 14 years as head coach, the Monarch program became one of the most successful in the OVAC and also in the state of West Virginia. Hinegardner's teams won four W. Va. Class AAA championships (1972, 1973, 1974 and 1979). The Monarchs were also runner-up four times and finished lower than sixth place only once in the W. Va. State Tournament. The Ron Muck OVAC Wrestling Tournament saw Hinegardner's John Marshall powerhouses take the overall team title four times (1972, '73, '74, '77) and finish second five times. The Monarchs also earned five OVAC Class 4-A titles and emerged as Class 4-A Dual Meet winners five times. From December of 1971 through December of 1976, Hinegardner's wrestlers went through 41 straight dual matches without a defeat. His overall dual meet record was 133-29-1. Hinegardner's program produced 20 individual state champions. In 1996, he was a member of the late Mike Linsky's staff that led John Marshall to the W. Va. Class AAA football title. He served as President or Director of the W. Va. Wrestling Coaches Assoc.; the Region One Coaches Association; Marshall County Coaches Association; Co-Director of the OVAC and W. Va. State Tournaments; Executive Board Member of the OVAC and the WVSSAC for Wrestling; His awards include National Wrestling Hall of Fame Lifetime Service in Wrestling Award (2004); National High School Coaches Association District 3 Coach of the Year (1976); OVAC Coach of the Year (1974); W. Va. Wrestling Coach of the Year (three times); Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Achievement Awards (two times); Mr. Mat Award for contributions to the sport of wrestling in the OVAC (1984); Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Carl R. Hambl Award (2000); Mountaineer Area Junior Chamber of Commerce Jim Edge Award (1977) given for outstanding work in religious and youth activities; and the John Marshall High School Wall of Fame (First Class, 2005). After retiring from Marshall County in 1999, Bill went to work for the Switzerland of Ohio School District at River High as a Guidance Counselor until he retired in 2004.

Joe Fortunato (Athlete - 1940s)



Joe Fortunato (Mingo High School, Class of 1948). A nine-time letterwinner in three sports at Mingo (football, basketball and baseball), he was an All-Ohio Valley Athletic Conference performer as a football and basketball player.

Fortunato enrolled at Virginia Military Institute, but transferred to Mississippi State when the Keydets' head coach Slick Monon accepted the job with the Bulldogs. At Mississippi State, Fortunato became an All-Southeastern Conference fullback-linebacker.

The honorable mention All-America performer led Mississippi State in rushing and had a game high of 169 yards against North Texas State.

Highlight of his collegiate career occurred when the Bulldogs defeated national champion Tennessee 7-0. Volunteers' Coach General Tom Neyland praised Fortunato after the game by calling him one of the greatest players his teams at Tennessee had ever faced.

Fortunato was drafted in the seventh round by the Chicago Bears, but played one season in the Canadian League before signing with the National Football League team.

He started at linebacker for 12 seasons (1955-1966) with the "Monsters of the Midway" and was named first team All-Pro three times along with being selected for the Pro Bowl on five occasions. The defensive captain of the Bears was also captain of the last Pro Bowl team coached by the legendary Vince Lombardi.

After his playing career, Fortunato spent two seasons on the Bears' staff, coaching the linebackers one year and then serving as defensive coordinator the next year.

Fortunato also is the only Ohio Valley athlete to be selected to the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame. He was the leading vote-getter in The Intelligencer's 1970 All-Time Ohio Valley Team, which was selected by a vote of the area sports fans.

Fortunato also is a member of the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame.

Don Fleming (Athlete - 1950s)



Don Fleming (Shadyide High School, Class of 1955). The two-time All-Ohio Valley Athletic Conference first team honoree in football, Fleming was captain of the Tigers' undefeated conference champions in 1954. He also played center for the Shadyide squad that won an OVAC division title in basketball. This versatile athlete played in the Ohio East-West All-Star baseball game held in Columbus and performed in the Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Football Game held during the summer of 1955 at Wheeling Island Stadium. Fleming went on to the University of Florida on a football scholarship. He was a three-year starter and a two-way end performer for the Gators. He was elected captain of the 1958 team that played in the Gator Bowl and was a member of the All-Southeastern Conference team that same year. He was drafted by the Chicago Cardinals of the National Football League and the Boston Patriots of the American Football League. However, Fleming elected to remain in college to complete work on his degree and play baseball. As a senior, Fleming also was chosen captain of the Florida baseball team that won the SEC championship and earned a berth in the NCAA tournament. In the spring of 1959, Fleming earned a degree as a construction engineer. When Paul Brown, owner-coach of the Cleveland Browns, traded for Fleming's NFL rights, Fleming bypassed signing with the baseball Baltimore Orioles and decided to play professional football. Despite never having played defensive back, he started as a rookie with the Browns at safety and made the NFL All-Rookie team in 1960. After his third season with the Browns, Fleming was named to the All-NFL first team. In that off-season, while working on a construction job building at a bank in Florida, Fleming was killed in an electrical accident. Born June 11, 1937, Fleming was just 25 years old at the time of his passing. Despite having played just three seasons with the Browns, he had such an impact on the franchise that they named their practice field, Fleming Field, in his honor and retired No. 46, which was his number. The University of Florida named its intramural field, Fleming Field, and the Florida Alumni Association established an award in his name that is given annually to the senior in any sport exemplifying the best leadership qualities. He also was selected for induction into the University of Florida's Hall of Fame and is a member of the State of Florida's Athletic Hall of Fame. Shadyide High School retired his number (59) and named its athletic complex Fleming Field.

John Reger (Athlete - 1950s)



John Reger (Linsly High School, Class of 1950). This all-OVAC honoree in football and basketball was inducted into the Wheeling City Hall of Fame in 1998.

Reger's football achievements were remarkable considering that he was less than six-foot tall and weighed just 125 pounds when he began competing as a high school athlete, but he had more important attributes such as a huge, competitive heart and the determination of a youth twice his size. He played fullback and linebacker at Linsly and captained the 1949 Cadet squad that lost just one game to Triadelphia (20-19) in what was regarded as the most memorable high school football contest played during that era at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Reger went on to the University of Pittsburgh on a football scholarship and his freshman team in 1950 went undefeated. After just three varsity games the following year, his collegiate career was ended by a knee injury. The Wheeling native returned home and was working in a gasoline station when his former high school coach, Ezz Rine, arranged a tryout for him with the Pittsburgh Steelers even though he had not played football in three years. Displaying the same grit and determination he had shown in high school, Reger opened the 1959 season as one of the Steelers' starting linebackers. During his nine seasons in Pittsburgh, Reger earned three Pro Bowl invitations. He became captain of the Steelers defensive unit and was voted as the team's MVP during the 1959 season. Reger played in his first Pro Bowl in 1960 and made two more appearances in 1961 and 1962.

He sustained a life-threatening and near career-ending injury during his final season in Pittsburgh during a game against the Eagles at Franklin Field in Philadelphia. Reger was hit in the head and had a spasm in his throat that cut off air. Fortunately, the ambulance they sent for included oxygen and he was revived. Following that harrowing incident, every team in the NFL was required to have oxygen on the sidelines.

Reger was placed on waivers by the Steelers prior to the start of the regular season in 1964 and he was picked up by the Washington Redskins, for whom he played three more years before retiring. Overall, he played 12 seasons in the NFL.

Bob Kelley (Athlete - 1960s)



Bob Kelley (Weir High School, Class of 1961). Kelley made the most of his gifted and speedy legs to carve his niche into the Weir High and OVAC record books in two sports. He was a star both on the gridiron and the track cinders for the Red Riders.

Kelley — coached by the legendary Jim Carey — rushed for 2,730 yards and 42 career touchdowns. Kelley led Weir to a 10-1 season and the West Virginia state championship in 1960. He gained 1,259 yards that year with 22 touchdowns.

In the 40-0 rout of Nitro in the state championship game, Kelley was a one-man wrecking crew. He tallied four TDs and passed for a fifth.

Kelley was also a two-way starter as a junior for the Red Riders. He was the second underclassman in state history to receive the Kennedy Award (1959), bestowed each year on the state's premier prep football player, and the first winner from the OVAC. The first-team All-West Virginia and all-OVAC honoree captured the Wigwam and Scholastic Magazine All-American honors as the Red Riders were ranked 11th nationally. He played in the OVAC All-Star Game and left with Most Valuable Player accolades. Kelley also made his mark in track his senior season. He established a Steel Valley League record of 9.95 seconds for the 100-yard dash and an OVAC meet standard of 10.1 seconds at the same distance.

He was voted most valuable performer at the OVAC meet where he won three gold medals and one silver. He went on to win four regional track titles and four more medals in the state meet, including second place in the 100-yard dash.

After graduation from Weir, Kelley matriculated to Cameron Junior College in Oklahoma. He led the Aggies to the JUCO championship, beating Bakersfield, 28-20, in a game played in the Rose Bowl. Kelley led Cameron with 712 yards on the season, earning first-team all-Oklahoma Conference team honors. He was also honored on the 1961 Junior College Helms Athletic Foundation All-American team as a first-team halfback.

He later attended Oklahoma State and Colorado, but was sidelined due to injuries.

Robert 'Bo' McConaughy (Athlete - 1960s)



Robert 'Bo' McConaughy (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1966). He was a two-sport phenom for the Maroon Knights in the mid 1960s, starting in basketball and baseball.

McConaughy was a four-year letterman in both sports, gaining first-team all-state honors in baseball as a senior. That same year he earned second-team all-West Virginia laurels in hoops after helping lead the Maroon Knights to the West Virginia Catholic Tournament title.

In baseball, McConaughy is considered one of the best shortstops the Ohio Valley prep ranks has ever produced. He went on to star at West Liberty State College in both sports.

In 1970, McConaughy was named first-team all-WVIAAC as a shortstop and shortly thereafter signed a professional contract with the Baltimore Orioles. A year previously, he was drafted by the Cincinnati Reds in the 24th round, five rounds ahead of Ken Griffey, Sr.

He spent three years in the Orioles' farm system before returning home and starring for the Watwood Reds of the Ohio Valley Baseball League.

Bo was a second-team all-conference selection as a senior for the Hilltoppers' hoop team.

McConaughy has maintained his relationship with West Liberty, finishing up his 25th year at the Hilltoppers' baseball helm.

He has accumulated more than 500 wins at his alma mater to go with five conference crowns and a berth in the 1990 NAIA World Series. McConaughy led the Black & Gold to their first-ever NCAA Regional Playoffs in 1998.

McConaughy was elected to the West Liberty State College Hall of Fame in 1988. He has been named WVIAAC Coach-of-the-Year on four occasions.

In addition to baseball, he has coached football, track and men's and women's basketball at West Liberty. He is currently in charge of the WLSC Intramurals Program.

Gene Cattane (Athlete - 1970s)



Gene Cattane (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1977). Cattane put together an impressive four-year career on the diamond as a shortstop and pitcher for the Red Devils.

Some 30 years later, he still ranks in Ohio's top 10 in two statistical categories — No. 4 on the all-time career hit list with 172 and No. 7 in RBI with 145. In 109 varsity games, Cattane's career numbers also included a batting average of .431 with 127 runs scored, 29 home runs, 13 triples and 28 doubles. As a pitcher, he compiled a 14-11 career record.

He was a four-time All-Valley selection (second team as a freshman and first team the next three years, including serving as captain as a senior) and he was selected to participate in four Eastern Ohio Baseball League All-Star Games. Cattane was also tabbed for the Ohio All-Star Series in Columbus, equivalent to gaining all-state honors at that time.

As a senior, Cattane helped the Red Devils to the OVAC Class 3-A championship and a 23-9 overall record. He batted .478 (fifth in the valley) with valley-leading totals of 54 hits, 10 home runs, 38 RBI and 33 runs scored. He also had four triples, six doubles and 16 stolen bases. On the mound, he was 6-2 with a 1.73 E.R.A. in 52.2 innings, striking out 71 while walking 27 and allowing 31 hits. Cattane's junior numbers included a .455 average (fifth in the OVAC) with valley bests in home runs (8) and RBI (36) along with 40 hits, five doubles, three triples and 26 runs scored. As a sophomore, he hit .349 with valley highs in home runs (9) and RBI (46) along with 38 hits, four doubles, three triples and 32 runs scored. His freshman totals included a .449 average (fourth in the OVAC) and valley-leading marks in his (40) and runs scored (34) along with 10 doubles, three triples, two home runs and 25 RBI.

In addition to his high school exploits, Cattane was also a standout American Legion player. He was named Ohio American Legion Player of the Year in 1976 after leading Maynard Post 666 to a state runner-up finish with a 28-7 record, batting .350 for the season including .433 in seven tournament games. He also played for more than 10 years with Maynard of the Ohio Valley Baseball League and was a perennial all-star.

Cattane, inducted into the St. C. Hall of Fame in 2006, died in a coal mining accident on Sept. 10, 1990 at the age of 31.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

John Leon (Athlete - 1970s)



John Leon (Brooke High School, Class of 1976). This Bruin starred in three sports, etching his name into the OVAC annals as one of the premier football linemen and track weightlifter ever to compete in the conference.

Leon — who was also a standout grappler at Brooke — was a two-way line star for the powerful Bruins, earning a myriad of all-star accolades, including the 1975 Ken Hunt Award, going to the Lineman of the Year in West Virginia, making Leon the first OVAC winner of the prestigious honor.

Leon led Brooke to a 9-1 season en route to the OVAC championship in his junior campaign before earning all-conference and all-state laurels as a senior. The powerful Leon played in the 1976 OVAC All-Star game, captaining the Mountaineers to victory.

He was just as impressive in track circles, rewriting the OVAC record books in the shot put and discus. In the 1976 state meet, Leon launched the iron ball 59-1, breaking the W. Va. standard by some two feet. The record lasted two years before being eclipsed by future Olympian Randy Barnes. Leon won three state throwing titles, two in the shotput and one in the discus.

Leon was also a force on the mats, compiling a 48-6 mark as a junior and senior heavyweight.

Upon graduation from Brooke, Leon accepted a football scholarship to Notre Dame. He was a three-year letterman for the Fighting Irish as a guard. The Irish won two Cotton Bowls and one Gator Bowl during his career at South Bend. After graduating from Notre Dame, he received his MD degree from West Virginia University in 1984.

He has been a radiologist for 20 years. He is the current president of Radiological Physicians Associates. He is past president of the West Virginia Radiological Society, past president of the Marion County Medical Society as well as past president of the Fairmont Field Club.

Leon and his wife Marcy have been married for 22 years. They have four children: Johnny, Camille, Isabella and Joseph.

Jennifer Hyland Brown (Athlete - 1980s)



Jennifer Hyland Brown (River High School, Class of 1986). She ranks among the all-time greats in girls' track, having excelled at the conference, league and state levels of competition as a sprinter.

In four years at OVAC Championship meets, Hyland scored a whopping 126 points as River won two Class 2-A team titles (1983 and '86) and finished as runner-up twice (1984 and '85). During her freshman, sophomore and junior years, she won the 100, 200 and 400-meters and was on the winning 1600-meter relay team. While as a senior, she won the 400 and 1600-meter relay and was second in the 100 and 200.

In state meet competition, Hyland was the 400-meter runner-up as a freshman in 1983; first in the 400, second in the 100 and third in the 200 as a sophomore in 1984 (her 24 points single-handedly gave River a third place finish in the state); first in the 400 as a junior in 1985; and first in the 400 with a state-record time of 55.65, and on the sixth place 1600-meter relay team as a senior in 1986.

Hyland also sparkled in Ohio Valley Track League (OVTL) Championship meets for the Lady Pilots, winning the 200 and 400 all four years while taking the 100 the last three.

She also enjoyed tremendous success in the Belmont County Relays, finishing as the top scorer as a sophomore after winning the 100, 200 and 400; duplicating the top scorer feat as a junior by winning the same three events (including a meet record in the 200); and scoring the same "triple" as a senior (bettering her mark in the 200).

She was selected All-Ohio in the 400-meters all four years by the Ohio Association of Track and Cross Country Coaches. She was also an All-District and All-Valley honoree in multiple events. In 1984, Hyland was named honorable mention High School All-America and in 1986, she was invited to participate in the Midwest Meet of Champions in Indiana, an event showcasing the best senior athletes from Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

A member of the River High School Wall of Fame, she received a scholarship to run track at West Virginia University where she competed for one season.

Anthony Reed (Athlete - 1980s)



Anthony Reed (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 1989). Reed left a lasting mark on the athletic scene both for the Patriots and the OVAC, evident when he became the first person inducted into the Wheeling Park Sports Hall of Fame in 1997 for his exploits in basketball and track.

On the basketball court, Reed was a two-time first team All-W.Va. Class AAA selection, serving as captain as a junior. He was a two-time USA Today W.Va. Player of the Year and the Gatorade State Player of the Year as a senior. He also gained first team All-OVAC and All-Valley accolades twice and was a tri-captain on The Intelligencer's all-decade team of the 1980s.

The 6-4 wing scored 1,290 points in two seasons, including what still stands as a school-record 663 points (a 28.9 per-game average) as a senior. He averaged 11.5 rebounds per game that year and also set what was then an OVAC-record 88 three-point goals as a senior. As a junior, Reed was selected to the West Virginia Class AAA All-Tournament team.

In track, the talented Reed was a stellar performer in the high jump, hurdles and relays.

A two-time West Virginia Class AAA state champion in the high jump (including a meet-record 6 ft. 9 in. effort), he also set what was then a valley-record with a 6 ft. 11 in. leap. Reed placed second in the 110-meter high hurdles at the state meet (14.65 seconds) and was on state championship relay teams to help Park finish a close second in the Class AAA state meet in 1989.

The Park product also made his presence felt at the collegiate level, starting and lettering for three years at Cleveland State University. He scored 1,090 points (ranking him 10th on the all-time CSU scoring list at the time), averaging 15.6 points per game as a senior to earn second team All-Mid Continent Conference accolades. As a junior, he averaged 13.2 points per game and received the Paul Stewart Award presented to the player whose unsung contributions did the most to further the success of the team. Reed also won the Mid-Continent Conference high jump championship as a junior.

Jose Davis (Athlete - 1990s)



Jose Davis (Bellaire High School, Class of 1996). Davis put together some eye-popping numbers in both football and basketball, earning him All-Ohio recognition in both sports during his stellar career.

On the gridiron, Davis was a three-year starter at quarterback, leading his team to a record of 30-5. As a senior, he led the Big Reds to a third straight OVAC Class 3-A championship, first undefeated regular season and first-ever OHSAA playoff appearance (Bellaire advanced to the Division IV state championship game, losing a 50-44 double-OT thriller to Versailles). He finished the season 253-of-406 passing for 3,551 yards and 32 TDs while adding another 10 scores rushing. Davis earned All-Ohio Division IV Offensive Player of the Year honors and was runner-up for the prestigious Mr. Football award as a senior. He also received first team All-Eastern District, All-OVAC Class 3-A and All-Valley big school accolades on multiple occasions. The talented signal-caller set BHS career records for most yards gained (7,306), pass attempts (790), pass completions (455), highest completion percentage (55.7), passing yards (6,769) and TD passes (60).

On the hardwood, Davis started and lettered four years, racking up 1,457 points, 479 rebounds, 167 assists and 151 steals (all ranking in the top five on the BHS career list). His all-star accolades in basketball included first team All-Ohio Division III, All-Eastern District, All-OVAC Class 3-A and All-Valley big school. He was also named third team All-American as a senior.

Also a three-year letterman in baseball at Bellaire, Davis continued his career at Kent State University. A three-year starter and letterman for the Golden Flashes in football, he put up equally impressive numbers including single-game record for most pass attempts (59), completions (34) and TD passes (7); single-season marks for offensive yards (2,883), pass attempts (365), pass completions (194), passing yards (2,707) and TD passes (32); and career records for offensive yards (7,731), passing yards (6,722) and TD passes (52). He had a Mid-American Conference record 551 yards passing in 1997 against Central Florida and when he left KSU, he ranked 10th in MAC history in passing yards and was third in TD passes.

Davis also doubled as point guard on the Kent State basketball team in 1997-98. Professionally, Davis played for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers of the Canadian Football League in 2000 and 2001; for the Ohio Valley Greyhounds of the National Indoor Football League in 2002, leading the team to the league title by passing for 1,668 yards and 37 TDs and earning championship game MVP honors; for the Indiana Firebirds of the Arena Football League in 2003, the Colorado Crush in 2004 and 2005; and the Grand Rapids Rampage in 2006.

Chris Enochs (Athlete - 1990s)



Chris Enochs (Oak Glen High School, Class of 1994). Enochs excelled in three sports for the Golden Bears, but it was baseball where he would make his biggest impact.

Enochs' senior season diamond exploits earned him first team all-West Virginia Class AA accolades and he was named the "Player of the Year" by both Gatorade and USA Today and was selected as the runner-up for that honor by the W. Va. Sportswriters Association.

Also a first team all-OVAC Class 3-A first teamer and "Player of the Year" and an all-Valley first teamer and "big school" captain, Enochs led the valley with 11 home runs and 42 RBI while batting .442. His pitching totals included a 6-4 record and a 1.22 E.R.A. with 106 strikeouts and 26 walks in 63 innings. He pitched a perfect game for Oak Glen against Toronto.

On the basketball court, Enochs was first team all-OVAC and all-Valley and was an honorable mention all-West Virginia Class AA choice. He averaged 19.2 points and 13.2 rebounds per game as a senior and finished his career with 1,047 points.

On the football field, Enochs earned first team all-West Virginia Class AA as a quarterback after leading Oak Glen to its first-ever WVSSAC playoff appearance. Also a first team all-OVAC Class 3-A and all-Valley pick, he led the valley with 1,729 passing yards.

Drafted by the Cleveland Indians in 1994, Enochs opted for a scholarship to West Virginia University where he became the Big East "Pitcher of the Year", first team All-East Region and was a second team All-American pick by Baseball America, The Sporting News and the National Collegiate Baseball Writers. Named the team's co-MVP, he was 12-1 on the mound with a 3.03 E.R.A. and 10 complete games, including a no-hitter against Villanova. As a junior he was named the Big East Tournament's MVP and Outstanding Pitcher. Enochs had 21 wins, including 14 complete games, in his three-year Mountaineer career.

Following his junior year, he became the highest drafted player in OVAC history, selected No. 11 in the first round by the Oakland Athletics in 1997. The 6-3, 225-pound right-hander with a 93-mile per hour fastball played nine seasons in the minor leagues, the first seven in the Oakland organization and then one year each for Houston and Pittsburgh. He pitched in 250 games with a 45-52 record and a 4.91 E.R.A., posting 661 strikeouts while walking 380. He was a member of the Class AAA Pacific Coast League champion Sacramento Rivercats and playing for the Puerto Rican Winter League champion Ponce Leones.

Enochs also played for Team USA, winning a silver medal at the 2001 World Cup in Taiwan.

OVAC Museum Seeks Memorabilia

The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, the nation's largest high school conference with 46 member schools, has established an OVAC Museum to display memorabilia from its member schools — past and present — and is currently seeking additional display items. Each school will have a display case for its trophies, photographs and other items to showcase its athletic history. For more information, call the OVAC office at 740-671-3269.

Be sure to check out the display cases in the outer concourse

Bob Hedmond (OVAC 'Family')



Robert L. "Bob" Hedmond (Follansbee High School, Class of 1948). During his high school days, Hedmond was a varsity letterman in football, track, baseball and basketball. He won the half-mile title and played in the 1948 OVAC Charity All-Star Football Game in which he sustained torn knee cartilage.

After spending 21 months in the military, Hedmond enrolled at Shepherd College where he played fullback and defensive end before graduating in 1954.

In coaching, Hedmond met with success at every stop. He was especially adept at starting neophyte programs or rebuilding teams that needed a spark. He coached football, track and/or wrestling at several schools, including Oxon Hill (Md.), East Liverpool, Brooke and Steubenville. Hedmond started the program at Oxon Hill and took his team from an 0-5-4 record the first year to a 5-3-1. He became the first head football coach at the consolidated Brooke High School in 1969 and led the Bruins to an OVAC championship. Hedmond took over at Steubenville in 1981 and directed the Jefferson County squad for two years. His teams compiled an 18-4 record and qualified for Big Red's first two post-season berths since Ohio adopted a playoff system in the 1970s. While at East Liverpool, Hedmond lettered 18 sophomores as the Potters turned in a 3-7 record. The following season, they rebounded to finish at 7-3. Overall, his record as a head football coach was 44-22-5. During his time as track coach with the Potters, his teams went through four straight seasons without losing a dual meet.

Successful as he was with a coaching whistle around his neck, Hedmond was even more effective as an administrator. Within the OVAC, he served as a class representative, was a long-time member of the OVAC Foundation Executive Board and, for several years, he directed giant OVAC Wrestling Tournament. Hedmond served as Athletic Director at Steubenville High School and later was the Building and Grounds Superintendent with Steubenville City Schools. Among his numerous honors were the Carl Hamill Memorial Award, presented by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club; OVAC Mr. Mat Award; Ohio Eastern District Coach of the Year; Eastern District Athletic Director of the Year and an Outstanding Achievement Award from Dapper Dan. Before his passing, Hedmond was inducted into the Ohio Athletic Administrators Hall of Fame.



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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

James 'Jimmy' Stewart (Media)



James C. "Jimmy" Stewart (Triadelphia High School, Class of 1918). Stewart devoted nearly a half-century to the newspaper profession, serving with great distinction.

He began his career associated with the *Wheeling News* and *The Register*, which then were separate newspapers. Stewart was sports editor of the now-defunct *Wheeling Telegraph* from 1921 through 1929 and later became the sports editor of the *News-Register*. He eventually concluded his long career as the associate sports editor of the *N-R* where he worked alongside fellow Hall of Famer Bill Van Horne.

In the early years of the OVAC, the conference perhaps had no greater friend than "Jimmy" Stewart, this according to Van Horne himself. Beginning in 1943, Stewart kept the weekly standings on football and basketball until his retirement on December 31, 1968. Stewart also painstakingly kept record books that proved invaluable to anyone interested in Ohio Valley sports lore. He also was recognized as a walking encyclopedia on local athletics. His head was a storehouse of sports information. What wasn't committed to his memory could be found in his pocket-sized record books and envelopes which filled his desk and filing cabinet.

Beginning in the early 1920s, Stewart's "Lookin' Em Over" column was one of the most widely-read throughout the area. In later years, he penned a golf column, "The 19th Hole," which appeared in the newspaper every Sunday from the spring months into the fall. He also initiated a popular Monday column on area collegiate sports which he titled, "With the Colleges."

He was also involved with the scheduling of basketball games worked by members of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials. His love of sandlot baseball was well known, as he almost meticulously covered happenings in the old Intelligencer and United Mine Workers baseball leagues.

A quiet man who never cast himself in the limelight during his career, Stewart was honored with a special award at the time of his retirement from an appreciative Ohio Valley Athletic Conference. He also received an award of appreciation from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

John Craig (Coaches)



John Craig (Follansbee High School, Class of 1967). Craig enjoyed an illustrious 26-year career as a head wrestling coach, including two seasons at Hillsboro (Ohio) High School, 18 years at Steubenville Big Red and five years at Indian Creek High School in Winterville.

While at Big Red, his teams earned six overall championships in the OVAC Wrestling Tournament. Steubenville also captured seven divisional titles and finished in the top three a total of 13 times at the conference championship event. Thirty-one of his Big Red matmen earned individual conference titles. He had 87 qualifiers for the Ohio state meet, five of whom earned individual championships, and 23 who were state place-winners. His team finished in the top five at the Ohio state tournament four times, including a runner-up finish in 1988.

Craig's 1989 squad finished the regular season ranked No. 1 in The Associated Press Division II wrestling poll and placed third at the state tournament. His overall dual meet record was 201-74-3 and he coached his teams to 42 tournament championships, including nine district titles. Four times, his teams turned in undefeated dual meet records. Several of his former wrestlers went on to compete in college at schools such as Ohio State, Purdue, Army, Navy and West Liberty. One of his protégés won a Big 10 championship and others were place-winners in the NCAA Division I, II, III and NAIA national tournaments.

Craig was named OVAC Wrestling Coach of the Year on five occasions and was presented the prestigious "Mr. Mat Award" in 2002. He is a member of the Ohio Wrestling Coaches and the West Liberty State College Athletic Halls of Fame. In 1989, he was selected as the East-Southeast Wrestling Coach of the Year and the Ohio Division II Coach of the Year. For 21 years, Craig served as a wrestling official on the youth, junior high, high school, college and open levels. As a principal at Indian Creek, he was one of the founders of the Buckeye 8 Athletic League.

As an athlete, Craig wrestled at Follansbee High School and was a three-year letterman at West Liberty where he earned WVAC championships three times and twice was the MVP in the conference tournament. In 1972, Craig was the runner-up in the NAIA national meet, where he earned All-American honors.

Robert 'Bob' Kettlewell (Coaches)



Robert S. "Bob" Kettlewell (Linsly Military Institute, Class of 1947). During his 20 years as the head coach at Winterville High School (1956-75), Kettlewell's teams posted a 143-40-10 record, the third-best winning percentage in Ohio Valley history for coaches with 100 or more wins. His teams earned nine league championships (four in the Big Eight and five OVAC titles). Winterville won its first OVAC crown under Kettlewell in 1956, got its second in 1966 and then captured three in a row from 1970 through 1972, which equaled a record held previously by Bellaire and Martins Ferry.

Kettlewell had three undefeated teams at Winterville — 1957, 1967 and 1972 — and seven clubs that sustained just one loss. From 1966 through '73, the Warriors lost only 11 games. Under Kettlewell's direction, Winterville scored in a record 140 straight games, ending with a scoreless tie against Bellaire in a contest that saw the Gold Warriors deny what would have been a game-winning and streak-continuing touchdown because of a penalty.

Among the stars coached by this highly-regarded mentor was Donnie Young, the Ohio Valley career rushing record holder. Among the other numerous college athletic football standouts tutored by Kettlewell were Ohio State captain Alan Jack who played on an undefeated Rose Bowl team with the Buckeyes, and Roger Alford, the first black to sign at West Virginia University.

Kettlewell also was a standout athlete while playing at Linsly Military Institute. He lettered in four sports and played football at West Virginia University, where he also lettered.

Indian Creek High School's (formerly Winterville High) football facility was renamed "Bob Kettlewell Memorial Stadium" in his honor. In 1990, Bob was the fourth Ohio Valley coach inducted into the Ohio Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame. He joined the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame in 1987.

William 'Bill' Thomas (Officials)



William D. "Bill" Thomas (Bellaire High School, Class of 1952). During a 48-year career as a track official, Thomas served as the meet referee for nearly every major championship in the Ohio Valley. The list includes the Martins Ferry and Shadyside Relays; the St. Clairsville, Barnesville and Wheeling Park Invitationals; Cal Giffin Track Classic; various OVAC championship meets; West Virginia Regionals and the Ohio High School Athletic Association Eastern Sectional and District meets.

He was a meet official for 10 OVAC schools, including Bellaire, Barnesville, Cambridge, John Marshall, Martins Ferry, Shadyside, Skyvue, St. Clairsville, Wheeling Park and Union Local and Thomas also worked as a meet official at the Mansfield Relays (15 years); Bellaire Relays (48 years); Ohio regional championships (10 years) and the Ohio high school state meets for boys and girls (15 years). Thomas also served as meet director as numerous Buckeye State district and regional events, along with the OVAC Track Championships.

He received the OVAC Cal Giffin Award for service to track and field in 1983; was honorary referee at the Bellaire Relays in 1996 and was honored again during the 50-year celebration of the famed Bellaire meet in 2004. The former Bellaire High athletic great is a member of the school's Wall of Fame.

Thomas attend Mississippi State on a football scholarship and also lettered there in track his freshman year. After two years with the Bulldogs, he entered the Army and served overseas before coming home and playing on the 1956 National Service football championship team, coached by Don Coryell, who later coached the San Diego Chargers. Thomas finished his college career at West Liberty State College where he lettered in football and baseball. He also had a long and successful career in coaching. He spent five years as an assistant in football and basketball at Bellaire High. After that tenure, he went to St. Clairsville as head baseball coach and an assistant in football and basketball. Bill later spent five years as head football coach at Barnesville before becoming athletic director at Bellaire in 1973. He served as head coach at Union Local from 1978 until 1981 when he returned to Bellaire as a teacher until retiring in 1989.

Tom Keane (Athlete - 1940s)



Tom Keane (Linsly Military Institute, Class of 1944). The Bellaire native was a multi-sport standout for the Cadets and earned All-OVAC basketball and football on the first selections in 1943-44. He also was an All-City basketball selection. As a senior on a 7-4 record Cadet football team, the two-way back and punter returned a pass interception 106 yards to score in an 18-6 win over Warwood.

He enrolled at Ohio State where he lettered as a freshman before serving 20 months in the U.S. Navy.

Upon discharge, he enrolled at West Virginia University and lettered in 1946 and 1947, becoming a rare letterman at both OSU and WVU.

Keane was a third round pick and 18th overall National Football League Draft selection by the Los Angeles Rams in 1948. He played eight NFL seasons, and 87 games, as a defensive back-offensive end including the first four with the Rams. In 1952, he played with the Dallas Texans before two years with the Baltimore Colts and ended his career in 1955 with the Chicago Cardinals. He was a two-time All-Pro and played in the 1953 Pro Bowl, ranked second in the NFL in pass interceptions twice, and played in three NFL championship games including the 1951 Rams' title team. From 1948-52, both Keane brothers competed in the NFL.

He was a long-time assistant coach in the NFL including Chicago Cardinals from 1957-59, Pittsburgh 1965 and was an original member of the Miami Dolphins' staff in 1966 where he remained through 1985 as defensive backs and special teams coach. In 1962, he became the first head coach of the Wheeling Ironmen and served until joining the Steelers' staff. The Ironmen went 9-4 in 1962 before winning the United Football League title with a 12-1 record in 1963. In 1964, the Ironmen were 7-7.

Keane died at age 74 in 2001.

Nick Mumley (Athlete - 1950s)



Nick Mumley (Wheeling High School, Class of 1955). One of the most honored three-sport athletes in the long history of Wheeling High, he starred in football, basketball and track, earning three varsity letters in each.

He was first team All-State in football as a two-way end and he also received All-OVAC and All-City accolades.

In basketball, he was first team all-class All-West Virginia as a senior and was a two-time All-OVAC and All-City first team selection. He scored 15.8 points per game as a junior and 24.3 per outing as a senior.

As a Wildcat senior in 1955, the 6-foot-6 center was the anchor of the final team coached by OVAC Legends' honoree Everett Brinkman which won its first 18 games before bowing in the regular season finale at Bellaire. The OVAC title-winning team won the sectional and regional titles before bowing in the first round of the state tournament to Mullens to finish with a 22-2 record.

He also scored 30 points in a record-setting 146-110 victory over Weir High at Madison Gymnasium, a game which set Ohio Valley and West Virginia marks for combined points in a game (256).

In track, he won two state one-class shot put titles with marks of 51-3 1/2 in 1955 and 52-2 3/4 in 1954 and two OVAC shot put crowns, including a conference-record toss of 53-5 1/2.

He earned a football scholarship to Purdue University, where he lettered three years as a regular two-way end.

He was the 51st overall NFL draft pick in 1959 by the Philadelphia Eagles, but opted to play in the new American Football League where he competed three seasons from 1960-62 with the New York Titans, a fore-runner of the Jets, as a defensive end-offensive tackle. He played in a total of 42 AFL games.

Tom Yakubowski (Athlete - 1950s)



Tom Yakubowski (Adena High School, Class of 1958). A three-sport standout for the Golden Wave who starred in the first year the school joined the conference, which expanded to three classes in 1957-58.

At Adena, he was a three-sport team captain in football, basketball and baseball and earned 10 letters — four in baseball and three each in basketball and football.

The 1957 Adena football team went 6-2-2 and won the OVAC Class A crown. He was a fullback-linebacker-quarterback in football and an All-OVAC, All-Valley Small School and All-East Ohio Athletic League selection. He was the MVP of the 1958 Ohio-W.Va. All-Star game won by Ohio, 25-0. He scored 13 points and starred as fullback-linebacker.

In basketball, he was a two-time All-East Ohio Athletic League honoree and averaged in double figures for three seasons, including 11.3 points per game as a sophomore; 17.5 points as a junior and 19.2 points as a senior.

In baseball, the pitcher-infielder was an All-Ohio selection as a senior and he also pitched in the East-West All-Star game in Columbus. He led the Golden Wave to a 12-1 record, losing in the regional finals to Northwestern High and future Major League pitcher Dean Chance. He tossed two one-hitters in a three-day span and had 32 2/3 consecutive scoreless innings in tournament play, which ranks second in the Ohio High School record book.

He earned a football scholarship to Purdue University, where he lettered as a sophomore and senior fullback-linebacker while suffering a series of knee injuries. He was second on the team in rushing (310 yards) as a sophomore. He also played baseball one season at Purdue.

Yakubowski competed in the 1962 Blue-Gray All-Star Football Game and tried out as a free agent with the Buffalo Bills.

Bill Kennedy (Athlete - 1960s)



Bill Kennedy (Warwood High School, Class of 1967). Basketball and Bill Kennedy are synonymous. Some four-plus decades since starring at old Warwood High School, basketball still is a major part of his life.

Kennedy enjoyed a stellar prep career with the Vikings. The dazzling 6 ft. 2 guard led Warwood to state Class AA basketball tournament appearances in both the 1966 and '67 campaigns. He capped his prep hoop career by sparking the Vikings to the school's only state basketball crown. That team finished with a stellar 24-2 mark, including closing the season on a 15-game victory run. Warwood captured its first OVAC hoop title in 21 years, with Kennedy providing much of the firepower with his 26.2 points per game average.

The explosive backcourt dandy garnered first-team All-West Virginia, All-OVAC, and All-City plaudits. Just a season prior, Kennedy led the Vikings to a 22-4 mark and the state semifinals before being eliminated by Mullens. He was a first-team All-OVAC honoree that year and was named an all-state tournament selection, an honor he duplicated as a senior. Kennedy finished his illustrious Vikings' basketball career with more than 1,200 points. He was also an accomplished high jumper, as reflected in his third-place finish in the state Class AA meet as a senior.

His basketball achievements earned him a spot with the West Liberty State College basketball team. He wasted no time in making his mark for the Hilltoppers, leading the team in scoring in both his freshman and sophomore seasons with 509 and 445 points, respectively. Kennedy earned all-WVAC and all-tournament plaudits as a freshman.

His two years of impressive play with WLS-C provided a springboard to a transfer to Arizona State University for the 1971 and '72 seasons. Kennedy proved he was no small-school wonder as he led the Sun Devils in scoring both seasons, averaging 14.8 and 14.6 points per game, respectively. His two-year point total of 765 is the ninth best for a Sun Devil in a two-year career. All told, he scored 1,719 on the collegiate level.

His play at Arizona State caught the eyes of professional scouts. He was drafted by Memphis of the ABA, but opted for a career as a basketball official. Kennedy, who still resides in the Phoenix area, continues to be a Pac-10 college basketball official.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Bob Rieves (Athlete - 1960s)

Bob Rieves (Wheeling High School, Class of 1969). Some 40 years after running his final prep race, Rieves remains the measuring stick for sprint greatness in the Ohio Valley. The 156-pound mercurial-heeled rocket was nothing short of sensational during his career with the Wildcats.

Rieves was nearly untouchable his final two years in the high school ranks. As a senior, Rieves turned in a performance that still ranks with the all-time great OVAC running fetes. He broke two state records in the state championship meet while tying a third.

He blistered the 220-yard dash in a new state standard of 21.5 while he smashed the 440 mark by 1.2 seconds via his 47.7 clocking. Rieves' scintillating 9.8 in the 100 equaled the state record. His assault on the state records resulted in him becoming the first OVAC athlete in 28 years to be the state meet's high scorer.

Rieves was also the West Virginia state champion in the 220 as a junior. The Wildcat star captured five individual OVAC sprint gold medals in his final two years of high school. His impressive efforts helped lead Wheeling High to the 1969 OVAC team championship, the school's first such title in 23 years.

His sprinting dominance is reflected in the fact that he was undefeated as a senior in the 220 and 440 and was never worse than second in the 100 in that time. He tied for high-point honors in the prestigious Bellaire Relays his senior year while being the high scorer in every other meet that spring.

Rieves' sprinting accomplishments were so impressive that his track jersey was retired at the annual Wheeling High awards assembly.

Rieves earned a track scholarship to West Virginia University. He competed for two seasons for the Mountaineers. He earned his bachelor of science degree in landscape architecture. He now resides in Brooklyn and is employed by the New York City Parks & Recreation Department as a capital projects analyst.



Mike Kovalick (Athlete - 1970s)

Mike Kovalick (Bellaire High School, Class of 1975). Kovalick has the distinction of not only being a two-sport standout, but also a two-state standout.

Kovalick, the son of legendary coach George Kovalick, was a prep grid and mat performer for three years at Weir High before matriculating to Bellaire High for his senior year. Both schools benefited from his prowess on the gridiron and on the mat.

Kovalick is a rare state champion wrestler in both West Virginia and Ohio. He turned the trick in the Mountain State as a junior for the Red Riders and capped his prep mat career with a state championship in the Buckeye State for the Big Reds. Both wrestling crowns came in the 185-pound classification.

The powerful matman was near-perfect his final two years on the mat. He won 27 of 28 matches as a junior before running the table in all 28 bouts as senior. He was an OVAC champion both winters after placing fifth as a sophomore.

He finished his illustrious wrestling career with a stellar 64-3-2 mark.

Kovalick continued his mat success on the collegiate Division I level. He wrestled for Bobby Douglas at Arizona State. Kovalick finished as PAC-10 runner-up at 190 pounds in his senior season.

Kovalick — Bellaire High's first-ever state wrestling champion — was inducted into the school's Hall of Fame in 1983.

He was also an all-star performer in football. The two-way lineman anchored the Weir High trenches his sophomore and junior years and filled the same role for Bellaire in 1974.

Kovalick earned All-Valley and all-OVAC honors his final two years. Moreover, he was named all-Ohio in football his senior campaign and he played in the OVAC All-Star Game.

Kovalick resides in Wheeling.



Joe Pettini (Athlete - 1970s)

Joe Pettini (Brooke High School, Class of 1973). Pettini is without question on the short list of the greatest prep baseball players in Ohio Valley annals. His high school diamond resume is overflowing with accomplishments which led to a sparkling collegiate career at Mercer University.

The multi-talented Pettini started every game during his Brooke High career, some 140 contests. He didn't skip a beat at Mercer, starting all 196 games for the Macon, Georgia-based institution.

Pettini not only enjoyed individual success in his prep career, he also led the Bruins to a coveted state baseball championship. He was a two-time first-team all-West Virginia selection and was twice named captain of the all-Valley squad. He earned the distinction of being captain of both the all-Valley and all-OVAC teams as a senior.

After his brilliant Mercer career, Pettini was signed as a non-drafted free agent with the Montreal Expos in 1977. He was later traded to San Francisco, playing four seasons with the Giants. Pettini finished his professional baseball career by playing three years with the Class AAA Louisville Redbirds.

He then entered the coaching ranks, holding several different posts. His managerial career commenced with Hamilton, Ontario in 1989. He moved to St. Petersburg for the 1990 season and in Arkansas for three seasons. Pettini ended his minor league managerial career by guiding the Louisville Redbirds to the American Association championship.

Pettini gained a plum assignment in 2002 when St. Cardinals' manager Tony LaRussa tabbed Pettini to be his bench coach, a position he still holds today. He attained the ultimate in 2006, gaining a World Series championship ring with the Cardinals.

Joe and his wife Barbara have two children, Michelle (25) and Joseph James (20). They reside in Bethany, W. Va.



Connie Douth (Athlete - 1980s)

Connie Douth (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 1981). At a time when girls' sports were starting to take hold in high school athletics, Douth was one of the first who excelled in three sports — basketball, volleyball and softball — but it was on the basketball court where she had her biggest impact.

The school's all-time leading scorer with 1,842 points who also had 538 career rebounds, the 5-7 guard helped Trail to four straight trips to the OHSAA State Tournament under Coach Dave Lim, including a state championship during her sophomore season in 1979.

In her freshman year, Trail posted a 22-1 record, with Douth scoring 284 points and gaining Associated Press All-Ohio honorable mention. She scored 311 points as the Lady Warriors went 23-1 in winning the state title in her sophomore season, with Douth named the state tournament MVP and again gaining honorable mention All-Ohio accolades. The team went 26-1 with Douth as a junior scoring 432 points. She received first team All-Ohio from United Press International and finished as runner-up as the "Player of the Year" to Trail teammate Lori Heady. She was also a third team All-Ohio pick by AP.

Douth moved to the head of the class, so to speak, as a senior when she scored 815 points and was first team UPI All-Ohio and "Player of the Year" as well as first team AP All-Ohio and first team All-OVAC. That year, Trail posted a 23-4 record, meaning the Lady Warriors' record during Douth's four years was an incredible 94-7. She was selected for the first Ohio North-South All-Star Game and scored 18 points to earn game MVP honors.

Douth was also a four-year starter and letterwinner in both volleyball and softball, playing on the Lady Warriors' state tournament team in 1979. She was inducted into the Buckeye Trail Athletic Hall of Fame in 1996.

The talented cager went on to a fine four-year career at the University of Michigan, becoming the school's first out-of-state scholarship recipient in women's basketball. For her career at Michigan, Douth scored 415 points, had 267 rebounds and 170 assists.



Jay Peterson (Athlete - 1980s)

Jay Peterson (Cadiz High School, Class of 1980). A spectacular four-sport athlete, Peterson made his biggest impact on the football field.

The Hopedale native dazzled as a running back with numerous memorable performances, including a single-game modern Ohio Valley record 377 yards against Mingo and games of 288 and 282 yards. He scored six touchdowns in a game twice.

Peterson broke a 50-year old Ohio Valley single-season rushing record held by OVAC "Legends" honoree George (Puck) Burgwin when he rushed for 2,348 yards on 203 carries to lead Cadiz to an 8-0-2 record. He just missed the modern single-season scoring record with 221 points (32 TDs, 28 PAT Kicks), one point shy of OVAC Hall of Famer Terry Sniively of Powhatan's mark of 222 points.

In his three-year gridiron career with the Cardinals, he rushed for 3,959 yards (second at the time on the Ohio Valley career list) and scored 349 points. Peterson had his football No. 22 retired by the school.

In track, he recorded the Ohio Valley's fastest time in the 100-meters as a senior (11.0 seconds) and also had the fastest 100-yard time (10.3) that year. He won the OVAC Class AA 100-meter race in 11.1 seconds.

He split spring duty between track and baseball and was an All-Valley honorable mention pick, hitting .352 and recording 25 stolen bases on an 18-7 record team. Peterson also participated in basketball as a sophomore and junior.

He earned a scholarship to Miami (Ohio) University and was honored three times on the All-Mid-American Conference football team, including first team accolades in 1982, second team in 1983 and honorable mention in 1981. A four-year letterwinner, he is fifth on the all-time career rushing yardage list at Miami with 2,874 yards.

Following his graduation from Miami in 1985, Peterson went on to a coaching career, first as high school assistant at Cadiz as well as Cincinnati Anderson and Cincinnati Withrow. He then spent eight years at Miami of Ohio (1991-98), five years at Northwestern University (1999-2004) and he is currently beginning his fourth year at Eastern Michigan University where he is the assistant head coach/defensive coordinator/linebackers coach.



Mark Cisar (Athlete - 1990s)

Mark Cisar (Magnolia High School, Class of 1994). He is the only two-time winner of a state football "Player of the Year" award in OVAC history, having won West Virginia's Kennedy Award in 1992 and '93. He was also the Gatorade "Player of the Year" in 1992 and was a two-time Class AA all-state captain. He was a two-time All-OVAC and All-Valley selection.

Cisar played quarterback, safety, placekicker and punter on Blue Eagle teams that compiled a two-year record of 25-3, finishing as the Class AA state runner-up twice under the tutelage of his father, Dave Cisar. In two seasons as a starter and one as a backup, he passed for Ohio Valley record totals of 5,193 yards and 64 touchdowns. As a junior, he passed for a record 2,691 yards and 34 TDs. He also kicked a valley and state record total of 85 points and had a record-tying 99-yard TD pass as a junior.

In baseball, he was a three-time All-West Virginia Class AA, All-OVAC and All-Valley pitcher.

He was also a regular in basketball, scoring 45 points in a game on one occasion.

He earned a baseball scholarship to Charleston Southern University in South Carolina where he was a four-year starter. He was named Big South Conference "Player of the Year" in 1997 and was a three-time all-conference pick.

He was drafted by the Boston Red Sox and was the Red Sox Rookie League "Pitcher of the Year" in 1998. In 1999, he was selected to the South Atlantic League All-Star Team and won a South Atlantic League title in '99 as a member of the Augusta Green Jackets. He then played for the Capitales de Quebec, an independent league team, and was an all-star in 2002 and the Northern League "Relief Pitcher of the Year".

Cisar earned his bachelor's degree in physical education and was a substitute teacher for five years in the Wetzel County School system before going back to Charleston (S.C.) to serve as a health and physical education teacher as well as an assistant football coach.

He is the head football coach at Union Local High School, guiding the Jets to a 9-1 record and their first-ever OHSAA playoff berth in 2007. He was named the Eastern District's Division IV "Co-Coach of the Year".



Suzie Dailer (Athlete - 1990s)

Suzie Dailer (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1991). She proved to be a true "queen of the court" in many ways, excelling for four years in basketball and tennis and adding a couple of fine seasons in volleyball for good measure.

In basketball, Dailer gain All-West Virginia recognition all four years, including first team in Class AA as a sophomore and senior and second team laurels as a junior. She was also a three-time All-OVAC and All-Valley first team selection and a two-time All-Mountaineer League pick. The valley's leader in three-point field goals all four years, she scored 22.1 points per game as a senior and finished her career with 1,381 points, the all-time girls' mark for the Lady Maroon Knights. Dailer led Central to three straight OVAC Class AA championships and was a sophomore on the Knights' W. Va. Class AA state runner-up squad in 1989. Central posted a 77-17 record during her career.

In tennis, she also lettered four years and had tremendous success in both OVAC and state tournament play, culminating in a W. Va. state doubles championship (with Pam Butch) as a senior as the Lady Knights finished as the state runner-up. She also finished first or second in several OVAC and regional tournaments in both singles and doubles and helped the team to three OVAC titles and three top four finishes in the state.

In volleyball, she lettered twice and gained first team All-OVAC honors as a senior, helping the team to a 37-5 record and the OVAC, W.Va. Section 1 and Region 1 titles, and a Class AA runner-up finish in the state tournament.

Dailer continued to star at St. Bonaventure University as a four-year starter and letterwinner. She finished as the school's fifth all-time leading scorer (1,422 points) and had the fifth-best single-season in 1992-93 (524 points). She set records for single-game (8), single-season (99) and career (291) three-pointers; had the single-season record for assists (163) and was second in career assists (449). Her all-star honors at St. Bonaventure included second team all-conference as a sophomore and third team as a senior. The 1995 Division I Women's Basketball Three-Point Shooting champion, she was inducted into the St. Bonaventure Athletic Hall of Fame in 2006.



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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Class of 2009

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Dr. Vincent 'Vince' Monseau (OVAC 'Contributor')

Dr. Vincent "Vince" Monseau (Weir High School, Class of 1958). Think of the sport of wrestling and you think of Monseau, who enjoyed success at the high school level locally before making his mark at West Liberty State College.

As a high school coach, he spent nine years at Oak Glen, Charleston and Weir high schools, guiding the 1967 Oak Glen squad to a W.Va. State Tournament championship. After one year at Peru State in Nebraska, he spent 31 years (1973-2004) as head coach at West Liberty, compiling a 359-221-7 record. He coached 72 All-Americans, 34 Academic All-Americans and six National Champions and guided the Hilltoppers to a national runner-up finish in 1995.

Monseau, who also coached football and cross country during his days at WLSC, directed the NAIA National Wrestling Tournament in both 1979 and '87 and was an administrative assistant for the NCAA Division II National Wrestling Tournament in 2003.

His awards are numerous, including the OVAC 'Mr. Mat' award in 1983; NAIA Hall of Fame in 1987; USA Wrestling Bronze Level Member Coach in 1987; West Liberty State College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997; NCAA Division II Southwest Regional Coach of the Year in 1996 and 1997; National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2002; NCAA Division II Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2003; and National Wrestling Coaches Association Lifetime Member in 2004.

Currently in his fifth year as principal at River High School, Monseau also directed youth wrestling camps at West Liberty for nearly 30 years.

As an athlete, Monseau participated in football, wrestling and track at both Weir High and West Liberty State College and later participated in many distance races, including the Boston Marathon and Wheeling Distance Race.

Monseau attained his B.A. degree from West Liberty State College as well as both a M.A. and Doctorate of Education from West Virginia University.



Richard 'Dick' Edge (OVAC 'Family')

Richard "Dick" Edge (Wheeling High School, Class of 1954). To say Edge has worn many different hats over the years would be a vast understatement.

He has spent 42 years in education, serving as a teacher, coach, assistant principal, principal and superintendent at various OVAC-member schools.

Edge coached in various capacities at Triadelphia, Warwood and Winterville high schools, starting the wrestling programs at both Triadelphia and Warwood as well as four junior high programs in Ohio County. He coached Warwood to an undefeated season and an OVAC wrestling championship as well as sixth place finish in the W.Va. State Tournament when there was only one classification. He also co-founded and coached summer track and girls' softball programs in Winterville.

Among his accolades were being named Ohio Eastern District Wrestling Coach of the Year in 1975; receiving the OVAC's prestigious 'Mr. Mat' Award in 1979; induction into the West Liberty State College Hall of Fame in 1997; and selection to the WLSC Wall of Honor for Outstanding Alumni in 2003.

Edge served as president of the OVAC during the 1986-87 and 1987-88 school years and served as a member of the OVAC Executive Board for many years. He was also a past president of the Tri-County Athletic League and the East Central Ohio League.

He also officiated at various levels in football, basketball and track.

Edge represented Wheeling High in the 1954 OVAC All-Star Football Game and then went on to West Liberty State College where he was a four-year letterman, two-time all-West Virginia Conference selection and the team's co-captain as a senior.

He received his B.A. in Business Education, Health Education and Physical Education and a Master's Degree in Secondary Administration from the University of Dayton. He is a U.S. Army veteran, serving active duty from 1958-60 and in the reserves from 1960-63.



John Sorrenti (Media)

John Sorrenti (Weir High School, Class of 1956). Even if you don't know Sorrenti, you probably recognize his voice.

Back in 1954, at the age of 16, he began what would be a 40-year career as a sports announcer for WEIR Radio in Weirton. During that time, he broadcast football, basketball and baseball games for four OVAC-member schools - Weir, Madonna, Brooke and Winterville.

After retiring from that position in 1994, he worked four years for television station WTOV-TV9 on football "Game of the Week" telecasts and also announced the OVAC Wrestling Tournament telecast in 1996.

As a long-time friend and supporter of the OVAC, Sorrenti served as Master of Ceremonies for the OVAC Queen of Queens competition for five years in the mid-1980s and he has been the Master of Ceremonies at the OVAC Hall of Fame Banquet since its inception.

Among Sorrenti's awards, he was honored on the Weir High Wall of Fame in 1995 and received two separate honors from the Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley, including the 2009 Robert S. McKelvey Memorial Award.

Sorrenti began a political career in 1982 when he was elected as a Weirton City Councilman. In 1986, he was elected as a Hancock County Commissioner - a position he was re-elected to twice for a total of 18 years in office.

He has also served as Purchasing Agent for Hancock County Schools and Adult Education and Placement Coordinator of the John D. Rockefeller IV Career Center and is currently Manager of Training at Mountaineer Casino, Resort and Racetrack.



Gene Ford (Coaches)

Gene Ford (Indian Valley North High School, Class of 1970). As colorful and well-known as he was successful, Ford compiled a 440-262 record in 31 years as a high school boys' basketball coach.

He coached one year at Shenandoah and five at Tuscarawas Valley before making his mark during 25 years at Cambridge High (1980-2005) where he won 400 games and lost 183.

Ford's Cambridge teams compiled a 59-25 record in tournament play, winning 18 sectional titles, eight district crowns and five regional championships leading to five state tournament appearances (1987-88, 1991-92, 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1999-2000), including a runner-up finish in 1994-95. His teams also won 10 East Central Ohio League titles.

He received "Coach of the Year" honors in the OVAC, Eastern District, District 12 and ECOL and was the OHSBCA Division II State "Coach of the Year" in 1988.

Ford served as president of the District 12 Coaches Association, as a trustee for the OHSAA Foundation and on the Board of Directors of the Ohio High School Basketball Hall of Fame Museum. The recipient of the OVAC Earl Haberfield Coaches Award in 2005, he was inducted into the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2007.

As an athlete, he earned 11 varsity letters (four in baseball, four in track, three in basketball) at Midvale and Indian Valley North. He scored 1,310 career points and earned first team all-Ohio, all-Eastern District and all-Inter Valley Conference accolades in basketball and was a state qualifier in the pole vault in track.

He was a four-year letterman at Muskingum College in basketball, scoring 1,717 points (second most in school history) while earning all-Ohio Athletic Conference "Athlete of the Year" honors and UPI "Small America" accolades. He was a charter member of the Muskingum Athletic Hall of Fame in 1980.



Henry 'Hank' Lazasz (Coaches)

Henry "Hank" Lazasz (Warren Consolidated High School, Class of 1950). A pillar of the boys' basketball coaching community for 34 years, Lazasz topped the 400-victory plateau as his teams at Warren Consolidated, Buckeye South, Buckeye SouthWest and Buckeye Local combined for a 405-301 record.

All told, Lazasz-coached teams won four OVAC championships, 10 sectional titles and three district crowns while having two teams go undefeated in the regular season (1970 and 1977).

In 15 years at Warren Consolidated (1958-72), his teams were 179-120, winning two OVAC championships (1961 and 1970). The 1970 squad posted a 22-1 record, winning OHSAA Class A sectional and district titles before bowing in the regional.

In 16 years at Buckeye South, his teams were 211-133 and won two OVAC championships (1977 and 1981), eight sectional titles and two district crowns. The 1977 team was 22-1 and ranked No. 1 in Ohio Class AA, losing in the regional finals. That year, Lazasz was named Ohio Class AA "Coach of the Year" by UPI and Eastern District "Coach of the Year" by AP.

He concluded with two years at Buckeye SouthWest and then was head coach in the first year of the complete Buckeye Local consolidation in 1990-91.

Lazasz also was the OVAC all-sports "Coach of the Year" in 1970 and received the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Carl Hamill Award in 1990. He coached in both the Ohio North-South All-Star Game and the OVAC All-Star Classic and had two yearly OVAC basketball scholarships named in his honor. He received the OVAC's Earl Haberfield Coaches Award in 1986.

He was a member of the OHSBCA and served as president of the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association. He was also inducted into the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame and the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Lazasz was a three-year letterman in high school basketball at Warren Consolidated in both basketball and football. He then lettered two years in basketball and four in football at Bethany College before serving two years in the U.S. Army.



Bill Paolisso (Officials)

Bill Paolisso (Weir High School, Class of 1946). He was a mainstay among area officials, working OVAC football and boys/girls basketball games for a 50-year period from 1948-1998, first with the Wheeling board and later with the Weirton-Stuebenville board.

Paolisso officiated 10 West Virginia state championship football games during his career and several Ohio-West Virginia and OVAC All-Star football games.

In basketball, he officiated more than 100 postseason tournaments (sectionals, regionals, state), including 19 state tournaments. He worked the first Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic in 1978 and also was a referee in the West Virginia Conference.

Among Paolisso's officiating awards are the OVAC Robert Dawson Officials Award; the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association Officials Award; the West Virginia Secondary Schools Athletic Commission Award; and the Weirton-Stuebenville Officials' Board Award.

Paolisso was a three-sport athlete at Weir High (football, basketball and baseball). He was first team all-state in football and basketball as a senior, earning all-OVAC honors in basketball twice and once in football. He was also all-tournament for the state champion Red Riders' baseball team.

He played two years of professional baseball in the St. Louis Cardinals' organization (1952 and 1953) and he served two years in the U.S. Army.



Harold 'Doc' Daugherty (Athlete - 1940s)

Harold "Doc" Daugherty (Weir High School, Class of 1945). In 1945, he became the first of only seven high school athletes to win the W.Va. Amateur Athlete of the Year Award, the state's oldest honor dating back to 1934. A first team, all-class, all-stater in football, basketball and baseball, he also earned All-OVAC football and basketball honors as a Red Rider senior.

The two-way back led Weir to a 9-1 football record in 1943, losing only to state champion Parkersburg. As a senior, in 1944, he led Weir to a 40-13 victory over Parkersburg and accounted for five touchdowns - a TD run, two TD passes, a 101-yard pass interception return and an 80-yard kickoff return.

Daugherty's two-year career included running and passing for 1,925 yards and 31 touchdowns. He also returned kicks and was a star defensive back.

In basketball, the all-stater helped Weir to a 22-2 record. In baseball, he led the Red Riders to the one-class state championship in 1945.

He signed a football scholarship to Ohio State University where he played on a 7-2 record team as a freshman starting safety. In the fifth game, he moved into the starting offensive lineup as tailback. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in April of 1946 and, after discharge, he signed a professional baseball contract with the Detroit Tigers and played pro baseball from 1948-53. Included were three years in Class AAA with Buffalo and Toledo. He opened the 1951 season with the major league team, but returned to Toledo after a month.

When the Weir High football coaching job opened, he was hired and guided his second team, in 1955, to an 8-2 record and an OVAC title. He also continued his pro baseball career by playing in the late 1950s in Minot, N.D., and Mitchell, S.D., and was manager of farm teams in 1964 and 1965 in Coco Beach, Fla., and Duluth, Minn. He capped his high school coaching career in Bedford, Ohio.



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Jim Hanna (Athlete - 1950s)

Jim Hanna (Weir High School, Class of 1950). A three-sport all-star who led the Red Riders to two state one-class championships as a senior, he is one of the most decorated athletes in school history. A varsity football starter as a freshman, he continued to excel under Hall of Fame coach Carl Hamill, who labeled Hanna and Daugherty as "two of the finest all-around athletes" he coached in his legendary career.

In 1949, Hanna starred on the 11-0 record Weir football team which won the first W.Va. largest Class A playoff title with a 27-13 victory over Milton. The two-way end/punter/placekicker landed nine touchdown passes and scored 83 points as a senior when he was runner-up for the West Virginia Player of the Year Heisman Award (now the Kennedy Award) and was selected first team All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-State. He also played in two all-star games: West Virginia vs. Ohio and the West Virginia North-South game.

In basketball, he was second team All-W.Va. and All-OVAC. He pitched and batted Weir to the one-class West Virginia championship. In the 5-3 finals' win over East Bank, he struck out 10 in a six-hit effort and batted in four runs with two singles.

He accepted a football scholarship from legendary Kentucky coach Paul (Bear) Bryant and started at end on a freshman squad quarterbacked by Babe Parilli. He left school to play minor league baseball for several seasons before returning to Weirton, where he has been a long-time local American Legion, high school and summer baseball coach and scout.



Bill Jobko (Athlete - 1950s)

Bill Jobko (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1953). A three-year, three-sport Bulldog athlete in football, basketball and baseball, he earned All-OVAC and All-Valley football honors as a senior lineman.

Recruited by Ohio State University, he became a two-way offensive guard and linebacker who played on the Buckeye national title teams of 1954 and 1957 when the Buckeyes won two Rose Bowls. He was team MVP in 1957. He is the only player in Big 10 Conference history to never play in a losing Big 10 regular season game. He recorded a safety for the College All-Stars in a 35-19 victory over the NFL champion Detroit Lions, one of only eight times the collegians defeated the NFL champions in the annual classic.

He was drafted by the Los Angeles Rams and played for the NFL team from 1958-62 before performing for the Minnesota Vikings from 1963-65. Jobko capped his pro playing career as a team defensive captain of the original Atlanta Falcons in 1966. From 1967-89, he worked for the Falcons in various roles - assistant coach, scout and Director of Pro Player Personnel. He closed his NFL career as chief college scout of the Phoenix Cardinals from 1989-94.

Bridgeport High School honored Jobko by naming the street entrance to Perkins Field as "Bill Jobko Way" and then on Aug. 21, 2008, dedicated its home complex as "Bill Jobko Football Stadium."



Tim Anderson (Athlete - 1960s)

Tim Anderson (Follansbee High School, Class of 1967). Anderson's football career was a well-traveled one, as well as a quite successful one. He first realized grid greatness in Follansbee, a prep career so good that it landed him a scholarship at one of the premier football colleges in the nation - The Ohio State University.

Just like for the Blue Wave back on the banks of the Ohio River, Anderson starred for the Buckeyes, so much so that he was a first-round pick of the San Francisco 49ers. His NFL, days, however, got off to a delayed start due to contract difficulties. In the meantime, Anderson enjoyed an all-league honors stint with the Canadian Football League's Toronto Argonauts.

Anderson was a three-sport standout at Follansbee High. In addition to his many football achievements, the 6 ft., 195-pounder distinguished himself quite nicely in baseball and track.

As a senior, Anderson's Blue Wave went 8-2. Those two blemishes came in the season's first two games, contests in which Anderson did not play due to injury. In just eight games, Anderson rushed for 863 yards and also led the team in tackles. As a result, the two-way back earned all-OVAC, All-Valley and all-W.Va. Class AAA first-team honors. As junior, he was all-OVAC and All-Valley second team.

He started two years for the Blue Wave baseball squad as an outfielder. He also joined the track team as a senior and was fifth in the state Class AAA shot put.

At Ohio State, Anderson started three years as a defensive back. During that span, the powerful Buckeyes went 27-2 with two Big Ten titles while also being named the consensus national champions in 1968. That team beat the O.J. Simpson-led USC Trojans in the Rose Bowl. As a senior, he was first-team All-Big Ten and was a first team All-American.

His Buckeye stardom proved a springboard to being the 23rd pick in the 1971 NFL draft. He owned the distinction of being the highest of the 12 Ohio State gridgers chosen in that draft, including Jack Tatum. When unable to agree to terms with the 49ers, he played four seasons in Canada before returning to San Francisco and playing the 1975 campaign for the Niners. The following season, Anderson played for the Buffalo Bills.



Mark Thompson (Athlete - 1960s)

Mark Thompson (Mount Pleasant High School, Class of 1969). Basketball was a way of life in the Thompson family, with Mark being the most productive. His two older brothers - Rich and Jim - started a hoop tradition at Mount Pleasant High in 1960. Every year during that decade witnessed a Thompson in the Mounties' starting lineup, ending with Mark's graduation in 1969. Mark set the family standard, however, for basketball greatness. He wasted no time making his presence felt on the hardwood, finishing as the second-leading scorer for the junior varsity team as a frosh. That jayvee squad went 18-0.

Thompson was nothing short of magical the next three winters, leading the team in scoring and rebounding each campaign. His tremendous play also sparked an eye-popping 92-9 record during that span for the Mounties, which included three successive section co-championships, a district final berth and a district semi-final appearance. As a sophomore, the hard-working hoopster averaged 17.6 points a game. That figure jumped to 24.8 as a junior and was capped by a 28.1 per game showing as a senior, including a career-best 50 lightings against Smithfield. During that senior year, the Mounties averaged more than 95 points a game, topping the century mark in six of 18 regular season contests.

All told, the 6 ft. 4 Thompson - who was blessed with both inside and outside scoring skills - exited high school with 1,623 points in his portfolio. He netted a host of accolades for his basketball expertise, headed by first team all-Ohio honors as both a junior and senior. He was also an all-Eastern District, all-Eastern Ohio Athletic League and all-OVAC honoree all three years. He was captain of the OVAC team as a senior.

Thompson was no one-sport wonder as he also displayed his athletic prowess on both the gridiron and baseball diamond. He was a two-way starter in football, starting as quarterback and defensive back. The three-year regular was an all-Eastern District, all-OVAC and Eastern Ohio Athletic League selection in his junior and senior seasons. Thompson also picked up three letters in baseball, chucked up two no-hitters and four one-hitters.

Not surprising, Thompson received some 120 Division I college scholarship offers. He cast his lot with basketball at the University of Florida. Thompson was the second-leading scorer on the Gators' frosh team. After redshirting as a sophomore due to an ankle injury, he worked himself into being a part-time starter during his junior and senior seasons and was a co-captain his final campaign with the Gators.



Marty Coyne (Athlete - 1970s)

Marty Coyne (Linsly Military Institute, Class of 1977). Coyne was a three-sport standout for the Cadets, but basketball was definitely the versatile 6 ft. 5 athlete's meal ticket.

Coyne distinguished himself as one of the premier hoopsters in the Ohio Valley during the decade of the '70s. He was a three-year starter in roundball at Linsly, blossoming into a virtual scoring machine his junior and senior campaigns. Coyne netted 599 points in his junior season alone, good for a 27.2 average. He was also a beast on the boards, grabbing 14.2 carrots per outing. He nearly duplicated those numbers in his senior campaign, scoring 598 points for a 27.1 average. The talented post's rebound totals ballooned to 16.5 per game.

Coyne's scoring antics were tops in the Ohio Valley both seasons. His single-game high was 46 against Wheeling Central. The dependable cager scored in double figures in all 47 of his high school starts. Coyne's scoring prowess also translated into team success. The Cadets compiled 54-12 record during his final three campaigns. The Bridgeport native garnered all-City, all-OVAC and all-West Virginia honors each for his last two years. He was also co-captain of the all-state team as a senior. He ended his illustrious hardwood career with 1,389 points.

He was also a standout on the gridiron, starting three seasons. The glue-fingered receiver led all Ohio Valley small school pass catchers his senior season while also averaging 37.5 yards per punt. Coyne was also named all-OVAC and all-state first team for his football success as a senior.

Springtime saw Coyne start three seasons on the Linsly diamond, serving as co-captain as a senior. After graduation from Linsly, Coyne received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point (NY). He had the privilege of playing for the now legendary Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski. Coyne started three seasons, helping the Black Knights of the Hudson to an NIT berth in 1978. He averaged 15.6 points a game as a junior and 16.5 points as a senior. His 1,126 career points ranked 11th on the all-time Army scoring list at the time of his graduation. He also grabbed more than 400 rebounds for the Cadets, where he served as co-captain as a senior. Coyne ascended to the rank of LTC with 11 years active duty.



Mike Dawson (Athlete - 1970s)

Mike Dawson (Magnolia High School, Class of 1978). When you begin to recall the great athletes in Magnolia High annals, Mike Dawson is always near the top of the list. And why not? The rugged 6 ft. 2, 195-pounder earned 12 letters in four sports for the Blue Eagles.

It was football, however, which brought Dawson the most acclaim. Following his senior grid season in 1977, Dawson was selected as the W.Va. All-Class Player of the Year by the Morgantown Touchdown Club while finishing as runnerup for the Kennedy Award. That same season, he was named captain of the all-W.Va. Class AA team as a defensive back after pilfering seven passes. He was also the captain of the all-Valley and all-OVAC teams. Dawson rushed for 833 yards on just 112 carries in nine games as a senior for Coach Dave Cisar. He was named second-team all-state as a quarterback as a junior. For his career, Dawson accounted for more than 3,000 all-purpose yards and totaled 152 points despite missing four games with injuries.

Dawson ultimately selected West Virginia University. As a sophomore, he earned a starting spot as a linebacker, but he injured his knee while blocking a punt against Penn State. Dawson ended as a two-year Mountaineer grid letterman.

The talented Blue Eagle was also dominant in baseball. He was a four-year starter, seeing action at both catcher and shortstop and earning all-West Virginia laurels his junior and senior seasons after helping lead the Eagles to the state tournament both years. He was a two-time all-OVAC and all-Valley honoree, serving as captain of the latter as a senior. Spring proved quite busy for Dawson. When not playing baseball, he was a valuable contributor to the Blue Eagles' track team. Despite little practice time, he was still able to sparkle in the West Virginia Class A state track meet. As a junior, he was runner-up in both the 100-yard dash and long jump, the latter on the strength of a leap better than 21 feet. He also won the West Virginia AAU 100-yard dash in 1977.

Dawson was also a three-year starter in basketball. Among his many hoop highlights was a 36-point outburst against Wheeling Park.



Charlie Keenan (Athlete - 1980s)

Charlie Keenan (Steubenville High School, Class of 1985). Be it on the gridiron, wrestling mat or in the classroom, Keenan prided himself on excellence and in all three areas of his life, he was nothing short of sensational.

Keenan was the cornerstone of Big Red's initial state grid playoff championship, captaining the 1984 grid juggernaut. He led the Reno Saccoccia-coached gridgers to a 13-0 season that fall. He established new school records for tackles and sacks en route to being named the state's Division II Lineman of the Year. The first-team all-stater was also accorded honorable mention All-American accolades. He was named captain of the all-OVAC and all-Eastern District teams and was selected to play in the OVAC and Ohio North-South All-Star games.

The relentless lineman was a three-year starter for Steubenville that went 30-0 in the regular season and 33-2 overall. His great grid play earned him the distinction of being named the co-captain of the 1980s All-Decade Football Team selected by The Intelligencer. His Big Red success proved a springboard to a football scholarship to The Ohio State University where he was a letterman for the Scarlet & Gray gridgers.

Keenan was just as impressive on the prep mats. He won a pair of OVAC titles, capturing the 175-pound class as a sophomore followed by the 185-pound crown as a junior before grabbing the brass ring as the Ohio state kingpin that winter. Keenan opted to move up to heavyweight as a senior, preparing him for the rigors of an Ohio State griddle. That move to heavyweight set up a match against Barnesville High's mammoth and fellow OSU grid recruit Tim Moxley. The two met in the OVAC finals in 1985, attracting possibly the largest crowd at a wrestling match in Ohio Valley annals, with Moxley pulling out an epic 11-8 triumph. It snapped Keenan's 45-match winning streak. Keenan was awarded the George Kovalick Scholarship that year. He finished his Big Red wrestling career with a sparkling 110-18 record.

Keenan also opted to wrestle at Ohio State, earning two varsity letters in the mat sport. He was the Steubenville High valedictorian, compiling a 4.0 GPA. He went on to earn master's and doctorate degrees. After receiving his OSU degree, Keenan returned home and served as a teacher, administrator and coach at his alma mater. He now is a school superintendent in northern Ohio.



Tim Moxley (Athlete - 1980s)

Tim Moxley (Barnesville High School, Class of 1985). A heavyweight in every sense of the word, Tim Moxley is certainly that. Moxley came up huge in both football and wrestling for the Shamrocks. He enjoyed a star-studded and champion-filled four athletic years at the western Belmont County school.

Moxley garnered all-Ohio honors in football for the Red & Green while also grabbing a pair of state wrestling championships. The 6 ft. 7, 300-pounder parlayed his prep achievements into a football scholarship at The Ohio State University.

Moxley was a three-year starter on the Shamrocks' line. He helped guide the Red & Green to a 17-3 mark over his last two seasons and the OVAC championship in 1983. He was accorded a bevy of first team all-star honors for his senior season play. They included all-Valley, all-OVAC, all-Eastern District and all-Ohio by The Associated Press. He was a second-team all-Ohio United Press International honoree as a junior. Moxley was a second-team all-Valley selection.

Moxley carved out an even more glittering prep resume in the mat sport. The powerful heavyweight captured a pair of Ohio state championships, matching the number of OVAC crowns to his credit. As a senior, he led the Shamrock grapplers to the overall OVAC Tournament title while also being accorded the prestigious Bierkorte Award. Moreover, the Moxley-led matmen of Coach Darrell Davis captured the state tournament team title in 1985. His OVAC title matches against Steubenville's Charlie Keenan - also joining this year's OVAC Hall of Fame induction field - are legendary. Moxley handed Keenan his only two losses in the OVAC event. Moxley was so impressive on the mat that he was selected to the USA's Scholastic All-America Wrestling "Dream Team" for 1984-85. He was third in the OVAC as a sophomore.

At Ohio State, Moxley was all football. He moved into the Buckeyes' starting lineup as a sophomore, after seeing playing time in all 13 games as a red-shirt freshman. He started seven out of the Bucks' final eight games as a sophomore. As a junior, he started all 11 games and continued that strong play as a senior. He played in two bowl games for Ohio State - the 1987 Cotton Bowl and the 1990 Hall of Fame Bowl. Moxley was selected by the Washington Redskins in the ninth round of the 1990 NFL Draft.



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

David Bosley (Athlete - 1990s)

David Bosley (Paden City High School, Class of 1993). Padon City prides itself on quality basketball. To that end, David Bosley is on the short list of great Wildcats.

Bosley was a scoring terror at the tiny Wetzel County School. The scoring also translated into a wealth of Wildcat winning as the Green & White advanced to the West Virginia state tournament in 1991 and 1992. Coach Bob Burton's 'Cats also grabbed the OVAC crowns in the 1992 and 1993 seasons. All told, Padon City won 81 times and lost just 12 during Bosley's four-year hoop career. While the Wildcats were winning, Bosley was scoring. He finished his prep days with 1,996 points, including a senior campaign in which he netted 29.2 points, 7.8 assists and seven rebounds per start. Those lofty numbers earned him the captaincy of the all-state team. He was also captain of the all-OVAC squad that year and was honored by the Dapper Dons for outstanding achievement. During his sophomore and junior seasons, the 5 ft. 11 backcourt dandy earned all-OVAC and all-state honors as Padon City advanced to the state tournament each winter.

Bosley also made use of his superb athleticism to star on the football field for Mike Flannery. The four-year grid letterman sparked as a quarterback, earning all-OVAC first-team honors as a junior and senior. He completed 113-of-221 passes for 1,271 yards and 11 touchdowns while rushing for 489 stripes and seven additional scores as a senior. Bosley was named to the West Virginia Sports Ultimate All-State Football Team. As a junior, he completed 69-of-112 tusses for 995 yards and eight touchdowns. He also rushed for 559 yards and six TDs. Bosley was also a stellar punter, averaging 36.1 yards on 29 boons.

Bosley also made his presence felt in track and field. He was an OVAC long jump champion and also was a state runner-up in the 300-meter hurdles.

Bosley took his vast basketball skills to the next level, earning a scholarship to LSU in the rugged SEC. He played four years for legendary Dale Brown, who retired after Bosley's senior campaign. In Bosley's final regular season game, he netted the final four points of the game to give Brown his first-ever triumph over Nolan Richardson's Arkansas Razorbacks since they joined the SEC in 1991. Bosley was awarded the LSU's Director Cup for academic excellence and was recognized as an SEC Scholar Athlete.



Otis Winston (Athlete - 1990s)

Otis Winston (Toronto High School, Class of 1992). Winston is synonymous with Ohio Valley high jumping. He still remains the measuring stick for prep jumping greatness.

Winston, however, was more than an accomplished high jumper. He possessed multifaceted skills both in track as well as basketball.

While becoming the Ohio Valley's first seven-foot leaper, he was equally as dominating on the hardwood, lettering four years for the Red Knights, while garnering first-team all-OVAC honors as a senior.

Winston is still the Red Knights' all-time leading scorer via his 1,453 markers. As a senior, the athletic forward carried his team to an OVAC 3-A crown thanks, in part, to his 31.1 points, 14 rebounds, six steals and six assists per game.

He was the model of consistency as reflected in a 20-game streak of 30 points or more. His single game high was 46. He was both the Eastern District and District 5 Player of the Year and starred in the Ohio North-South Game, scoring 18 points in a winning cause. As a junior, he averaged 25 points a game and was first-team all-OVAC. He also enjoyed a superb sophomore year, gaining first-team all-OVAC honors with his 18 points a game.

For the Red Knight thinclads, the 6 ft. 5 Winston was a three-time state champion, twice in the high jump and in the long jump as a senior with a 22-10 effort. He captured the state high jump title as a sophomore with a 6-10 jump followed by his record-setting state leap of 6-11 the following June.

His athletic achievements led him to Columbus where he starred in both sports for The Ohio State University. Winston earned All-American honors at OSU in track, winning the Big Ten high jumping title four times, twice outdoors and twice indoors. He finished third in the NCAA as a freshman with his still Ohio State record of 7-4.5. Winston competed in the 1996 Olympic trials.

He was no slouch for the Buckeyes in basketball, earning a starting berth as a junior, specializing as a defensive stopper. He served the Buckeye hoopsters as co-captain as a senior and finished his career with a 17-point outing against hated-rival Michigan. He was a three-year OSU basketball letterman.

Winston went on to play professional basketball in Russia. An ordained minister, he still lives in the Columbus area. He owns his own production company and is a bank computer technician. He also finds time to coach track at New Albany High School.



Class of 2010

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Rick DeLuca (OVAC 'Family')

Rick DeLuca (Warren Consolidated High School, Class of 1970). Probably the only question regarding DeLuca is in what aspect of the OVAC hasn't he made a significant contribution. Whether it's the arduous task of compiling the conference standings, serving on various committees, developing new ventures, coaching and even reporting the events through the media, DeLuca has done it all.

He's the one who puts together the weekly standings in a majority of sports in the OVAC, including football, volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball and baseball.

It was DeLuca who formulated the OVAC basketball playoffs, serving as the director of that event, and who also combined with OVAC Executive Secretary Tom Rataiczak to establish the OVAC Museum - a historical look at the conference, its schools and athletes throughout the years - which is housed in WestBanco Arena in Wheeling.

DeLuca also serves on the OVAC Volleyball Committee, the OVAC Baseball Committee, the OVAC Boosters Committee and the OVAC Scholarship Committee.

He also offers - through his DeLuca Realty business venture - a yearly OVAC Volleyball Scholarship.

DeLuca, who also coached the high school baseball teams at Bridgeport for three years and Buckeye Local for one year, is a veteran of the Ohio Valley media, working for more than 40 years as a part-time sportswriter at The Times Leader. He was a three-time finalist for Ohio Sportswriter of the Year by the National Sportswriter and Sportscasters Association and received four awards from the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association. He also wrote some articles for USA Today in its early years and has had several non-sports articles published in various regional and national publications.



Frank Baxter (OVAC 'Contributor')

Frank Baxter (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1949). When you think of Bridgeport High School, this is surely one of the names that comes to mind. After all, Baxter was part of the Bridgeport school system for more than 60 years as a student, athlete, teacher, coach and administrator.

As an athlete, he was an all-OVAC honoree in football as a center-linebacker and in basketball where he averaged 25 points per game as a senior. After a stint in the armed services during the Korean War, he enrolled at West Liberty State College where he played football and ran track and received a bachelor's degree, later receiving his master's at the University of Dayton.

After teaching and coaching at Barnesville High School for one season, he returned to his alma mater and began an incredible 47-year run as Bridgeport's athletic director - believed to be the longest tenure in OVAC history - retiring in 2004.

From 1962 to 1980, he also doubled as the Bulldogs' head boys' basketball coach, guiding the team to a solid 269-128 record. His teams won four OVAC championships (1963, '66, '72 and '74); 14 sectional titles; two district crowns and one regional championship. Bridgeport posted an unbeaten regular season in 1966, ending with a final 23-1 record and the UPI Class A state poll championship; and finished as the 1969 Ohio Class A runner-up with a 25-2 record at a time when there were only two classes in the state.

Baxter was named the Ohio Class A "Coach of the Year" in 1966 and became the first recipient of the OVAC's all-sports "Coach of the Year" award in 1969. He was also selected Eastern Ohio and Eastern District "Coach of the Year" on several occasions. In 1988, Baxter was the Eastern District "Athletic Director of the Year" and he was inducted into the Ohio Athletic Administrators Hall of Fame in 1994. He has also been recognized by the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association, the Naimith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame through the OHISA in 1988 and with the Earl Haberfield Coaches Award at the OVAC Basketball Classic in 1987. Baxter received the Carl Hamill Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club in 2003 and when the new Bridgeport High School was constructed, the floor at the John J. Havlicek Gymnasium was named Frank Baxter Court.



William 'Bill' Davies (Media)

William J. "Bill" Davies (Barnesville High School, Class of 1944). A "gentle giant" who wore many hats during his lifetime, it would be easy to label Davies as "Mr. Barnesville" to many inside and outside the western Belmont County community, but it was in the media where he made perhaps his greatest impact.

After enlisting in the Navy during World War II and serving with the Navy Seabees in Okinawa, he attended Miami (Ohio) University and completed his education at The Ohio State University where he graduated from the OSU School of Journalism in 1950.

A true "old school" reporter who could recall many names and events at the drop of a hat, his lifelong career was spent right in his backyard at The Barnesville Enterprise until his retirement in 1994, serving several years as editor-publisher while also covering Shamrock sporting events religiously.

Not only did he report on Barnesville athletics for The Enterprise, but he also was a valuable contributor to the sports departments at The Times Leader in Martins Ferry and The Daily Jeffersonian in Cambridge.

Among the sports-related awards Davies received were a Distinguished Service Award from the Barnesville wrestling program in 1991; the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Distinguished Service Award in 1996; the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame Media Award in 1997; and induction into the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association Hall of Fame in 1998.

He was also inducted into the Barnesville Area Education Foundation Hall of Fame in 1998; was named Barnesville Citizen of the Year in 1994; received a Founders Award from the Ohio Association of Community Colleges; and graces the top of the Heritage Tree at Belmont Technical College.

Davies was a varsity letterman in football and basketball in high school, and was a member of the gold medal-winning basketball team in the 1945 Pacific Olympics. He was a registered basketball official for 20 years and served as Ohio Stadium bench security and as an usher at Buckeye football games from 1958 until the year of his death in 2003.



John Stephenson (Coaches)

John Stephenson (Waynesburg High School, Class of 1969). Regarded as the "Father of Cadiz Wrestling", Stephenson assumed the role of head mat coach in the second year of the sport at the school.

His first team had just 12 wrestlers on the squad and finished 5-5-2, but by the next year the team had increased to 34 members and the program was off and running. What followed during the next 14 years until Stephenson stepped down after the 1988 season was that Cadiz wrestling became highly-respected throughout the state of Ohio and was a perennial Ohio Valley Athletic Conference powerhouse.

Stephenson-coached Cardinal squads won 12 OVAC Class AA dual meet titles, 12 OVAC Class AA tournament titles and the overall OVAC mat championship in 1981. His teams also won eight sectional championships and seven district titles with numerous top 10 state tournament finishes, highlighted by the 1987 team which captured the Ohio Class A State Wrestling Championship. That feat earned Stephenson the Ohio Class A "Coach of the Year" selection.

Under his tutelage, Cadiz produced 29 state place finishers including two state champions and countless OVAC Tournament champions. Stephenson's dual meet record with the Cardinals was an impressive 142-18-2.

For his many contributions to the sport of wrestling, including serving for many years on the OVAC Wrestling Committee and as director of several sectional and district tournaments, Stephenson was honored with the OVAC's prestigious "Mc. Mat Award" in 1993. Harrison Central later recognized the long-time coach with the naming of school's multipurpose building as The John W. Stephenson Center.

Stephenson received his degree in Industrial Arts and Physical Education from Fairmont State College, where he was a NAIA All-American wrestler. After stepping down as wrestling coach, Stephenson served as assistant principal at Cadiz High School and then was promoted to principal at Harrison Central when the district reorganized in 1999 and he maintained that position until 2001. He has also served as principal at Harrison Hopedale Elementary, Harrison Lakeland Elementary and has been Buildings and Grounds Supervisor for the district.



Charles 'Chuck' Watt (Coaches)

Charles "Chuck" Watt (Staubenville High School, Class of 1945). A mainstay of Big Red athletics, Coach Watt made his mark both as head basketball and baseball coach.

In basketball, Watt assisted Ang Vaccaro before taking over in 1967 and beginning a 23-year stint as head coach. During that time, he compiled a stellar record of 350-149, a winning percentage of 70.1.

Big Red won eight OVAC championships under Watt (1971, '75, '78, '79, '80, '81, '86 and '90) and he was named the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association "Coach of the Year" in each of those seasons while being named OVAC "Coach of the Year" in both 1971 and 1990. His teams won 12 sectional titles, including seven straight from 1983 through 1990; and captured four district championships (1970, '71, '85 and '90).

He was inducted into the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1994 and into the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Watt also succeeded Vaccaro as the school's head baseball coach, serving in that role from 1965-75 and compiling a 192-87-4 mark. His Big Red teams won two OVAC championships (1968 and 1973); three sectional titles (1968, '72 and '75) and one district crown (1972).

He also coached the Staubenville American Legion Post 33 team for many years. After serving as an assistant to Vaccaro from 1957-82 before becoming the manager in 1983 and posting a 367-104 record, including state championships in 1984 and 1989.

Watt's coaching career actually began in his senior season at Staubenville College when he took over at mid-season and guided a team that started out 3-5 to a 14-8 record to earn recognition as the "Most Improved Team in the Country" as determined by the Dick Dunkel National Rating System.



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

John 'Streaky' Haloszka (Officials)



John "Streaky" Haloszka (McKinley Vocational School, Class of 1943). A dedicated and colorful individual who was easily recognizable by his nickname, Haloszka spent 40 years as an official in the Ohio Valley, working high school games in football, basketball, softball, baseball and track.

He also officiated in the Wheeling Outdoor Basketball League which featured such players as Ohio State University greats John Havlicek and Jerry Lucas and West Virginia University legends Jerry West and Rod Hundley. He also worked many years in the St. Vincent's Tournament and the Sistersville Independent Tournament — both widely-recognized for attracting top collegiate players from throughout the tri-state area.

He worked a host of West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission (SSAC) tournament games at the sectional, regional and state levels and also officiated in the West Virginia Catholic State Tournament.

Among the honors Haloszka received were an SSAC Service Award at the state basketball tournament in 1975; an SSAC Meritorious Award for 30 years of officiating football and basketball in 1984; a Meritorious Award for outstanding service to high school athletics from the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) in 1985; recognition from the Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials for his many years of service in 1986; honorary lifetime memberships to the Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials in 1988 and the Ohio Valley Board of Basketball Officials in 1990.

He was also honored by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club for outstanding achievements and contributions to high school sports in the area in 1989 and recognized as an honorary official at the 31st annual Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic in 2002.

Fred Bruney (Athlete 1940s)



Fred Bruney (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1949). An honored football player at three levels — high school, college and pro, he etched his name in Purple Rider lore as a senior when he led the 1948 team to a 9-0-1 record. Ferry was ranked No. 3 in the Ohio one-class poll behind No. 1 Massillon (8-1) and No. 2 Canton McKinley (9-1). The lone tie was a scoreless struggle with unbeaten Triadelphia (9-0-1) played before 10,961 at Ferry Stadium.

After the mid-season tie with the Triads, Bruney led Ferry to wins over Bellaire, 33-0; East Liverpool, 13-7; Steubenville, 20-0; Linsly, 35-0; and Mansfield, 6-0. Bruney lifted the Riders past East Liverpool with a second half comeback; led Ferry past Steubenville, following a scoreless first half, with a TD run and TD pass; and scored the game's only TD in a 6-0 win over state-ranked Mansfield. Ferry had seven shutouts and allowed only 19 points.

The four-year football player, who also played basketball and ran track, earned All-Ohio honors from International News Service as well as All-OVAC and All-Eastern Ohio recognition. The triple-threat player led the Riders in rushing and scoring with 97 points plus six TD passes and also led the team in pass interceptions and kick returns. He went on to Ohio State University where the two-way back had 17 pass interceptions — second on the Buckeye charts, including three in one game. He was a first team All-Big Ten Conference choice and played in the East-West Shrine Game.

Bruney was the 35th overall draft pick, in the third round, by the Cleveland Browns in 1953 and played six years in the NFL with the San Francisco 49ers, Pittsburgh Steelers and Los Angeles Rams. From 1960-62, he played in the upstart AFL with the Boston Patriots and twice earned AFL All-Star status. He ended with 15 pro pass interceptions.

He then served 35 years as an NFL assistant coach with the Philadelphia Eagles, Atlanta Falcons, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, New York Giants and Indianapolis Colts. When he retired in 1997, he had the longest tenure as a player and coach in pro football.

Bruney was the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Co-Man of the Year in 1981 along with OVAC Hall of Famer Tom Keane and was inducted into the City of Martins Ferry Hall of Fame in 2009.

Henry Josefczyk (Athlete 1950s)



Henry "Hank" Josefczyk (Yorkville High School, Class of 1956). After five decades, he holds the Ohio Valley record for basketball scoring average for a senior. The 6-foot-6 center scored 1,097 points in 26 games for a 42.2 per game norm. He averaged 17.5 per game with 728 points as a junior and his four-year total of 2,001 points ranks in the Top 15 in Ohio Valley history.

An 11-letter winner — four each in basketball and baseball and three in football — he led the Ductifites to a 22-4 team record as a senior. They won the Jefferson County title for the second straight year plus the Ohio Class B section and district crowns including a win over an unbeaten Strasburg team before losing to Chagrin Falls, 62-60, in the regional tournament. As a senior, he broke the Yorkville single game scoring record set by OVAC charter Hall of Famer Ken Alessi by netting 76 points against Shadyside, a team he also scored 60 on in another game. He had 62 against Linsly and four 50-point games to average 45.1 points for regular season. The 76-point game is the third-highest in OV history and came in the final regular season game, a 99-78 win.

Josefczyk was selected first team All-Ohio, All-OVAC and All-Eastern Ohio as well as Chuck Taylor All-America recognition by playing in the annual North-South All-America Game in Murray, Ky. He also played in the Ohio/W. Va. vs. Kentucky All-Star games in Huntington, W.Va. and Ashland, Ky.

He reportedly had some 200 college scholarship offers and the senior class president and salutatorian selected the University of Dayton. He was a three-year varsity letterman with the Flyers after playing on the freshman team. In his sophomore season, he was a reserve on the 25-4 record NIT runner-up team which lost in overtime to Xavier after beating Fordham and St. John's. At Dayton, he received the first John L. Macheb Scholar-Athlete Award in 1958. He graduated in 1960 in Electrical Engineering and received a master's degree from Case Institute of Technology. He returned to UD as an instructor for two years, teaching the school's first graduate digital computer courses. At the time, Dayton was one of only four colleges to offer computer courses. He then joined the business world, working for 12 years for Intel Corp.

Don Sutherin (Athlete 1950s)



Don Sutherin (Toronto High School, Class of 1954). A three-sport, 12-letter winner for the Red Knights, he earned All-Ohio, All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-Eastern Ohio football honors as a senior when he scored 19 of Toronto's 24 TDs and accounted for 74 of the Red Knights' 95 first downs in a 5-4 record season.

The 185-pound two-way back-kick returner-punter-kicker scored 129 points and accounted for 2,355 yards for an average of 250 yards a game. He rushed for 1,022 yards and passed for 833 yards. On defense, he returned two of four pass interceptions for scores.

He also led the Red Knights to a 16-2 regular season basketball record, the second best mark in school history at that time.

He earned a football scholarship to Ohio State University and lettered all three varsity seasons as a two-way back-kick returner-kicker-punter on two Big Ten Conference title teams. As a senior, on a 9-1 record team, he kicked the winning 34-yard field which decided a 10-7 Rose Bowl victory over Oregon.

Drafted in the eighth round by the New York Giants, he started a 13-year pro career as a defensive back-punt-kicker. He played two seasons in the NFL with the Giants and Pittsburgh Steelers and played 11 years in the Canadian Football League with Hamilton, Ottawa and Toronto.

A perennial CFL All-Star, he played in eight Grey Cup title games in 10 years and was on four championship teams. When he retired, he was the all-time scoring leader in the CFL and held 18 CFL records. He also served as a CFL scout and assistant coach from 1981-91.

In 1992, he was inducted into the CFL Hall of Fame. He also is inducted into the Toronto High School and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Halls of Fame. He resides in Hartsville, Ohio, where he taught at Lake High School and served as football coach before retiring in 1997.

Larry Duck (Athlete 1960s)



Larry Duck (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1962). Winning and Larry Duck go hand-in-hand.

The prep gridiron legend was one of the key pieces in the Purple Riders' amazing success in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The punishing and powerful Duck was a three-year grid starter for Ferry.

What is most remarkable about his illustrious grid career was the fact that he never lost a game as the Purple Riders went 30-0. As a sophomore, Duck started at middle guard for the Fernians, coached by Hayden Buckley. As a junior, he started at both linebacker and fullback as rookie coach Bob Wynn guided another 10-0 campaign. Duck's contributions did not go unnoticed as he was first-team all-OVAC and co-captain of the all-Valley team. Duck's senior year was even more amazing as Wynn's charges rolled to yet another 10-0 season. Duck headed in a myriad of post-season honors. He was named captain of the all-OVAC and all-Valley teams and earned first-team all-Ohio plaudits as a fullback. He was named to the Senior Scholastic All-American Team while also gaining a spot in the Ohio North-South All-Star Game in Canton. Moreover, he was named UPI "Back of the Year" after averaging 6.6 yards a carry, scoring 12 touchdowns and gaining 911 yards.

The 6 ft., 220-pound Duck was no one-sport wonder, as he was a starter in basketball while also excelling in track. He putted the shot more than 50 feet and twirled the discus better than 150 feet, both prodigious distances in that era. Duck accepted a scholarship to WVU and subsequently led the Mountaineers' freshman team in rushing. His stay in Morgantown was short-lived as he transferred to Memphis State University. The move worked out exceptionally well as Duck started three years at middle guard. His teammates voted him MVP following his senior year. Duck was also chosen to play in the prestigious Blue-Gray All-Star Game in Alabama.

Duck's prolific play led him to being drafted by the Canadian Football League. He opted to remain at Memphis as a graduate assistant. He returned home and accepted a teaching position at Martins Ferry High in 1970. He spent the next 30 years at his alma mater, teaching, coaching and also serving a stint as athletic director. He guided the Ferry boys' basketball team to a 20-5 record and a district championship in 1982. He later coached the girls' team to much success.

Joe Nickro (Athlete 1960s)



Joe Nickro (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1962). The younger half of the most successful brothers pitching tandem in Major League Baseball history, Joe carved his pro niche after distinguishing himself on the mound at the prep and collegiate levels.

Nickro pocketed 221 Major League wins as he and older brother Phil teamed for 539 victories, still the professional high water mark.

His athletic feats took root at Bridgeport High, where he was more than just a pitching standout. Nickro, in addition to his baseball accolades, was an all-OVAC basketball player at the Kirkwood-based school. Nickro was a major player in the Bulldogs capturing three straight Class AA baseball sectional and district titles, the largest class in Ohio at that time.

He closed out his prep career in stellar fashion, tossing a no-hitter against Martins Ferry in the sectional semifinals. He was honored as an all-Eastern Ohio baseball selection. Baseball had no OVAC All-Star team at that time.

Following his successful Bridgeport tenure, the Blaine resident matriculated to West Liberty State College where he played both baseball and basketball for the Hilltoppers. Nickro helped pitch the Gold & Black of legendary Coach George Kovalick to the 1964 NAIA national title.

His collegiate fetes helped propel Nickro to a 22-year Major League career. He pitched for seven teams during his career, with 11 seasons as a member of the Houston Astros. He won 21 games for the Astros in 1979 and followed that with 20 more victories in 1980.

During the 1979 campaign, he made the National League All-Star team, leading the senior circuit in wins and shutouts (5). He won the Sporting News Pitcher of the Year Award and was runner-up to Bruce Sutter in the Cy Young voting. Nickro pitched in one World Series, that coming in 1987 with the Minnesota Twins. Joe hit one major league home run, that coming off brother Phil in 1976.

Nickro died Oct. 26, 2006 after suffering a brain aneurysm, but his legacy lives on through The Joe Nickro Foundation created by his only daughter, Natalie. The foundation's proceeds are donated to various hospitals in an effort to expand aneurysm treatment and research.

Less Browne (Athlete 1970s)



Less Browne (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1979). From Columbianna County, to Colorado, to Canada, Browne was an all-star football player at every stop.

Browne was a three-sport standout at East Liverpool, with football being his forte. His grid heroics are highlighted by eight kickoff or punt returns for touchdowns under the late Ted Mailey. In his senior year at East Liverpool, Browne rushed for 992 yards and scored 56 points in earning second-team all-Ohio honors.

Browne was also a standout basketball player and sprinter for the Potters while also owning the distinction of being his senior class president. He was chosen East Liverpool Review "Player of the Year" in 1978.

The versatile gridder was recruited to Colorado State as a running back. He quickly and seamlessly made the transition to defensive back, starting in the Rams' secondary for three years. The 5 ft. 11, 170-pounder led Colorado State in interceptions in 1980.

Following his stellar collegiate career, Browne signed as a free agent with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats in 1984 and he wasted no time making his presence felt north of the border. He earned all-Eastern and CFL all-star awards as a defensive back in 1985 and 1986. Browne moved on to star for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers from 1985-91. During the latter two years, he established CFL records for most interception return yards in a season with 273 and 267, respectively. After one year with the Ottawa Rough Riders, one in which he again led the league in interception return yardage, Browne closed out his CFL career with the British Columbia Lions in 1994. The Lions captured the coveted Grey Cup that season. Browne set league records for most career interceptions (87) and most regular-season interception return yardage (1,508). After his playing days, Browne went on to serve as an assistant coach in the CFL.

Halls of Fame are nothing new to Browne. He was inducted into the East Liverpool Hall of Fame in 1993 and he was later inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame.

Mike Wright (Athlete 1970s)



Mike Wright (Wellsville High School, Class of 1976). Regarded as one of the most versatile athletes in a tradition-rich school, Wright etched his name in the Tigers' football and basketball record books.

Wright starred at quarterback for three years and also was a four-year starter at point guard for Coach Bobby Dawson's hoop juggernaut.

The 6 ft. 3, 185-pound dual-threat quarterback guided the up-river Tigers to their best three-year run in school grid history, compiling a sparkling 24-6 card, highlighted by a school-best 9-1 ledger in his junior year. Wellsville went 8-2 in Wright's senior year, with both blemishes by a single point. Wright was a two-time all-OVAC first-team honoree while also garnering all-District honors. He was one of the valley's most prolific gridders, accumulating 1,218 yards in total offense and 15 TDs.

Wright was even more impressive on the hardwood.

As a mere frosh, he played an integral role in the Tigers winning 18 of 23 games, good for Class AA sectional and district championships. As a sophomore, Wright, combining craftiness with athleticism, sparked in a 21-1 season, which saw the Tigers gain the No. 1 ranking in the UPI poll. Wellsville followed that with an OVAC Class AA championship in Wright's junior campaign. The Tigers went 19-2 and again claimed the top spot in the UPI poll.

That set the table for a senior basketball season like no other in Wellsville boys' hoop history.

Wright led Wellsville to its first-ever state tournament berth. The spotless Tigers fell to Dayton Roth in the state tourney semifinals. The season also saw the Columbianna Countians pocket another OVAC Class AA crown. For his efforts, Wright was named Eastern District "Player of the Year" while garnering second-team all-Ohio honors from the Associated Press and third-team all-state plaudits from UPI. The two-time all-OVAC pick was named captain of the all-Valley team his final year, in which he averaged 15.1 points per game.

Wright accepted a football grant-in-aid to Bowling Green State University. Wright landed the starting quarterback job his junior year, passing for more than 1,800 yards. He followed that with more than 1,100 passing yards as a senior while earning all-Mid American Conference honors.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Melissa Hammond (Athlete 1980s)



Melissa Hammond (Shadyide High School, Class of 1989). This former Lady Tiger was a standout in three sports during her prep career, but it was basketball where she shined the brightest.

Hammond was a four-year letterwinner for the Lady Tigers who went onto a four-year career at West Liberty State College, etching her name into history at both schools.

At Shadyide, Hammond was a prolific shooter en route to her school-record 1,516 points. She drained 112 three-point goals. Her 46 points, as a junior, during in a game against Buckeye North is also tops in school history.

During her junior season, Hammond became just the second female in Ohio Valley history to average at least 30 points a game at 30.2. She was more than a scorer, however, as she averaged 9.1 rebounds, 6.2 assists, 5.0 steals and drilled 67 three-point goals.

As a senior, Hammond averaged 28.1 points a game and was named All-Ohio Division IV State Player of the Year by UPI. She also averaged 9.5 rebounds, 8.1 assists, 6.5 steals, shot 48 percent from the floor, 80.1 percent at the line and 58 percent from three-point range.

Hammond was named second-team all-Ohio by The Associated Press twice and was selected to the Ohio North-South All-Star Game. She was captain of the all-OVAC team twice.

Hammond also doubled as a softball player and thrower for the track team. She earned four letters in softball and three more in track. She was an all-OVAC first team selection three times in softball and once on all-Ohio.

In track, she was no all-Eastern District performer in the shot put and discus. At West Liberty, Hammond was a four-year basketball starter. She scored 2,150 points from 1990-93, which is still the West Liberty record and third-best in WVAC history. Hammond, who also starred in softball at WLSC, was the second female athlete to be inducted to the West Liberty Sports Hall of Fame.

Jeff Sweitzer (Athlete 1980s)



Jeff Sweitzer (Brooke High School, Class of 1987). This former Bruin was once described by his high school coach, Paul "Bud" Billiard, as the best player he ever coached.

He's definitely one of the most decorated Bruins to come from the storied program when it was the Ohio Valley kingdom.

Sweitzer helped lead the Bruins to back-to-back appearances in the West Virginia state championship game as a quarterback during his junior and senior seasons. He was a four-year mainstay for the program, spending time as a running back, defensive back and kick returner before shifting to quarterback.

As a senior, when the Bruins finished 11-2 as the state runner-up, Sweitzer set an Ohio Valley record for total yardage with 3,399. He also accounted for 36 touchdowns. Of his yardage total, he had 2,203 passing; 674 rushing and 522 on kick returns.

After that senior season, Sweitzer, who also shined in baseball for the Bruins, repeated on the first team all-state squad and was named the captain of the offensive unit. He was also runner-up for the Kennedy Award that season. He was twice named all-OVAC and all-Valley and was the Gateways State Player of the Year. He was also listed in the USA Today as West Virginia Player of the Year and an honorable mention to the paper's All-American Team.

Sweitzer then accepted a scholarship to the University of Akron. As was the case at Brooke, Sweitzer began as a kick returner and running back before becoming the quarterback for his final two seasons.

In two years, Sweitzer passed for 2,744 which is 10th on Akron's career listing. He passed for 1,599 yards as a junior.

Kyle Rose (Athlete 1990s)



Kyle Rose (River High School, Class of 1990). This three-sport Pilot athlete was a standout on and off the field during his four years in Hamhill, earning four letters in baseball to go along with three letters each in wrestling and football.

Baseball was where Rose made his presence felt for the Pilots. He was a four-year mainstay at catcher and in the heart of the Pilots' batting order. He batted .366 as a freshman, .473 as a sophomore, .500 as a junior and .536 as a senior en route to two OVAC Player of the Year awards. As a sophomore, Rose had an on-base percentage of .695 and he was 40-of-42 stealing bases. That mark is still an Ohio Valley standard. All told, he hit 13 home runs and drove 76 runs, but missed 11 games as a senior after a bout with mono.

After his senior campaign, he was named first-team all-Ohio, all-Eastern District, all-OVAC and all-Valley. He played in both the Ohio and OVAC all-star games.

In football, Rose played tailback for the Pilots and racked up all sorts of yardage and a host of honors. As a senior, he was first team all-Eastern District, all-OVAC and all-Valley after rushing for 800 yards and scoring eight touchdowns. For his career, Rose amassed 1,532 yards and 14 touchdowns in three seasons. He was also a defensive standout with 183 total tackles, six sacks, four interceptions and seven fumble recoveries.

His wrestling career didn't begin until he was a sophomore, but he picked it up quickly. As a soph, he finished 15-12, but turned it on as a junior and went 27-8. He was fourth at the OVAC Wrestling Tournament and advanced to the Ohio District Tournament. He fully arrived in his grappling career as a senior. Posting a 36-3 record, Rose advanced to the OVAC finals before falling. He then won the sectional and district titles at 152 pounds to qualify to the state tournament where he advanced to the finals and settled for the silver medal. He finished with a 79-23 record.

While having plenty of options about continuing his athletic career at the collegiate level, Rose accepted a scholarship to Mercer College in Georgia to play baseball. Playing in every game as a freshman, Kyle batted .294 and was chosen as conference freshman of the year. However, his career and life underwent a cruel twist on Dec. 12, 1991 when he was involved in a car accident. Rose survived, but is confined to a wheelchair as a paraplegic. After spending six months in and out of surgeries and therapies, Rose went back to school at Ohio University Eastern for two years and then, in 1994, enrolled at West Liberty State College where he later earned his degree in secondary education in mathematics. In 1998, Rose was hired at his prep alma mater as a math teacher. He's also since earned his master's degree from Marygrove College. His handicap didn't prevent from staying involved in sports as he was named head baseball coach of his alma mater in 1998 and he held the post until 2007. He led the Pilots to the OVAC title in 2003.

Joanna Bernabei (Athlete 1990s)



Joanna Bernabei (Weirton Madonna High School, Class of 1993). This former Lady Blue Don was one of the most prolific and unselfish basketball players from the Ohio Valley.

Bernabei helped to guide the Lady Blue Dons to three straight state tournament appearances and, during her senior season of 1992, Madonna brought home the school's second state championship with a brilliant 24-2 record.

During that 1992 campaign, Bernabei averaged 17.5 points, six rebounds, seven assists and five steals per game while surpassing the 1,000-point mark. All told, she finished her prep career with 1,062 points and more than 500 career assists.

After her senior season, Bernabei was named captain of the West Virginia Class A All-State team and captain of the OVAC Class A-AA West Virginia team when basketball was a fall sport. She also competed in both the OVAC and North-South all-star games. All told, Bernabei was a three-time all-star. She was a second team choice as a sophomore and a first team selection as a junior.

While basketball was where Bernabei made her mark, she also excelled for Madonna in track and field as well as tennis, earning letters in each sport. In 1993, Bernabei brought two gold medals home from the West Virginia state track meet. She was a part of the winning 4x200-meter relay as well as the winning shuttle hurdle relay. She ran a leg on the state runner-up 4x100-meter relay team. During the 1992 tennis season, Bernabei was a part of an OVAC-winning doubles team in tennis.

Bernabei completed her degree in 1997 from West Liberty State College. During her career with the Lady Hilltoppers, she scored 1,317 points and finished with 1,107 assists, which is the NCAA Division II record. During her senior season, Bernabei was named WVAC Player of the Year and Division II All-American after helping to lead WLSC to a NCAA Tournament appearance. She was named first team all-conference in the WVAC all four years and was inducted to the West Liberty Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002.

Bernabei entered the coaching ranks at West Virginia Wesleyan. She was there for a year and has also worked at Eastern Kentucky, West Virginia and the University of Maryland where she won a national championship ring as



Class of 2011

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Richard (Dick) Thurnes (OVAC 'Contributor')



Richard (Dick) Thurnes (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1946). During a 17-year career as a head football coach at three different spots, Thurnes won an impressive 75 percent of his games (112-36-7). Even more impressive, however, was the fact that five Thurnes-coached teams posted undefeated records.

His first stop was Cameron High School, where he compiled a three-year mark of 18-6-1, highlighted by an unbeaten (7-0-1) team in 1956 which was ranked No. 2 among West Virginia small school teams.

Thurnes then moved on to Warren Consolidated High School, serving as head coach for 12 years (1958-69) and posting a 78-26-6 mark. His teams put together unbeaten seasons in 1961, '62, '64 and '67. The first three of those teams won OVAC Class A championships while all four were Eastern Ohio Athletic League kingpins.

After stepping aside for a couple of years, he returned to coach the newly-consolidated Buckeye South High in its first two seasons (1972-73), posting a combined 16-3-1 record.

He received several "Coach of the Year" awards - from the Wheeling Intelligencer in 1964; The Times Leader in 1967; and the Eastern Ohio Athletic League in 1961, '62, '65 and '67; and the AP Eastern District in 1964 and '67.

Thurnes was also the recipient of the Belmont Hills Country Club's 27th Annual Achievement Football Coaches Award in 1965 and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Outstanding Achievement Award in 1967. He was inducted into the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1985.

Thurnes was also a long-time assistant basketball coach to fellow OVAC Hall of Famer Henry Lazear and he also coached baseball, track and golf at various times during his career.

In high school, Thurnes was a three-year letterman in football as a center-linebacker, gaining third team all-West Virginia recognition and first team all-OVAC honors.

He went on to play at West Liberty State College in the "Golden Era" of Coach Joe Bartell, starting at center on two undefeated teams and playing in the Python Bowl and the Smoky Mountain Bowl, both Hilltopper victories.

Charles E. Petty (OVAC 'Family')



Charles E. Petty (Pomeroy High School). The entire Ohio Valley Athletic Conference owes a debt of gratitude to Petty and the other eight "Founding Fathers."

Little did that small group know back in 1943 when they brought together 20 schools from both sides of the Ohio River that they would establish what would become (as of 2011) a 50-school bi-state conference, regarded by most as the largest functional high school conference in the nation.

The original OVAC member schools included Bellaire, Follansbee, Linsly, Martins Ferry, Moundsville, Powhatan, Shadyide, St. John Central, Steubenville, Steubenville Catholic Central, Tiltonsville, Triadelphia, Union, Warwood, Weir, Wellsburg, West Liberty, Wheeling, Wheeling Central Catholic and Yorkville.

Petty was a key cog in the OVAC in its early years, serving as the first official executive secretary for 13 years from 1944-56, longer than anyone has been in that position except for Sam Mumley to this point.

Petty coached the pre-OVAC boys' track program at Triadelphia High School, winning the 1941 West Virginia one-class championship after finishing as runner-up four times and placing third twice.

After coaching and teaching mathematics at Triadelphia High, he served briefly as principal at Woodsdale Junior High. He then joined Linsly Military Institute in 1942-43, serving as athletic director and was the head basketball coach from 1944-51. His second team (1944-45) won the OVAC Class AA title with a 16-5 record. He also coached track and assisted in football at Linsly.

He served as Meet Director for several years at one of the Ohio Valley's premier high school track meets at Triadelphia - The Intelligencer Relays - which had a three decade run before ending in the 1950s.

Petty then moved to St. Petersburg, Florida in the summer of 1956 and taught in junior high until he passed away at age 57 in 1963.

Born in 1906 in Ripley, W. Va., he graduated from Pomeroy (Ohio) High School; attended the University of Florida for two years and graduated from the University of Illinois. He received a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

John Kirker (Media)



John D. Kirker (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1934). Born in Follansbee in 1913, Kirker's first taste of the newspaper business came at the old Wellsburg Daily Herald as a high school student. He wrote sports and was eventually the managing editor of the paper when he left for the Army Air Corps in 1942.

Upon his discharge from the service in 1946, he began a 29-year run (1946-74) as sports editor of The Herald-Star newspaper in Steubenville until moving into the news department as a district editor for the remainder of his career. He was the longest-serving sports editor in the newspaper's history, covering all high school sports as well as local college sports and summer events.

He was inducted into the University of Steubenville Sports Hall of Fame in 1981; the Ohio Prep Sports Writers Hall of Fame in 1988; and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame in 1989.

Kirker was a member of several high school all-star selection committees, including those choosing the All-Eastern District and All-Ohio teams.

He also served as an emcee at numerous local sports functions and was a ring announcer at local boxing events.

For Kirker, harness racing was a personal passion. He owned and trained 17 horses for many years, regularly attending the Little Brown Jug event in Delaware, Ohio, and contributing numerous articles to various harness racing publications.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Class of 2012

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Tom (Bear) Bechtel (OVAC Family)



Tom (Bear) Bechtel (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1969). Commissioner, director, official... Bechtel wears many hats in the athletic realm, and he wears them well. He is a long-time member of the OVAC Softball Committee, currently serving as the OVAC Softball Commissioner and has been Game Director of the annual Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic since 2005.

As an official, Bechtel has worked area high school softball, basketball and football games dating back to 1974. He founded the Ohio Valley Board of Softball Umpires, serving as secretary for 31 years; was an Ohio Valley Officials Board officer for more than 20 years; and has officiated football playoff games in Ohio and West Virginia for more than 20 years. He has worked 26 state tournaments in softball and six state championship games in football.

He also umpires softball in the West Virginia Conference.

In 1990, he became the first West Virginia recipient of the National Federation of State High School Associations' Officials Award.

Bechtel has been director of the City of Wheeling Recreation Department since 1974, actively promoting various youth sports activities. He founded the Wheeling Recreation Summer Basketball League which has grown to more than 100 teams; organized the annual Wheeling Basketball Shootout which has brought numerous high profile athletes to the area; and oversees the J.B. Chambers 1470 Complex which hosts more than 2,000 baseball and softball games annually.

A basketball and baseball player at Wheeling Central High, he graduated from Wheeling College in 1973 and served as an assistant basketball coach there from 1974-78.

He has served as a color analyst for WTRF-TV on football and basketball broadcasts; worked as a radio announcer for basketball games; and was the public address announcer at Wheeling Jesuit University home basketball games. He is also director of the annual Undo's Catholic Basketball Tournament in Wheeling.

Bechtel received the Robert S. McKelvey Memorial Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club in 2008.

Burdell (Jimmy) Carey (OVAC Contributor)



Burdell (Jimmy) Carey (Follansbee High School, Class of 1923). He is the only coach in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference and the state of West Virginia to win state championships in three sports - football, basketball and baseball.

Carey got his first taste of coaching with 10 years at his alma mater, Follansbee High, before moving to Weir High to assist OVAC Hall of Famer Carl Hamill and begin a 25-year Red Rider career.

Carey coached Weir to W. Va. Class AAA football titles in 1957 (11-0), 1960 (10-1) and 1961 (10-1) and his 1958 team was 9-1, losing only to eventual state champion Parkersburg. In six seasons (1956-61), his teams posted a 52-11 record and won two OVAC Class AAA championships (1957 and 1958).

In basketball, Carey coached Weir for 13 seasons (1956-68), compiling a record of 178-115. His teams made the W. Va. Class AAA title game three straight years, winning in 1963 with a record of 20-5. The 1962 team was 24-1 and the 1964 team had a 23-2 record. Overall, his Red Rider hoop teams won seven sectional titles, five regional crowns and made four state tournament appearances while also winning two OVAC championships (1962 and 1964).

In baseball, he guided Weir to five state tournament berths and the one-class W. Va. state championship in 1959 while also winning four straight OVAC titles.

Carey was selected the West Virginia All-Sport Coach of the Year in 1958. He is a member of the West Virginia Sports Hall of Fame; the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame and the Weir High Hall of Fame.

Weir High named its football stadium in his honor.

At Follansbee High, Carey was a multi-sport athlete who went on to play three sports (football, basketball and baseball) at George Washington University before transferring and graduating from West Liberty State College.

Charles (Red) Donley (Media)



Charles (Red) Donley (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1941). An early pioneer of radio and television broadcasting in the Ohio Valley, Donley got his start at WSTV-AM radio in 1946 where he served as play-by-play announcer for high school football and basketball games and was the station's sports director.

In 1954, when WTSV-TV Channel 9 (now WTOV) went on the air, Donley became the sports director and soon thereafter, was selected to work with Joe Tucker on Pittsburgh Steelers' broadcasts, a position he held from 1955-62.

He also announced horse racing at Wheeling Downs and Waterford Park from 1949-56.

In 1960, he left to become sports director at Channel 11 in Pittsburgh, a position he had for 10 years. During his days in Pittsburgh, Donley won five "Golden Quill" awards for distinguished news coverage, including one for a documentary he wrote and narrated on the late Art Rooney and two others (on Roberto Clemente and Pie Traynor) that are in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

In 1962, he was named to succeed legendary Ray Scott as play-by-play announcer for the University of Pittsburgh. Donley received Channel 9 in Steubenville in 1972 as news director and remained there he retired in 1988.

Donley received the President's Media Award from what was then the College of Steubenville in 1989; received an honorary degree from Jefferson Technical College in 1987 and an honorary baccalaureate degree from the College of Steubenville in 1989; was the recipient of the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Robert S. McKelvey Award in 1991; and was inducted into the Ohio AP Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 2006.

He also participated in many charitable projects including the United Way and Easter Seals and made countless appearances as a master of ceremonies at community events. His many contributions were recognized at a testimonial dinner in his honor back in 1979.

The road leading to the current WTOV-TV9 studio in Steubenville is named "Red Donley Drive" in his honor. A World War II veteran who served in the Marine Corps, Donley passed away in 1998.

Gene Ammirante (Coaches)



Gene Ammirante (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1969). When you think of Ammirante, you think of two things - passion and success. During his 30-year career as head boys' basketball coach at Bellaire High, "Coach A" displayed plenty of the former and achieved plenty of the latter.

Ammirante began his coaching career in 1976 as an assistant to Mark Matz at Bellaire before beginning a successful run as head coach of the Big Reds.

He compiled an impressive 471-205 career record at Bellaire, the all-time best coaching record in boys' basketball at the school. That included a 189-41 mark during the 1990s, an average of 19 wins per season during that 10-year span.

Bellaire High achieved Top 20 rankings in Ohio 15 times under Ammirante; won 14 Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships; 14 sectional crowns; six district titles and one regional championship as Bellaire earned its first ever trip to the OHSA Division III State Tournament "Final Four" in 2003-04, tying the school record for wins (22) before losing to Versailles in double-overtime in the semifinals.

His teams posted two undefeated regular seasons, going 20-0 in 1993-94 and 2005-06; and two 19-1 records; and the 2005-06 team broke the school record with 23 victories.

Among Ammirante's numerous awards were "Coach of the Year" for Ohio Division II, the Eastern District and District 12 as well as the OVAC overall "Coach of the Year" in 2003-04; and the Bob Arzen Award for 20 consecutive years at the same school (1996).

He was also selected to coach the South squad in the annual Ohio North-South All-Star Game in Columbus in 1997.

He served as Game Director for the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic on two different occasions and is still active on the committee; founded and directed the OVAC Basketball Clinic for six years; is director of the Wheeling Recreation Department's Youth Basketball Program; and started the annual Saturday Morning Fundamental Feeder Program and Basketball Camp at Bellaire. He received the OVAC's Earl Haberfield Boys' Basketball Coaches Award in 2012.

Ammirante received his bachelor's degree from West Liberty State College in 1973 and his master's from West Virginia University in 1976.

Bill Tonini (Official)



Bill Tonini (Avella (Pa.) High School, Class of 1940). "Play ball!" Considering the fact that his career as an umpire spanned an incredible seven decades, perhaps no one has uttered those words more than Tonini.

He spent a total of 52 years working countless baseball games throughout the Ohio Valley and beyond from 1957-2010 while also serving 30 years as a football official and 10 years as a basketball referee.

His expertise as an umpire, primarily behind home plate calling balls and strikes, earned Tonini numerous high school post-season assignments, including five state tournaments in Ohio and five in West Virginia. He also umpired more than 30 years of OVAC Tournament action.

Tonini worked NCAA Division III College World Series games in Marietta a total of 10 times; several NCAA Division I games involving Ohio State and Ohio University; a host of American Legion games in the summer and three years in the minor leagues, including the Northwest League in Eugene, Oregon and Walla Walla, Washington.

He also was an instructor at Bill Barr's Umpire School in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Tonini is in the Western Pennsylvania Soccer Hall of Fame and he received a special award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

A highly-decorated World War II veteran who received commendations from both the United States and France, the 90-year old Tonini resides in Hannibal.

Gary Sprague (Coaches)



Gary Sprague (Needham (Mass.) High School, Class of 1964). He piloted the Linsly School baseball program from 1974-2006, compiling an impressive 33-year record of 488-257-1, which ranks fourth all-time among Ohio Valley coaches.

He led the Cadets to 13 OVAC Tournament championships - more than any other conference coach (1982, '85, '86, '87, '89, '90, '91, '94, '95, '97, 2001, '03, '05, '06) and coached Linsly to five Eastern Ohio Baseball League titles (1987, '88, '90, '95 and '96).

Sprague was named OVAC "Coach of the Year" in 1986 after guiding the Cadets to a 27-4 record and EOBL "Coach of the Year" three times.

He coached six athletes who went on to play professional sports - Heath Haynes, Ron Stephens, Kevin Tatar, Mike Coss and Mark Seaver in baseball and Willie Clay in the NFL. He also coached a total of 13 first team all-state players including two captains; five OVAC "Player of the Year" winners and four West Virginia American Legion "Player of the Year" selections.

He also coached freshman football at Linsly.

Sprague received the Carl R. Hamill Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and was the recipient of the OVAC's Thomas E. Rataiczak Scorekeeper/Timer Award in 2009 after nearly three decades as the timer at Linsly basketball games.

Sprague graduated from West Virginia Wesleyan College in 1968.

Eugene (Eudie) Joseph (Athlete - 1940s)



Eugene (Eudie) Joseph (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1945). A three-sport All-OVAC honoree in football, basketball and track, he was a major contributor to top-record Purple Rider football and basketball teams.

In basketball, playing for OVAC Hall of Fame Legend coach Floyd Baker, Joseph was a regular on teams which went 71-4 in three years including 21-2, with 20 straight wins, as a senior. He was a junior on a 26-1 record team which won the first OVAC Class AA title in 1944. That team lost its only game to eventual Ohio champion Middletown, 38-34, in the state tournament semifinals. Joseph, along with teammate and OVAC Hall of Famer Alex Groza, were all-tournament selections. Joseph scored 421 points - second on the team to Groza's OV record total of 628 points. As a sophomore, Joseph was a member of a 24-1 record team.

In football, he was co-captain of a 7-2-1 record team which won the first OVAC Class AA title and recorded eight shutouts. He earned All-Ohio UPI honors as well as All-OVAC and was a two-time All-Eastern Ohio selection at running back. Nicknamed the "Ghost" for his elusive style, he played on a 9-1 record team as a junior and Ferry was 22-6-1 in his three seasons.

In track, Joseph set an OVAC high hurdle record in the two-year-old meet as a junior and won the high jump. He didn't compete as a senior after being drafted for military duty.

After discharge, he enrolled at the University of Dayton and played four years of basketball with three as a starter on teams with school records of 24-8, 27-5 and 28-5. The last two years, the Flyers were runners-up in the National Invitation Tournament and also were NCAA regional semifinalist in his senior year of 1952.

He spent his entire 37-year professional career teaching and coaching at Linsly Military Institute where he was head coach of boys' basketball (1953-72) and track and assistant in football and also served as athletic director. His Cadet teams won three OVAC titles - 1971 basketball and 1961-62 in track. The top court records were 16-4 in 1957, 15-4 in 1971 and 15-3 in 1972. A Linsly scholarship is named in his honor.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Art Hehr (Athlete - 1950s)

Art Hehr (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1959). He graduated as the winningest career wrestler in the OVAC, with two straight unbeaten seasons capped by Ohio titles in 1958 and 1959 after placing third in the state meet as a sophomore. He was captain of the 1959 Ohio state championship team — the first for an OVAC member, coached by OVAC Hall of Famer George Kovalick. He won his last two titles at 127 pounds after competing at 120 pounds as a sophomore. He also won three consecutive OVAC titles on conference championship teams.



He also competed in football and was a member of the Bulldogs' first-ever unbeaten season in 1958 and the first Bridgeport team to defeat rival Martins Ferry in 1956.

After serving in the U. S. Army from 1959-62, he enrolled at West Liberty State where he was a member of the West Virginia Conference title teams in 1962 and 1963, also coached by Kovalick. He was injured and couldn't compete for part of his college career.

After graduation, he coached wrestling at Wheeling College and started the wrestling program at old Skyvue High School. He also coached Martins Ferry High to an OVAC title in 1968 as well as sectional and district crowns. He served as a wrestling official from 1970-86 and as athletic director at Skyvue for 28 years and Monroe Central two years plus three years as track coach at Skyvue.

Hehr was inducted into the Bridgeport High School Hall of Fame in 2011 and was the recipient of the OVAC Wrestling Coaches "Mr. Mat" award in 2012.

Dan Abramowicz (Athlete - 1960s)

Dan Abramowicz (Steuenville Catholic Central High School, Class of 1963). This glue-fingered wide receiver had to make believers out of countless doubters every step of his brilliant football career.

The Crusaders' three-sport standout was deemed too slow and too small to make it in big-time college football. After he shredded that fallacy, Abramowicz did so even more emphatically on the professional level.

After a sparkling career at Steuenville Central where he was honored as an all-OVAC and all-Ohio wide receiver, the college recruiters were nowhere to be found, turned off by his pedestrian-like 4.8 40-meter clocking. His lone college scholarship offer came from Xavier University in Cincinnati.

Abramowicz made the most of that opportunity, and went on to enjoy a record-setting stay with the Musketeers.

Abramowicz established a host of Xavier receiving records during a brilliant four-year career, including 120 catches for 1,685 yards and 14 touchdowns.

His prodigious numbers resulted in him being tabbed by the New Orleans Saints in the 17th and final round of the 1967 NFL Draft. That 17th round pick turned out to be a gem for the Saints.

Abramowicz carved out a pro career that many first-rounders would relish.

He was instant impact in "The Big Easy," landing 50 passes for 721 yards and six touchdowns as he was one of the top contenders for NFL Rookie of the Year honors.

Two seasons later, Abramowicz led the league with 73 receptions. His biggest NFL achievement, however, was setting a league record for catching a pass in 104 consecutive games, which has since been broken. The Saints dealt Abramowicz to the San Francisco 49ers after the second game of the 1973 season for draft choices. After an adjustment period, he became a 49ers' starter the last 11 games, catching 35 passes for 442 yards and a TD. He retired after the 1974 season, a campaign in which he grabbed 25 passes for San Francisco. Abramowicz put up some lofty numbers during his eight-year NFL career. He caught 369 passes for 5,686 yards and 39 TDs in 111 games.



Doug Swearingen (Athlete - 1970s)

Doug Swearingen (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1979). He was best known for his pitching prowess, but Swearingen was a multi-sport standout for the Purple Riders.

In addition to the diamond, Swearingen sparkled on the gridiron as well as the hardwood for Ferry. With that said, Swearingen remains one of the finest hurlers in Ohio Valley prep annals.

The crafty southpaw was a four-year baseball letterman for the Purple Riders. When not on the hill, Swearingen was a hard-hitting outfielder.

He was a two-time all-Valley honoree and was a first-team all-Ohio selection as a senior. There was no all-OVAC team back then.

Swearingen went 6-2 a senior, compiling a miniscule 0.74 ERA. He fanned 130 batters in 62 innings. He was equally as potent at the plate, batting a robust .412 with eight doubles, three triples, one homer and 24 RBI. He lost the ultimate heartbreaker that spring, dropping a 1-0, 10-inning district final affair to Cadiz. He struck out 20 in a route-going effort.

Such an outstanding prep career had college baseball coaches coveting the 6 ft. 2, 195-pound southpaw. He chose The Ohio State University, a decision he would not regret. Swearingen was a four-year letterman for the Buckeyes. He compiled a sparkling 23-13 career mark with a 3.80 ERA. Swearingen was a superb 9-1 as a junior, losing only to Oklahoma in the NCAA Regional. He was second-team all-Big Ten that season. Swearingen finished his Scarlet & Gray career tied for 14th place for career mound wins, ninth in innings pitched (278) and 13th in strikeouts (224). He was the team's co-captain as a senior.

He was drafted by the Seattle Mariners in the 23rd round. He pitched for four years in the minors, going 30-22 with a 3.36 ERA. Swearingen was also a member of the 1982 U.S. National Team which participated in South Korea. He posted a 3-1 record with a 2.25 ERA as the U.S. claimed the bronze medal.

A two-year in football and basketball letterman, he was a first-team all-OVAC defensive back as a senior and was chosen to play in the OVAC All-Star Football Game, but he opted to bypass the game due to his Ohio State baseball scholarship.



Chris Starr (Athlete - 1980s)

Chris Starr (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 1986). You name the sport and this former Warrior shined en route to earning 12 varsity letters and eventually a scholarship to Michigan.

While football and basketball were priorities for Starr, baseball was where he made his greatest impact.

Starr was a standout on the hill for the Warriors and earned first-team all-Ohio Class A, first-team all-Eastern District and first-team all-OVAC. He also played in the Ohio North-South All-Star Series.

During the summer months, Starr was a key contributor for the Maynard Post 666 American Legion squad which won two state titles and played in the American Legion World Series in 1986.

Starr earned a full baseball scholarship to play for the Wolverines in baseball. He played two seasons in Ann Arbor, winning a Big 10 championship in 1987. Due to injury, Starr eventually transferred to Muskingum College where he pitched for two years, earning all-Ohio Athletic Conference honors. He had 125 strikeouts in his two seasons with an ERA of 2.81 and was named 1 pre-season all-American, but tore his ACL in the first game of the season.

Continuing to overcome adversity, Starr was drafted in the 16th round of the Major League Baseball Draft by the Texas Rangers in 1991. He played three seasons of professional baseball.

On the football field, Starr etched his name into Buckeye Trail history as the school's all-time leader in passing and rushing yards. He was an honorable mention all-Ohio pick, first-team all-OVAC and first-team all-Eastern District. He was chosen to play in the OVAC All-Star Football Game, but turned it down due to Legion baseball.

During basketball season, Starr also earned all-state accolades. He was named to the third-team as well as first-team all-OVAC and all-District 12 squads. All told, he scored 770 points, averaging 12 points a game. He grabbed 367 rebounds, passed out 154 assists and shot 45 percent from the field.



Joe Maroon (Athlete - 1950s)

Joe Maroon (St. John Central High School, Class of 1958). A four-year Irish letterman in football, basketball and baseball, he became the first St. John's griddier to earn first team All-Ohio football honors (as a defensive safety) and also was an All-Ohio baseball selection. A two-time All-OVAC and All-Valley football honoree, he was co-captain of the 1957 All-OV 'Big School' honor roll as a 5-foot-6, 150-pound two-way back. After earning second team All-OVAC honors as a sophomore, he helped the Irish record the school's first-ever perfect football season of 9-0 with an OVAC title as a junior under Coach Hen Healy in 1956. Then he posted major statistics in only seven games (6-1 record) in a senior season shortened by influenza.



As a senior, Maroon led the Irish in scoring and rushing in the seven-game season. He led Eastern Ohio with 107 points on 17 touchdowns and five conversion runs and also completed 16 of 35 passes for eight scores. He had eight TD runs between 50-80 yards; returned four kicks for TDs with a long of 78 yards; and had four-TD games against Wheeling Central, Mingo and Barnesville. On defense, he intercepted five passes and also punted.

A three-sport Irish team co-captain, he also was selected captain of the winning Ohio team in the annual Ohio-W. Va. All-Star game. He also was awarded the Coca-Cola Scholar-Athlete Award by the OVAC.

Maroon attended Indiana University on a football scholarship and earned Academic All-America honors. He was a starting halfback in 1960 and averaged 5.3 yards a carry.

After receiving a medical degree from Indiana, he trained at Georgetown University and at Oxford University in England. Currently Vice-Chairman and Professor of Neurosurgery at the University of Pittsburgh, he is also the Team Neurosurgeon for the Pittsburgh Steelers. He also participates in numerous marathon races and triathlons. He was the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Man of the Year in 1987.

Dick Kerwood (Athlete - 1960s)

Richard (Dick) Kerwood (Bishop Donahue High School, Class of 1968). Some would have viewed it as a handicap; Kerwood used it as motivation.

The Bishop Donahue star was born June 9, 1950 with just one arm. It never hindered him in life or athletics.

During his youth, he played basketball and baseball, excelling in both. He was also a pioneer in weightlifting. He bought a cast iron set of weights while in grade school and used it passionately. The visionary strength training paid handsome dividends.

As a freshman at Bishop Donahue, Kerwood played football, basketball and baseball for Coach Tom O'Connell, lettering in all three sports.

During the next three years at the McMechen-based school, he opted to concentrate on just football and basketball. It proved a prudent decision.

The powerful 6 ft. 2, 190-pounder started on the gridiron his final three seasons as a center, middle linebacker and kicker.

During that time, he was accorded all-Valley, all-OVAC and all-State honors, named captain of the first two all-star squads.

Kerwood distinguished himself so much as a senior griddier that he earned honorable mention All-American plaudits. He was also invited to play in the OVAC All-Star Football Game.

His basketball career with the Bishops also took on all-star status. Kerwood was the team's center and gained all-OVAC and all-Valley honors. He was accorded the Sportsmanship Trophy at the West Virginia State Basketball Tournament as a senior.

Kerwood's sparkling prep play afforded him several college scholarship offers in both football and basketball. He opted to play football at Salem College, earning extensive playing time as a freshman.

As fate would have it, Kerwood was tragically killed in an automobile accident shortly after his frosh grid season at Salem.



Alex Welker (Athlete - 1970s)

Alex Welker (The Linsly School, Class of 1977). He is the Michael Phelps of Ohio Valley swimmers.

Welker splashed his way to a career like none other in OVAC swimming annals. Simply put, Welker was unbeatable.

The Linsly star never lost a race in high school, including relays, so it is only fitting that he is the first swimmer to be inducted into the OVAC Hall of Fame.

He entered Linsly as a sophomore and quickly established himself as an aquatic star. An exclamation point to his unblemished record was that he held an OVAC record in every event he competed in. He competed without ever shaving his body or tapering, methods use to lower resistance, yielding faster times.

Welker still holds school and OVAC records dating back to 1976. He earned the distinction of being named All-American as both a junior and senior.

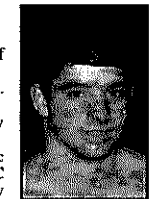
His unparalleled swimming career proved a springboard to a scholarship from The Ohio State University, and Welker found more pool success in Columbus.

He was voted the Buckeyes' Freshman Swimmer of the Year, helping the Scarlet & Gray to a runner-up finish in the Big Ten. He was a two-time NCAA qualifier while establishing five Ohio State records.

Welker, unfortunately, suffered a major shoulder injury during his sophomore season, and many thought his swimming career was over. He proved the naysayers wrong as he earned "Comeback of the Year Award" while also setting a new Ohio State record in the 200-meter freestyle as a senior.

He also set numerous records during his earlier years in AAU competition.

He also earned a piece of a world record. In 1975, he was a member of a 10-swimmer team that established a world mark in the 50-mile relay in Mount Vernon, Ohio, with Welker posting the fastest split.



Shawn Vincent (Athlete - 1980s)

Shawn Vincent (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1987). Football was the name of the game for this Red Devils' icon.

You name the way to be involved in a football game and Vincent was the leader of a team that advanced to the OHSAA Division III state semifinals before falling to Chagrin Falls Kenston, 22-21.

Vincent triggered the Red Devils' attack at the quarterback spot, setting an Ohio Valley record for rushing yards from the position at 1,360 yards in 13 games. He also scored 150 points for a Red Devil squad which won the OVAC Class 3-A title. During the regular season, Vincent averaged 10.1 yards a carry and scored 20 touchdowns.

Vincent passed for 441 yards and four touchdowns during his senior campaign. All told, he scored 24 touchdowns. He was also a weapon as a punt and kick returner, accumulating 638 yards and three scores. On the defensive side of the ball, Vincent roamed in the secondary and had seven interceptions.

For his season, Vincent was an all-OVAC, all-Ohio and all-Valley selection.

Upon his graduation, he accepted a scholarship to play defensive back at the University of Akron. He started for the Zips for three seasons and in 1988 shared the top sophomore award. He still holds the school record with 265 interception return yards and his 13 career interceptions rank second in the Akron record book.

Vincent then signed a free-agent contract with the Pittsburgh Steelers, playing 10 games in 1991 and recording two interceptions.

Aside from his football prowess, Vincent lettered in basketball and track and field for the Red Devils. He was the track most valuable athlete and still holds the school long-jump record.



PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Amber Ellison (Athlete - 1990s)

Amber Ellison (Meadowbrook High School, Class of 1999) . The Lady Colts' basketball program is one of the most storied in the Ohio Valley and Ellison is a major reason why.

Ellison was a four-year letterwinner for the Lady Colts, twice earning first-team all-Ohio accolades en route to her honors and eventual basketball scholarship to Wheeling Jesuit University.

She's currently Meadowbrook's second all-time girls' leader in points (1,363) and rebounds (850) and the all-time leader in steals (506) and assists (472). Ellison also holds the Meadowbrook single-game record for 44 points, which she netted as a senior against John Marshall.

During that senior season, Ellison averaged 24.1 points and 14.6 rebounds per game en route to every first-team award imaginable. She was first-team all-Ohio in Division II, Eastern District Player of the Year, All-District 12; Player of the year in the East Central Ohio League and first-team all-OVAC. She was also chosen for the Ohio North-South and OVAC All-Star games.

As a junior, Ellison poured in 19 points, grabbed 10 rebounds, passed out 5.7 assists and snared 5.5 steals per game en route to first-team all-everything. She was also named honorable mention all-USA Today.

If basketball wasn't enough, Ellison is also one of the finest softball players to ever wear a Lady Colts' uniform. She batted better than .400 every year of her career. Ellison was a three-time all-Ohio softball selection and four-time all-district pick. She was player of the year, as a sophomore, in the ECOL after batting .506 with seven home runs, seven triples and 37 RBI.

At Wheeling Jesuit, Ellison scored 1,273 career pints, grabbed 521 rebounds, passed out 389 assists and made 218 steals and blocked 42 shots. A four-year letterwinner, she was a two-year captain for the Lady Cardinals and was twice named to the all-WVIAC squad.

After her playing career at Jesuit, Ellison accepted a coaching position at Shenandoah where she served as an assistant for a season before ascending to the head coaching job. She was with the Lady Zeps for three seasons, posting a 54-17 record while reaching three district tournaments. She also had brief coaching stints at Franklin Heights and Olenangy Orange.



Denver Williams (Athlete - 1990s)

Denver Williams (Cadiz High School, Class of 1996). When it comes to speed, there have been very few, if any, faster than Williams.

Regardless if it was on the track or on the football field, Williams was consistently running away from the opposition.

Williams was a four-year regular in both track and football for the Cardinals. On the oval, Williams wrote his name into Ohio Valley history in both the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes.

He wasted little time in making a name for himself. He won the Division III state 200-meter dash title as a freshman in 1993. He proceeded to win three more, making him one of just five athletes in state history to win the same event four straight years.

Williams didn't stop with the 200 titles. He added the Division III 100-meter crowns to his resume in both his junior and senior seasons. Williams ran his personal-best times of 10.55 and 21.50 to win the gold medals as a senior, and both still stand as all-time OHSA and Ohio Valley records.

On the football field, Williams also sparkled, earning first-team all-Ohio and all-Eastern District twice. He owns the Cadiz school record for career rushing yards with 4,479.

After his prep career, Williams accepted a football scholarship to the University of Kentucky where he also ran track. He red-shirted as a freshman and then transferred to Youngstown State where he helped the Penguins win the NCAA Division I-AA National Championship. All told, he lettered four years at YSU in football and three in track.

For the Penguins' track team, Williams was the 200-meter runner-up in the Mid-Continent Conference and was apart of school records in the indoor 4x400 and sprint medley.

Williams has now entered the coaching field. He's spent time at Ashland, Ohio Northern and Heidelberg. Currently, he's working as a football coach and track coach at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn.



Kenny Howell (Athlete - 2000s)

Kenny Howell (St. John Central High School, Class of 2000). It didn't matter the season or the sport for this former Irish standout.

However, it was in track and field where Howell made his greatest impact despite only participating in the sport for three years because he played baseball as a freshman.

After being encouraged to give track and field a try, Howell became the area's most decorated male thrower, shining in the discus and shot put.

Howell was a three-time all-Ohioan in the discus. He placed third in the state his first season in the circle and then captured the coveted Division III state championship in 1999. As a senior, Howell was undefeated until the state meet when he settled for silver despite a personal-best throw of 180 feet. That mark still stands as the best in Ohio Valley history. Along with his efforts in the state competition, Howell was a three-time OVAC Champion in the platter event.

Howell placed fifth in the state shot put competition as a senior and was a two-time OVAC champion in the iron-ball event.

Howell also ran on high quality sprint relay teams for the Irish. On the football field, Howell etched his name into St. John Central history as a three-year starter for squads which combined for a 25-6 record and qualified for the playoffs in 1999 after a 9-1 season.

Howell was the primary running back for the Irish, amassing 1,500 yards as a junior en route to second-team all-Ohio status. He was first-team all-stater as a senior when he ran for better than 1,300 yards and was twice named to the OVAC's first team.

Howell was also a three-year starter for the Irish basketball program.

After high school, Howell accepted a track scholarship to West Virginia University, but eventually transferred to The Ohio State University where he completed his career and degree. He now resides in Columbus and works in the construction business.



OVAC Hall of Fame

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OVAC Hall of Fame lapel pins courtesy of Dr. Nick Trombetta

Former Superintendent of Midland Borough School District
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"As a former OVAC coach, I am aware of the unique role that this conference plays in the lives of the member schools' student-athletes. Your demonstrated emphasis on sportsmanwhip and scholarship are a tribute to your dedicated leadership and is rivaled by no other high school organization of which I am aware.

The OVAC Hall of Fame is providing an opportunity to recognize and honor individuals whose accomplishments continue to inspire and motivate today's athletes.

It is both my honor and extreme pleasure to play a small part in your continuing success."

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2004

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2004 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Nancy Mumley (accepting for the late Samuel A. Mumley), Evelyn Kovalick (accepting for the late George Kovalick), Gladys Van Horne (accepting for the late Bill Van Horne), Betty Pokas (accepting for the late Cal Pokas), Jim Foti, Linda Beisel (accepting for the late Richard L. Potts), and Martha Reese (accepting for the late Evan Reese. Second row, Jim Murray (accepting for the late A. Wilson Murray), Ken Alessi, John Havlicek, Bill Mazerowski, Dr. Al Blatnik (accepting for Bobby Douglas), Alan Hornyak and Rayna Williams (accepting for the late Ron 'Fritz' Williams). Third row, Doug Donley, Gerald Spencer (accepting for Tim Spencer), Amy Gamble, Mitch Hannahs, Vicki Pullie-Stokes, Geno Ford and Stephanie Petho.



OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2005

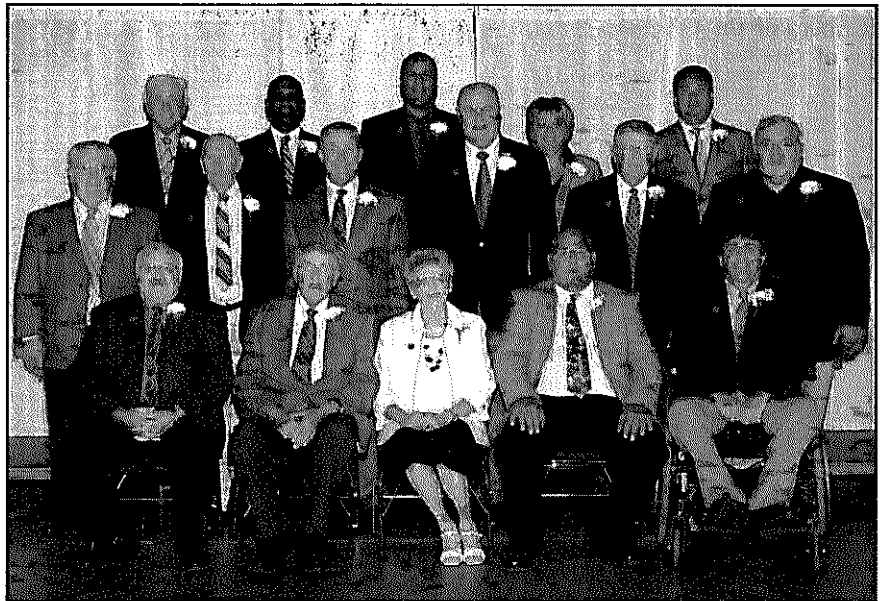
Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2005 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Matt Mumley (accepting for the late Rudy Mumley), Agnes Timmons, Doug Huff, Duke Strager (accepting for the late George Strager), Bob Burton and John 'Corky' Vrotsos. Second row, Chester Grossi, Mary Kay Zitzelsberger (accepting for the late Walter Hell), Mary Schuetz (accepting for the late Alex Groza), June Paull (accepting for Chuck Howley), Dick Miller, Mike Sherwood and Terry Snively. Third row, John 'Fuzzy' Filliez, Lance Mehl, Dee Davis, Brian Swisher, Courtney Redman (accepting for Joey Galloway), and Matt Gaudio.



A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2010

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2010 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Rick DeLuca, Frank Baxter, Jean Davies (representing Bill Davies), John Stephenson and Kyle Rose; second row, Tom Cusick (representing Chuck Watt), John "Streaky" Haloszka, Dave Bruney (representing Fred Bruney), Henry Josefczyk, Don Sutherin, Larry Duck; third row, Phil Niekro (representing Joe Niekro), Less Browne, Mike Wright, Melissa Hammond and Jeff Sweitzer.



OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2011

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2011 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Chuck Petty (accepting for the late Charles E. Petty), Dick Thurnes, Ross Gallabrese (accepting for the late John Kirker), Patty Dei (accepting for the late Dick Dei) and Larry Shaw. Second row, Piennie Clutter, Gary Martin (accepting for the late Edgar Martin), Carol Hudson (accepting for the late Bob Jeter), Jim McCormick, Richard Boron, John Donahue (accepting for the late Randy Donahue). Third row, Craig Miller, Pat Miller, Marsha Clay (accepting for Willie Clay), Sharon Vincent, Reno DiOrio (accepting for T.J. Hannig), Quincy Wilson and Ashley Battle.



A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2012

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2012 or their representatives include, front row l to r, Tom Bechtel, Phillip Carey (accepting for the late Burdell "Jimmy" Carey), Shawn Donley (accepting for the late Charles "Red" Donley), Gene Ammirante, Gary Sprague and Bill Tonini; second row, Stephanie Joseph Wilson and Aimee Joseph Mayer (accepting for the late Eugene "Eudie" Joseph), Art Fehr, Joey Maroon (accepting for Joe Maroon), Dan Lalich (accepting for Dan Abramowicz) and Amber Ellison; third row, Mark Kerwood (accepting for the late Richard "Dick" Kerwood), Doug Swearingen, Alex Welker, Chris Starr, Shawn Vincent and Kenny Howell.



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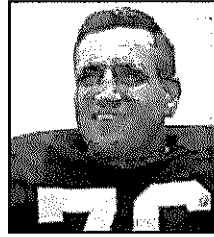
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2005



V. Everett Brinkman



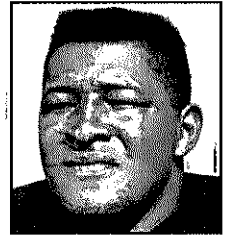
Clarence 'Bevo' Francis



Lou 'The Toe' Groza



Clarke Hinkle



Calvin Jones

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

V. Everett Brinkman (Wheeling High School, Class of 1923)

One of only three 13-letter winners in football, basketball, baseball and track at Wheeling High, he was an all-state football end and scored 54 points in a basketball game as a freshman. He became a three-sport, nine-letter standout at W. Va. Wesleyan College before returning to the Ohio Valley to earn his mark in coaching.

A pioneer of the jump shot and fast break, Brinkman coached Benwood Union from 1928-33 and Wheeling High from 1934-55 to a combined 405-193 record. At Wheeling, his teams were 356-138 with five state titles in seven trips to the finals. The 1938 and 1950 teams were unbeaten. Other state titles were won in 1936, 1940 and 1943. The '40 and '43 teams lost but once.

Brinkman also coached football for 14 years — six at Benwood Union and eight at Wheeling, with a combined record of 87-32-15 including 40-9-4 at Union. Four of his gridiron teams claimed state titles in the pre-official state playoff era: 1928 and 1931 Union, both unbeaten, and at Wheeling in 1934 and 1937. The '34 team was unbeaten but twice tied.

He also was a top-flight football official for several years and active in state coaches and officials' organizations.

Brinkman earlier was elected to four Halls of Fame — West Virginia Sports, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan, City of Wheeling, and W. Va. Wesleyan Sports.

Clarence 'Bevo' Francis (Wellsville High School, Class of 1952)

A record-setting basketball scoring machine in high school and college who attracted national attention and was profiled in numerous books, national magazines and major newspapers. Two books were written on his career.

The 6-9, 190-pounder played only one season at Wellsville High after sitting out a year following transfer from Irondale. In 1952, he scored 776 points in 25 games with 31-point average, second best in Ohio. He outscored six opposing teams with highs of 57, 54 and 50 points. Wellsville lost only to 28-1 record state runner-up Steubenville and handed W. Va. Class B champion Newell two of its three losses.

He followed Wellsville coach Newt Oliver to Rio Grande College and played two seasons. In 1953, he scored 1,954 points in 39 games for national record 50.1 per game average. He scored 116 vs. Ashland Junior College. In 1954, he averaged 46.5 points and scored 113 vs. Hillsdale College. The schedule included wins over Wake Forest, Providence, Butler and Creighton and games in Madison Square Garden, Boston Garden and Miami Beach Auditorium.

The NALA Hall of Famers left school to join the Boston Whirlwinds and tour with the Harlem Globetrotters. He also played in the Eastern and ABL pro leagues before retiring in 1962.

Lou 'The Toe' Groza (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1942)

The Purple Rider luminary is best known as a record-setting professional football placekicker, but he was much more.

In high school, he was a three-sport standout and All-Ohio in football and basketball. He was center, and the state tournament's leading scorer, on the 27-2 record Rider team which won the 1941 state Class A title. He also was a tackle on the 10-0-1 record 1941 football team which claimed an Ohio co-championship after a 14-14 tie with Toledo Libbey in a post-season challenge game. Groza, by the way, kicked only one field goal in high school.

He played football as a freshman at Ohio State before joining the armed services which preceded his 21-year career with the Cleveland Browns which ended in 1967. When he retired, he was pro football's all-time leading scorer with only one TD and 1,609 points. He booted 234 field goals, with a long of 53 yards. He had conversion streak of 134 and scored in 107 straight games. The Lou Groza Award is given annually to college football's top placekicker.

A nine-time Pro Bowl offensive tackle, as well as kicker, he played in nine NFL title games, with four titles, and played on four All-American Conference title teams.

The Pro Football and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Famer had his jersey No. 76 retired by the Browns. A portion of Route 7 is named for him in Martins Ferry.

Clarke Hinkle (Toronto High School, Class of 1926)

This versatile early era football player left such an impression on his alma mater that the Toronto High School Football Stadium behind the school is named in his honor.

The 5-11, 195-pound athlete also left an enduring imprint at Bucknell University, where he was inducted into the first Hall of Fame class, and in the National Football League. He was inducted, in 1964, in the second class of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He's also a member of the Halls of Fame for College Football and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dans.

At Bucknell from 1929-31, he led the East in scoring with 128 points in 1929 and later his team to an unbeaten season in 1931. He then played in the East-West Game where he was selected the Most Outstanding Player.

From 1932-41, the Green Bay Packer star was one of the most versatile players in the National Football League. He was a fullback-linebacker-punter-placekicker, and was cited for his running, blocking, receiving, kicking and tackling.

Hinkle was first or second team all-league all 10 seasons and four-time All-Pro. He was on the NFL All-Time Two-Way team selected in 1994. One of the Packer practice fields is named in his honor.

When he retired, he was the leading rusher (3,860 yards on 1,171 carries) in NFL history and his totals now rank sixth in Packer history. He scored 379 career points and averaged 40.8 yards punting.

Calvin Jones (Steubenville High School, Class of 1952)

This two-sport Big Red standout was a high school basketball rival of fellow honoree Bevo Francis but is best known for football.

At Big Red, he helped the 1952 basketball team to a school-best 28-1 record and Ohio Class A runner-up finish. En route, Big Red handed the Francis-led Wellsville team its only two losses.

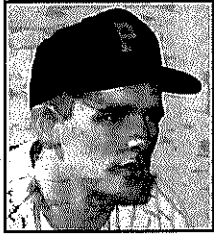
In football, the All-Ohio lineman selected the University of Iowa over Ohio State and went on to All-Big Ten Conference honors three times. He made 22 All-America teams at guard, including a record 15 in 1954. As team captain, he earned the Outland Trophy given to the nation's top interior lineman and became one of only two consensus All-America picks at Iowa, where he played both offense and defense.

A member of the College Football and Helms Athletic Foundation Halls of Fame, he was inducted into the first Iowa Hall of Fame class and is a member of the All-Time Hawkeye team. His jersey No. 62 was retired by Iowa, one of only two at the school.

He was the first African-American athlete pictured on the cover of Sports Illustrated.



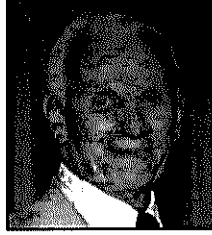
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2006



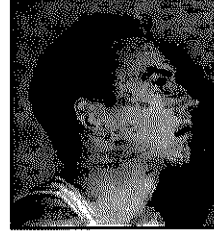
Bernie Allen



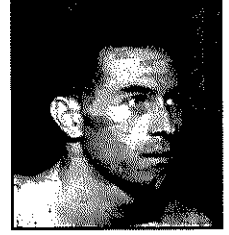
Russ Craft



Carl Hamill



Bernie Mehen



Jule Rivlin

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Bernie Allen (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1957)

A 10-letter winner in three sports for the Potters, he was a quarterback-placekicker for the 8-2 record 1956 football team; a regular basketball player on team which upset unbeaten Steubenville in the sectional tournament; and an all-state baseball infielder. He played in the Ohio All-Star Baseball Game and was on winning Ohio football team in annual Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Game.

At Purdue University, he earned six letters as football quarterback and baseball shortstop and was team MVP in both sports and All-Big Ten in baseball.

Allen earned National Football Back of Week honors from The Associated Press and Sports Illustrated for play in upset of Ohio State. He was Purdue's Outstanding Senior Athlete for 1960-61.

Allen signed a pro baseball contract in 1961 with the Minnesota Twins. After spending one year in the minor leagues at Charlotte, N.C., he went on to a 12-year major league career from 1962-73 with the Twins, Washington Senators, New York Yankees and Montreal Expos. In 1962, he was runner-up to the Yankees' Tom Tresh for the American League Rookie of the Year honors. He batted .269 with 12 home runs in 1962. In 1972, he hit three home runs in the Hall of Fame game in Cooperstown, N.Y.

He's been inducted into four other halls of fame. In 1999, he became the fifth inductee into the Purdue Hall and was a charter inductee into the East Liverpool Hall of Fame. He's also in the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan and Lou Holtz Ohio Valley Halls of Fame.

Russ Craft (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1939)

He was a three-sport performer in football, basketball and baseball for the Orange Knights and earned All-Valley and All-State honors as a senior football back.

Craft played football, baseball and ran track at the University of Alabama, where he was a two-way back regular in football and earned second team All-Southeastern Conference honors.

Drafted in 1943 by the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League, he played eight seasons (1946-53) as a defensive back-kick returner and was selected to the All-Time Eagles' Team. He played on Eagles' teams which won NFL titles in 1948 and 1949 and finished second in 1947. He was named to the Pro Bowl in 1951 and 1952. He is tied for the current NFL record of four pass interceptions in one game against the Cardinals in 1950. He also blocked three Pittsburgh Steeler extra-point kicks in 1952 game and returned a kickoff for a ten team record 103 yards against the Rams in 1950.

Craft is credited as the first player in the NFL to wear the new hard plastic helmet in 1951. He ended his NFL career in two seasons as a player-assistant coach with the Steelers. In 1995, he was included in the NFL Films' presentation of the 100 Greatest Touchdowns in NFL History. It featured his defensive theft, and 20-yard TD return, of a pass reception caught by NFL Hall of Famer Elroy (Crazylegs) Hirsch of the Rams.

Craft is inducted into the W. Va. Sports Hall of Fame and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall.

Carl Hamill (Linsly School, Class of 1922)

A legendary athlete and high school coach in the Ohio Valley, he was a three-sport standout at Linsly and Bethany College. An All-Valley football player, he also scored an unheard-of 330 points in 21 basketball games in 1920, a rare total in the center jump, low-scoring era.

From 1929-51, he was the three-sport coach at Weir High. His football teams scheduled top-notch programs from three states and went 166-35-13 including a 111-10 mark vs. Mountain State teams. He coached six unbeaten teams and four with only one loss. Three state titles were claimed in 1935, 1942 and 1949 when the Red Riders won the first-ever WVSSAC largest class state playoff title and the school narrowly missed a state title trifecta. Later that school year, he coached the 1950 baseball team to its second state one-class crown (the other was in 1945). The 1949-50 basketball team lost a 38-37 regional title game to unbeaten Wheeling High, which went on to win the championship. He was selected West Virginia "Coach of the Year" for high school and college all sports.

In basketball, he guided Weir to a 370-127 record and six state tournament berths. Weir was runner-up in 1942.

Hamill has been inducted into several halls of fame, including W. Va. Sports, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan, Bethany College and was the first inductee into the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Hall. The annual Dapper Dan coaching award is named for him and he was one of three prominent Weirton community leaders pictured on a downtown mural. The Weir High Fieldhouse is named in his honor.

Bernie Mehen (Wheeling High School, Class of 1938)

The first Ohio Valley athlete to be selected first team all-state basketball three straight years, he led the Wildcats to W. Va. state titles in 1936 and 1938 including a 24-0 record in 1938.

During those three years that he was the leading scorer, Wheeling High was 65-4 under Hall of Fame coach Everett Brinkman. Mehen scored 1,193 points in 84 career games with many coming during the center jump, low scoring era.

He later earned All-America and All-Southeastern Conference recognition at the University of Tennessee, where he helped the Vols win the 1941 Southeastern Conference championship. After serving in World War II, where he was wounded, he played professionally with the Youngstown Bears and Toledo Jeeps.

He was inducted into the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame in 1992.

Jule Rivlin (Triadelphia High School, Class of 1935)

He was an all-state basketball guard in high school where he led the Triads to a 20-1 record in 1934. He also was the high-point scorer in the 1935 one-class state track meet where he won three gold medals. He timed 10.2 for 100 yards, 22.8 for 220 yards and was a member of the medley relay winning unit.

At Marshall College, he was one of the first guards to run the fast break offense for state Hall of Fame coach Cam Henderson and earned Little All-America honors while setting a school season scoring record with 530 points. He helped the Herd to two Buckeye Conference titles. He later coached the Marshall basketball team to two Mid America Conference titles.

He played professionally with the Toledo Jeeps and was player-coach of the Wheeling Blues from 1950-52.

In 1947, he was the Most Valuable Player in the World Tournament in Chicago which featured the nation's best pro teams including the Harlem Globetrotters.

He was a 1980 charter inductee into the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame and is a member of four other halls of fame, including W. Va. Sports, Marshall and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan.



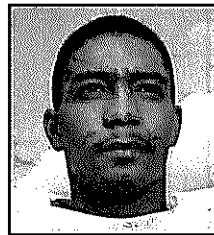
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2007



Rudy Baric



Mike Basrak



Les Carney



Charles 'Doc' Hartwig



Jim 'Monk' Moscrip

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Rudy Baric (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1938)

He was a first team All-W.Va. basketball honoree as a senior when the OVAC charter member school bowed to unbeaten Wheeling High in the section finals. As a junior, he helped the Ironmen to a state tournament berth and the school's best-ever record of 23-2.

At West Virginia University, the 6-3 center captained the 1942 team which won the National Invitation Tournament championship in New York's Madison Square Garden when the NIT was more prestigious than the NCAA Tournament. After a 16-4 regular season record, the Mountaineers were seeded last in the eight-team event before they upset top-seeded Long Island U., 52-49, in the first round. WVU then defeated Toledo, 51-39, and Western Kentucky, 47-45, before 17,000 fans in the finals. The team's only 6-footer was the team's leading rebounder and second-highest scorer and was selected tournament MVP. The three-year regular helped WVU to a 45-20 record.

In 1943, with WVU coach Dyke Raese in the armed services, Baric served as interim coach and guided WVU to a 14-7 record. He then went on to coach high school basketball for 19 years at Penns Grove, N. J., where his teams won more than 300 games.

A member of the All-Time WVU era team, he was inducted into the second WVU Hall of Fame class and is a W. Va. Sports HOF inductee.

Mike Basrak (Bellaire High School, Class of 1931)

The 6-3, 210-pound football center started 22 games in his Big Reds' career and earned All-Eastern Ohio and All-Valley honors before becoming the first college All-America player from Bellaire and the first in Duquesne University history. He started 30 games at Duquesne and was selected All-America by the A-A board, The Associated Press and other major selectors. Bellaire displayed its pride for its hometown hero by placing a 10-foot pictorial banner above the front entrance to the City Building.

In the second National Football League Draft of 1937, Basrak was the fifth overall league selection in the first round by the Pittsburgh Pirates, later renamed the Steelers. No other OVAC product has been drafted earlier than Basrak. Weirton's Bob Gain, inducted into the OVAC Hall in 2006, also was a fifth pick. Basrak played two seasons in the NFL.

Les Carney (Wintersville High School, Class of 1952)

A 10-letter winner in four sports — football, basketball, baseball and track — for the Warriors, the football running back played in only one losing game in three seasons for Coach Bob McFarren. Wintersville, however, didn't join the OVAC until 1955 after Carney accepted a scholarship to Ohio University.

As a sophomore OU running back, he earned honorable mention All-Mid American Conference for the MAC champions before being called to military service.

After returning, he led the Bobcats' track team to the 1958 and 1959 MAC titles while earning NCAA All-America honors as a senior. He held the NCAA 220-yard dash record of 20.8 seconds for one day. The two-time MAC 220-yard champion set a conference record which lasted 21 years. He also won the conference 100-yard crown with a 9.7-second clocking. At one time, he claimed all or parts of five school individual or relay records.

Carney was drafted by the NFL Baltimore Colts, but bypassed the offer for a job in his current hometown of Akron where he competed in AAU track meets. He earned a spot on the U.S. team for the 1959 Pan-American Games and won a silver medal at 200 meters.

In 1960, he placed third in the U.S. Olympic Trials at 200 meters and earned a spot on the U.S. team for the Rome Olympics. In the 200-meter finals, he earned a silver medal in a photo finish with hometown hero Livio Berutti of Italy, who set an Olympic record of 20.5 seconds. Carney's time of 20.6 would have won every previous Olympic final including the 1936 Games won by the legendary Jesse Owens in 20.7.

Charles 'Doc' Hartwig (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1930)

An All-Valley and All-West Virginia football lineman who went on to earn national fame and recognition at the University of Pittsburgh. He played for Coach Everett Brinkman at Union and helped the Ironmen to the school's first unbeaten season of 8-0 in 1928. At Pitt, he was selected team captain, starred in the 1933 Rose Bowl, and earned All-America honors in 1934 after coming back from an injury which forced him to miss his sophomore season. The 1934 Pitt team was acclaimed national champions. The three-year letterman played on Panther teams with a combined 24-3-2 record.

He also played in the East-West Shrine Game along with fellow honoree Jim Moscrip and Michigan's Gerald Ford, a future U.S. president.

Hartwig became a national hero when he was pictorially featured on a Wheaties cereal box, the only Ohio Valley athlete so honored.

He coached Moundsville High in 1938 and Martins Ferry High the next two years before returning to Pitt to join the athletic department.

Hartwig died in 1950 after a lingering illness and Benwood Union named its football field, Hartwig Field, after the school's only All-American.

Jim 'Monk' Moscrip (Adena High School, Class of 1931)

He earned 10 letters in three sports — football, basketball and baseball — and was an All-Eastern Ohio and All-Valley football end under Coach Fred Thomas. He led the 1930 football team to a 9-1-1 record as the Golden Wave outscored foes, 284-19. He also the MVP of the county basketball tournament.

After spending a year at Kiski Prep in Saltsburg, Pa., the 6-foot, 186-pounder became a three-year starter at Stanford University and played on the famed "Vow Boys" team — so named for vowing not to lose to Southern California during their career. Moscrip and teammates kept their promise and defeated USC three times and compiled a 25-4-2 record while becoming the first team to play in three straight Rose Bowls. Stanford won twice and Moscrip, a two-way end and placekicker, was MVP of the 1936 Rose Bowl win over SMU. He also played in the East-West Shrine Game.

He was selected by the old NFL Brooklyn Dodgers in the first NFL Draft in 1936, but his NFL career was two seasons with the Detroit Lions.

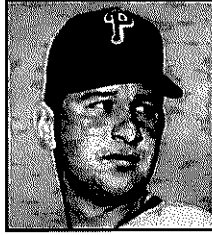
A member of the All-Time Stanford team, he was inducted into the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame and the College Football Hall of Fame.



LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2008



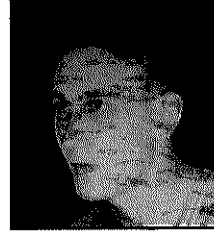
Ernie Bell



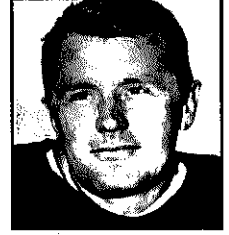
John Blatnik



George Burgwin



Kenny Griffith



Jim Keane

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Ernie Bell (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1953).

He was a two-way line standout on the unbeaten 1952 Potter football team regarded as one of the best in school history.

The 160-pound guard was named to five All-Ohio first team selections, and an Ohio Lineman of the Year selection by the International News Service after the 9-0-1 record team was voted No. 3 in the final statewide poll.

The Potters defeated Cleveland West, Steubenville, New Philadelphia, Youngstown Rayen, Alliance, Martins Ferry, Salem, Ashtabula and Wellsville and tied Sandusky, 13-13.

Opposing teams found it almost impossible to keep Bell out of their backfield. Alliance quarterback Len Dawson, a future star at Purdue University and the Kansas City Chiefs, was sacked several times by Bell and he lauded the Potter defender as the best he faced all season.

Bell also blocked four punts in one game of his four-year career.

An inductee into the East Liverpool High School Hall of Fame, Bell also was a member of the winning North team in the annual Ohio North-South game.

John Blatnik (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1939).

He was a two-sport Bulldog standout who signed a pro baseball contract before his senior high school season. He was a member of two teams which advanced to the Ohio state basketball tournament in the largest Class A division.

The 1938 team, coached by Floyd Baker, defeated Bowling Green and Akron St. Vincent before bowing to eventual champion Newark in the semifinals. In 1939, under coach Stan Plummer, the Bulldogs defeated Akron Buchtel in the tournament before bowing to eventual champion Akron North in the quarterfinals.

Baseball was where Blatnik earned fame in high school and the pros, however. He competed for Coach Orville (Tubby) Edmundson in high school and played for the Fred Englehardt-coached Bridgeport National Bank Juniors in the summer. Between his junior and senior prep seasons, he worked out for six weeks with the Cleveland Indians and signed a contract with scout Bill Bradley but played his final high school season.

After graduation, he started his pro career with Greensburg, Pa., in the Class D Penn State League. He then competed, as a first baseman and outfielder, in Fargo, N.D., and Charleston, W.Va., before serving from 1942-46 in the Air Force. He returned to play in Harrisburg and Wilkes-Barre, Pa., before being called up by the Philadelphia Phillies. He competed for the Phillies and St. Louis Cardinals for two full seasons, plus minor league stops, from 1948-56 before retiring from baseball.

George 'Puck' Burgwin (Steubenville High School, Class of 1933).

A legendary early era four-sport Big Red who set school and Ohio Valley football rushing records while playing for 31-3 record teams against top tri-state competition from 1929-32.

He was the anchor of the 9-0 record, unscored-upon Big Red team of 1930 and a program which reeled off an OV record 17 straight shutout wins. As a junior, he rushed for 2,126 yards and scored 196 points in nine games — both Big Red records after 75 years and OV standards for six decades.

His career totals of 541 points and 5,614 rushing yards are both Big Red school records.

A two-way football player and kicker, he also excelled in track, baseball and basketball and some of his school track records lasted until the early 1950s.

He played one college season for Western Reserve before leaving school and played in 1947-48 for the Steubenville semi-pro team. He's inducted into the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame.

Burgwin died of a heart attack at age 37 in 1951.

Kenny Griffith (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1937).

He was a senior standout on the 1937 Orange team which won its first, and only, OVAA championship with an 18-1 regular season record. It ended a school-best 22-2 season, under coach Reed Clark, in the regional finals with a loss to Benwood Union.

He enrolled at Alderson-Broadus College, where he became a national scoring sensation under Coach Rex Pyles. He broke the national career scoring record of 1,596 points set by national Hall of Famer Hank Luisetti of Stanford by scoring 1,941 points in four seasons. Griffith led the nation in scoring his last two seasons (1940 with a 23.9 average and 1941 at 22.0) and became the first West Virginia Conference player to average 20 points for a season.

In 1941, the small college All-American became the first state basketball player to be selected the W. Va. Amateur Athlete of the Year. He also competed in a national All-Star game in Chicago.

An Alderson-Broadus Hall of Famer who is featured on the walls of the school gymnasium, he was selected to the all-time West Virginia Conference team.

After college, the 6-foot-2 Griffith played briefly in 1942 with the pro Akron Goodyears.

Jim Keane (Linsly Military Institute, Class of 1941).

The Bellaire native was a six-sport Cadet letterman in football, basketball, track, golf, tennis and boxing. He earned All-Valley honors in football and received a football scholarship to the University of Iowa. He finished his career at Northwestern University in Chicago.

A 6-foot-4, 208-pound end, he was drafted in the 18th round by the Chicago Bears in 1945 and played seven seasons in the National Football League — the first six with the Bears and one with the Green Bay Packers. In his rookie season, the Bears defeated the New York Giants, 24-14 in the NFL championship game.

In his second season, he led the NFL in pass receiving with 64 catches for 910 yards and 10 touchdowns in 12 games.

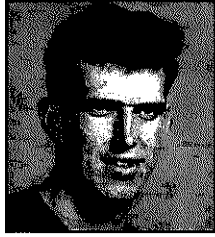
His seven-year, 81-game NFL career included 224 pass receptions for 3,222 yards and 24 touchdowns.



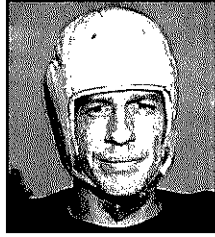
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2009



**Tom
Kinkade**



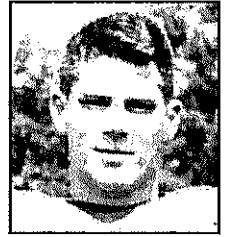
**Fred
Negus**



**Charley
Seabright**



**Nick
Skorich**



**Moffat
Storer**

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Tom Kinkade (Toronto High School, Class of 1938)

He was a football and basketball standout for the Red Knights before excelling in football at Ohio State University.

As a senior in high school, he led Toronto to a school record 19-2 record with only a regular season split with Weir High marring an unbeaten season. The 1938 team advanced to the regional tournament finals, the farthest in school history, before bowing, 50-49 to state tournament-bound Bridgeport.

The 6-foot-1, 190-pound Kinkade was selected All-Ohio by The Associated Press and led all scorers with a 25-point average. Toronto averaged 53 points a game.

In a 82-31 rout of Midland, Pa., Kinkade scored a school record 52 points on 23 goals and six free throws. It was the second highest Ohio Valley effort at the time and lasted as a school record for 30 years.

A quarterback in football, he was recruited by Ohio State and was a three-year letterman and two-way regular as a running back-linebacker on teams which finished 6-2 and Big Ten Conference champions in 1939 and 6-1-1 in 1941 under first-year coach Paul Brown. He was drafted by the Green Bay Packers in 1942, but opted not to play pro football.

Fred Negus (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1940)

He was a three-sport, three-year Purple Rider athlete in football, basketball and baseball and earned All-Valley honors as a junior center and senior full-back while serving as team captain in two sports.

After a year in prep school, he played football two years at the University of Wisconsin and earned All-Big Ten as a sophomore center on an 8-1-1 record team ranked No. 3 in the nation. After enlisting in the Marine Corp Reserve, he earned All-Big Ten center as a junior at the University of Michigan and also lettered in track. After a year in the active U.S. Marine Corp where he competed on the Marines' football team, he was drafted by the NFL's Cleveland Rams, but opted to return to the University of Wisconsin. He earned his third All-Big Ten first center honors and competed for the College All-Star team against the Chicago Bears.

After college, he played three seasons in Chicago in the All-American Football Conference and the 1950 season with the Chicago Bears.

In 1998, he was inducted into the University of Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame. In 2005, he died at age 83 in Fort Atkinson, Wis.

Charley Seabright (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1937)

He was a three-sport standout in football, basketball and baseball at old Benwood Union High, earning All-West Virginia one-class honors in football and basketball and was All-Valley in football. As a senior, he led the Ironmen to a school-best 23-2 basketball record and sectional and regional titles plus a state tournament berth. During that run, the Ironmen ended a 33-game winning streak of defending state champion Wheeling.

At West Virginia University, he earned seven letters and is one of only 12 athletes in school history to earned letters in football, basketball and baseball. A three-year starter as blocking back, single-wing quarterback and linebacker, he also batted .300 as a left-handed baseball first baseman and played guard in basketball.

He was selected to the WVU football all-time decade team (1940-49) and was a 2004 inductee into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame. In 1977, he was inducted into the West Virginia Sports Hall of Fame.

In 1941, Seabright played with the NFL's Cleveland Rams before serving in the U.S. Army. After the war, he played five seasons (1946-50) as one of the last two-way offensive-defensive players in the NFL as blocking back-linebacker with the Pittsburgh Steelers. He started on the 8-4 record 1947 team regarded as the best in team history prior to the 1970s. He was selected in the 1970s on an All-Time Steeler Defensive Team.

After residing and working in the Ohio Valley for three decades, he died in 1981.

Nick Skorich (Bellaire High School, Class of 1939)

He was a three-sport Big Reds' athlete in football, basketball and track and earned All-Valley honors as a football center while playing on three teams which won titles in the OVAA, the forerunner of the OVAC. The three teams had records of 9-1, 8-2 and 9-1.

He earned a football scholarship to the University of Cincinnati where he was team captain as a senior and earned honors on the All-Ohio college selections.

Skorich was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1943 before serving in the U.S. Navy. After military service, he played three seasons as guard for the Steelers before turning to coaching — first in high school before serving as an assistant with the Steelers, Green Bay and Philadelphia before becoming Eagles' head coach for three seasons. He then joined the Cleveland Browns' staff and became the Browns' head coach from 1971-74. After leaving Cleveland, he capped his career as supervisor of officials for the National Football League. He died in 2004.

Moffat Storer (The Linsly School, Class of 1939)

He was a three-sport Cadet standout in football, basketball and track where he set the longest-lasting Ohio Valley and W. Va. record in the 100-yard dash.

An All-Valley fullback, he helped Linsly to 7-2 and 9-2 records as a sophomore and junior but is best known for his record-setting first place finish in the 1939 Intelligencer Tri-State Track Meet, the most prestigious meet in the area at the time. He clocked 9.7 seconds for 100 yards which remained on the OV record books for four decades and was the best-ever in West Virginia until 1972.

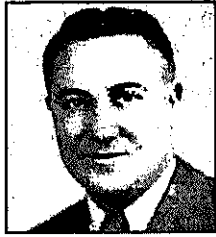
He continued his football and track career at Duke University where he was a starting back in the 1942 Rose Bowl game against Oregon State. It was played in Durham, N.C., the only time outside Pasadena, Calif., because of World War II in the Pacific. He also starred on the Blue Devils' track team and led the sprint relay unit to a victory in the prestigious Penn Relays.

Storer was drafted by the NFL Chicago Cardinals but, after graduation, served in the armed forces.

He lived in Chattanooga, Tenn., for several years, and is deceased.



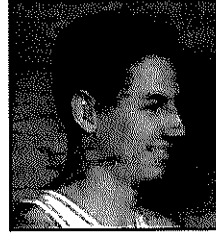
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2010



Floyd Baker



Carl Hoppel



Dick Mehen



Will Robinson



Jack Simons

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Floyd Baker — The graduate of Wittenberg University left his boys' basketball coaching imprint on the Ohio Valley from 1932-45. He put Bridgeport High on the roundball map during a golden era from 1934-40 when the Bulldogs had three straight 20-win seasons (20-5, 27-4 and 23-3, all by Baker), five sectional crowns (three by Baker), and four straight Ohio state tournament berths (three by Baker), reaching the semifinals in 1936 and 1938, a team that included OVAC Legend John Blatnik. His seven-year Bulldog coaching record was 118-56. Baker then moved over to rival Martins Ferry, where he enjoyed even more success and became the only area coach to guide two different schools to the Ohio state tournament, highlighted by the 1941 Ohio championship squad. He started the Purple Riders' golden era in basketball, which lasted from 1939-54 and included 12 sectional titles, six by Baker-coached teams. His final six Ferry teams won more than 20 games. From 1941-45, his teams went 122-9. That included the 29-2 record title team of 1941, led by Hall of Famer Lou Groza, and followed by records of 22-3, 24-1, 25-1 and 21-2. A 33-game winning streak ended in 1942. The 1944 team (26-1), led by Hall of Famer Alex Groza, won the first OVAC Class AA title. His seven-year Ferry record was 159-21. Baker's 14-year Ohio Valley coaching record was 277-77, with seven Ohio state tournament berths and the 1941 Ohio largest Class A championship. He left Ferry for a job in Richmond, Ind.

Carl Hoppel (Beaver Local High School, Class of 1962). The youngest of five sons to Everett and Lee Hoppel, a famous wrestling family known throughout Ohio, he became the first freshman to win an Ohio wrestling championship in 1959. Had it not been for a highly-disputed takedown in the last few seconds of his semifinal match as a sophomore, where he placed third, he could have been a four-time state champion. He went on to win Ohio titles as a junior and senior to become a three-time champion. Hoppel, who also played football at Beaver, was never pinned in four years and finished his career with a 99-2 won-loss record and three state championships. He was honored at the 2000 Ohio State Wrestling Tournament as one of the Top 15 "Greatest Ohio High School Wrestlers." For 10 straight years, from 1953-62, the five Hoppel brothers competed in the Ohio State Tournament and had 12 state placers including six champions — three by the youngest son, Carl. The four oldest sons competed for East Liverpool High. Carl Hoppel, a retired businessman, was once owner of Hoppel Enterprises, Hoppel Block and Brick and co-owner of West Point Electric.

Dick Mehen (Wheeling High School, Class of 1940). He and older brother Bernie Mehen, who was honored as an OVAC Legend in 2006, became the first two West Virginia basketball players to earn all-class, first team all-state basketball honors three times. The 6-foot-5 center was honored as all-state captain in 1940 when the Wildcats went 23-1 and won the second state title in three years and also claimed the OVAA championship. The OVAA was a conference forerunner of the OVAC. In 1938, when both Dick and Bernie Mehen started for the Wildcats, Wheeling High went 24-0 and won a state title for Coach Everett Brinkman, an OVAC Legends charter selection. The Wildcats went 64-3 in the three years that Dick Mehen was a starter. As a senior, Mehen scored 556 points to lead the Ohio Valley, and probably the state of West Virginia, and ended his prep career with more than 1,300 points, a high total for that era. Dick joined Bernie at the University of Tennessee and earned two first team All-Southeastern Conference honors and was second team All-America. He then played five years of pro basketball in the pre-NBA era, including the Toledo Jeeps coached by Triadelphia High product and OVAC Legend, Jule Rivlin.

Will Robinson (Stuebenville High School, Class of 1933). A five-sport Big Red letterman in football, basketball, baseball and track, he was the "T" quarterback on the 1930 9-0 record football team which was unbeaten, untied and unscored-upon and also featured OVAC Legend George (Puck) Burgwin. Big Red went 26-1 in his three years at quarterback. He was also a fine golfer, placing second in the Ohio state tournament. At West Virginia State, Robinson captained three teams in three sports, won 12 varsity letters, and quarterbacked the 1936 national Negro championship team. He became a legendary high school coach in Detroit where his 28 teams won 85 percent of their games while producing numerous college and pro athletes at Cass Tech and Pershing High School. In 1970, he became the first black to become head basketball coach at a major university — Illinois State — where he coached Olympian and NBA player Doug Collins. After five winning seasons, he returned to Detroit to join the NBA Pistons' staff as a scout. He's also a member of several Halls of Fame including W. Va. State, Illinois State, Michigan Sports Hall, and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dans. He died, at age 96, in 2008.

Jack Simons (New Cumberland High School, Class of 1920). He has held the Ohio Valley single-season football scoring record for 90 years. In 1919, he scored 38 touchdowns and 60 extra points for a record 288 points. He was a four-year, four-sport (football, basketball, baseball, track) performer at the school which was merged, along with Chester and Newell, into the current Oak Glen High School. He became the first New Cumberland athlete, in 1919, to earn first team all-state football honors. At West Virginia University, he was a four-year starter (1920-23) at halfback and fullback as well as linebacker. He started on the 10-0-1 record 1922 team, the only unbeaten team in school history. He was captain of the 7-1-1 record 1923 team and is a member of the 1919-29 all-time WVU decade team. In 1924, he spent one year as player-coach of the professional Steubenville Pros. He also became athletic director and started the football program at old St. Francis High School in 1931 and coached until 1938 including two 9-0 record teams. Simons has been inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame and the W. Va. State Sports Hall of Fame. He died, at age 96, in 1997 in Morgantown, where he operated an insurance agency.



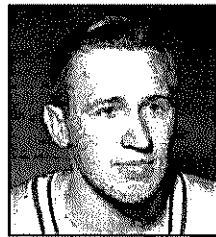
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2011



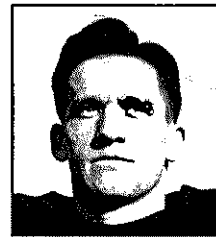
Bob Bentz



Punque Cartledge



Jim Jordan



Cas Myslinski



Norman Willey

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Bob Bentz (Beaver Local High School, Class of 1972). In high school, he dominated the area and Ohio distance running scene while setting school 1,600- and 3,200-meter school records which remain on the books.

He became the first sub-nine minute 3,200-meter runner in Ohio history (8:58) and his 4:20 time in the 1,600 remains on the school record books. As a junior, he won the Ohio Class AA cross country title and placed second in the state meet 2-mile run.

As a senior, Bentz was undefeated in cross country and track while setting an Ohio two-mile record. He earned All-America status by placing third with a time of 8:58.4 for two miles at the High School Track & Field National Meet in Baton Rouge, La.

Recruited by the University of Tennessee, he led the Vols to four unbeaten cross country seasons, four Southeastern Conference titles and the 1972 NCAA title. In track, his teams won three SEC crowns and the 1974 NCAA championship. He contributed to 11 SEC titles in four cross country and track seasons while earning All-SEC honors.

Charles (Punque) Cartledge (Steubenville High School, Class of 1912). The first area inductee into the Ohio Football Coaches Hall of Fame and the initial honoree in the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame, he put Big Red football on the area and Ohio maps with a 22-year record of 140-38-11 from 1916-40.

His teams outscored foes by 3,772-870 and dealt famed Massillon its worst loss ever, 68-0, in 1931. That team was led by OVAC Hall of Fame Legends George (Puck) Burgwin and Will Robinson. The Big Red schedule during that era included top team from around Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

In a pre-playoff era, his Big Red teams were acclaimed Ohio state champions five times (1925, 1926, 1930, 1931, 1935). He coached seven unbeaten teams and three one-loss squads.

From 1922-26, Big Red was unbeaten in 45 games against high school teams, with a lone defeat in 1924 to the Carnegie College freshmen. They had 35 shutouts in 46 games. In 1930-31 seasons, they had an Ohio Valley record 17 straight shutouts.

He also coached Big Red basketball to a 181-139 record from 1919-39 and also coached the tennis team.

As a high school senior (1911-12), he captained Big Red football, basketball and baseball teams and was a football quarterback. He died in 1978.

Jim Jordan (Chester High School, Class of 1943). A 6-foot-3, 195-pound basketball center, he was selected captain of the 1943 one-class West Virginia All-State team after leading Chester to a 20-4 record. Two of the losses, including the regional tournament, were to 26-1 record state champion Wheeling High.

In five years of college play, Jordan competed for four conference championship teams. Enrolled in the Navy V-12 program at Mount St. Marys (Md.) College, he was the leading scorer in the Mason-Dixon Conference.

He enrolled at the University of North Carolina in the Naval ROTC program and earned second team and first team All-America honors in two seasons with the Tar Heels. The 1946 UNC team finished as NCAA runner-up to Oklahoma A&M. He was the only unanimous choice for All-Southern Conference and led the league in scoring. Featured on a Tar Heel trading card of basketball legends, his jersey No. 8 hangs from the rafters of the Dean Smith Center.

Jordan finished his college career with two seasons at the University of Kentucky and played on the Wildcats' 1947 NIT title team and the 1948 NCAA championship squad led by fellow OVAC Hall of Famer and All-American, Alex Groza of Martins Ferry. Both Groza and Jordan were later selected to the All-Time Ohio Valley Pre-1950 team by The Intelligencer.

Jordan, who died in 1999, was an attorney in Chester for 35 years.

Casimir Myslinski (Steubenville High School, Class of 1941). In high school, he was a football running back and captain of the 1940 Big Red team, the final one for fellow OVAC Legend honoree Charles (Punque) Cartledge.

He entered West Point in the last pre-World War II class and under the stepped-up wartime program, he graduated in three years with a B.S. in engineering.

He served as captain of the 1943 Army team and earned the Most Valuable Player award while being named to every first team All-America selection as a 6-foot, 195-pound center. He also received the Knute Rockne Award as the nation's outstanding lineman in 1943.

After graduation in 1944, Myslinski entered the Air Force and returned to West Point in administration in 1952. In 1956, he became head of the Physical Education Department at the Air Force Academy and from 1968-82, he served as Athletic Director at the University of Pittsburgh.

He was selected Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Man of the Year in 1977.

Myslinski died in 1993.

Norman (Wild Man) Willey (Pine Grove High School, Class of 1945). He is the Ohio Valley's most prominent product of the old six-man football teams at the smaller enrollment schools.

The 6-foot-2, 225-pound athlete played football, basketball and baseball for the Tornados.

After high school, he enrolled for one year in the U.S. Navy and briefly attended Salem College before enrolling at Marshall College, where he played football and basketball.

A fullback-defensive end in football, he was drafted in the 13th round by the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles, where he played eight seasons from 1950-57. He was a two-time Pro Bowl selection and is a member, along with Reggie White, as a defensive end on the All-Time Eagles' honor roll.

Willey is credited as the reason the NFL started charting defensive sacks after it was reported he was unofficially credited with 17 sacks against New York Giants' quarterback Charley Conerly on Oct. 26, 1952. He earned the nickname "Wild Man" from his pass rushing resulting in opponents' yardage losses.

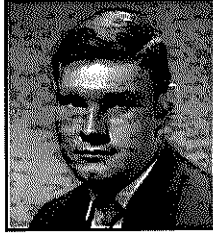
An inductee into the Marshall and West Virginia State Sports Halls of Fame, he was honored in Pine Grove with a "Norman Willey Day" on Sept. 15, 2006. Signs proclaiming "Home of Wild Man Willey" were erected at the entrance to the town as well as at Valley High School.



LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2012



**Tony
Carna**



**Jim
George**



**Carter
Howell**



**Dave
Jones**



**Kenny
Mikes**

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1945 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Tony Carna (Caldwell High School, Class of 1987). He is one of only four boys to win three Ohio cross country championships and led the star of the most successful team program in state history. He captured individual Class A titles from 1984-86 and had a winning senior time of 15:44.2. The Redskins started a record run of eight straight state team titles, with Carna the main cog in the first two crowns of 1985 and 1986. The 1986 team went unbeaten with a 137-0 mark and was ranked No. 1 in the nation by The Harrier publication, with Carna as an All-American selection.

He was a nine-time All-Ohioan in cross country and track, claiming two Ohio state crowns — the 1,600-meters as a junior and 3,200-meters as senior. His personal best times were 4:18 at 1,600; 8:38 at 3,000; 9:18 at 3,200; and 15:12 at 5,000 meters. He also set a national meet record in the 5,000-meter run in the 15-16 age group at The Athletics Congress (TAC) Junior Olympics in 1985.

Carna earned a scholarship to the University of Michigan where he won eight varsity letters in track and cross country and was an All-Big Ten and All-America honoree. He led the Wolverines to sixth place in the 1991 NCAA Division I National Cross Country Meet, where he finished 21st in individual competition. He resides in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Jim George (Smithfield High School, Class of 1950). A three-sport Spartan, he was a 190-pound fullback-tackle-end who was selected to the first All-Ohio Associated Press Class B team in 1949 and also was an All-Ohio Class B honorable mention basketball honoree as well as a baseball standout. The two-time All-Eastern Ohio football player led the Spartans to a school record 22-game win streak with a 22-1-1 record from 1947-49 including unbeaten seasons in 1947-48. As a senior, the Spartans opened the season with a 40-6 victory over the Massillon reserve team before playing their regular varsity schedule. He also started for the winning Ohio team in the 1950 Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Game.

In basketball, he led the Spartans to a 22-3 record — second best in school history — and the Jefferson County title.

He accepted a football scholarship to Syracuse University, where he was a three-year letterman and regular for the Orangemen. He became the only Smithfield product drafted by the National Football League when he was selected by the Detroit Lions. He opted to join the Air Force.

Carter Howell (Flushing High School, Class of 1955). The 6-foot-5 center led the Orioles to the two best seasons (43-3 combined record) in school history, including an unbeaten regular season in 1954 and an overall 21-2 mark in 1955. A four-year starter, he scored 905 points — second most in area history at the time — as a senior for a then Ohio Valley record 39.3 points per game norm after sporting a 40.2 average in regular season. He scored 74 points against New Athens — second best in Ohio Valley history at the time — and also had games of 58 and 55 points. In the 118-52 rout of New Athens, he hit 26 of 37 goals and 22 of 30 free throws.

A two-time All-Eastern Ohio selection, he also was honored on the 1955 five-player first team All-Ohio Class B selections by the three major wire services.

The four-year basketball regular ended his career with what was then a Belmont County record 1,961 points including 905 and 513 his last two seasons.

Howell, who also played on the Orioles' six-man football team and baseball team, enrolled at West Virginia State before joining the armed services. He returned to Flushing where he served as mayor for two years before passing away in 1990.

Dave Jones (Jewett-Scio High School, Class of 1981). The 6-foot-2 basketball guard led the Ohio Valley in scoring his last two seasons with averages of 33.6 and 32.1 points and he scored a Harrison County record 1,885 career points. He had a game high 50 points twice and averaged 12 rebounds a game as a senior.

A two-time first team All-Valley captain, he was Ohio Class A player of the Year and first team All-Ohio as a senior and second team as a junior. His basketball jersey was retired by the school and is displayed in the Scio Museum. In 1982, he was selected to the All-Time Ohio Valley Post-1950 Team by The Intelligencer newspaper.

A three-sport, 11-letter winner, he was an All-Valley selection at end as a junior when he led the "Small Schools" with 51 receptions for 766 yards. In track, he cleared 6-foot-7 as a high jumper.

Jones accepted a basketball scholarship to Ohio State where he was a four-year letterman and one of three seniors featured on the cover of the 1984-85 OSU Media Guide. He was a full-time starter as a senior and part-time regular as a junior.

He resides in Manhattan Beach, Calif.

Ken Mikes (Sistersville High School, Class of 1954). The only Tiger to earn all-state recognition in football, basketball and baseball, he led the 1953 football team to a 10-0-1 record and the first state title (Class B) in school history. Playing for OVAC Hall of Fame coach George Strager, he starred in the 27-12 state title game victory over Romney. He was selected first team Class B All-State as well as co-captain of the All-Valley "Small School" team. He also started for West Virginia's winning team over Ohio in the annual Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Game. He was accorded National All-American High School Team honors.

In basketball, he led the Tigers to a 22-2 record as a senior, the school's best mark at the time, and he scored 582 points for a 23-point average. He had a game high of 44 points against Pine Grove. Mikes was selected the state Player of the Year at the Tri-State Independent Basketball Tournament in Sistersville.

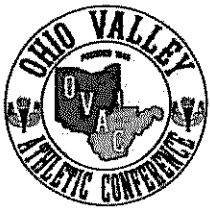
In baseball, he was a pitcher-shortstop and helped the Tigers to their first ever one-class sectional championship.

Recruited by numerous major colleges for football, he enrolled at Purdue and was a three-year letterman and two-year regular as a two-way back and punter. He led The Big Ten in punting as a senior and was fourth in the nation with a 41.2-yard average. He was featured in Sports Illustrated for a major role in Purdue's upset of No. 1 ranked Michigan State, 20-13 in 1957, and is also featured in a book entitled "The Greatest Moments in Purdue Football History."

Mikes played on the winning (21-20) North team in the North-South Shrine All-Star Game.

He declined offers to try out for NFL teams and served in the armed forces. He resides in Parkersburg.

Ohio Valley Athletic Conference



Embarks on 71st Year



The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference was organized in 1943 with F.W. Bowen, J.E. Ewing, J.C. Greer, M.S. Hattala, B.G. Lockhart, J.V. Nelson, C. Petty, C.F. Walker, and C.S. Wiseman among those responsible for its basic conception. C.S. Wiseman became the conference's first president.

A demand arose in 1943 for a conference which would help stimulate and promote a more lucrative program of competitive high school athletics in the upper Ohio Valley.

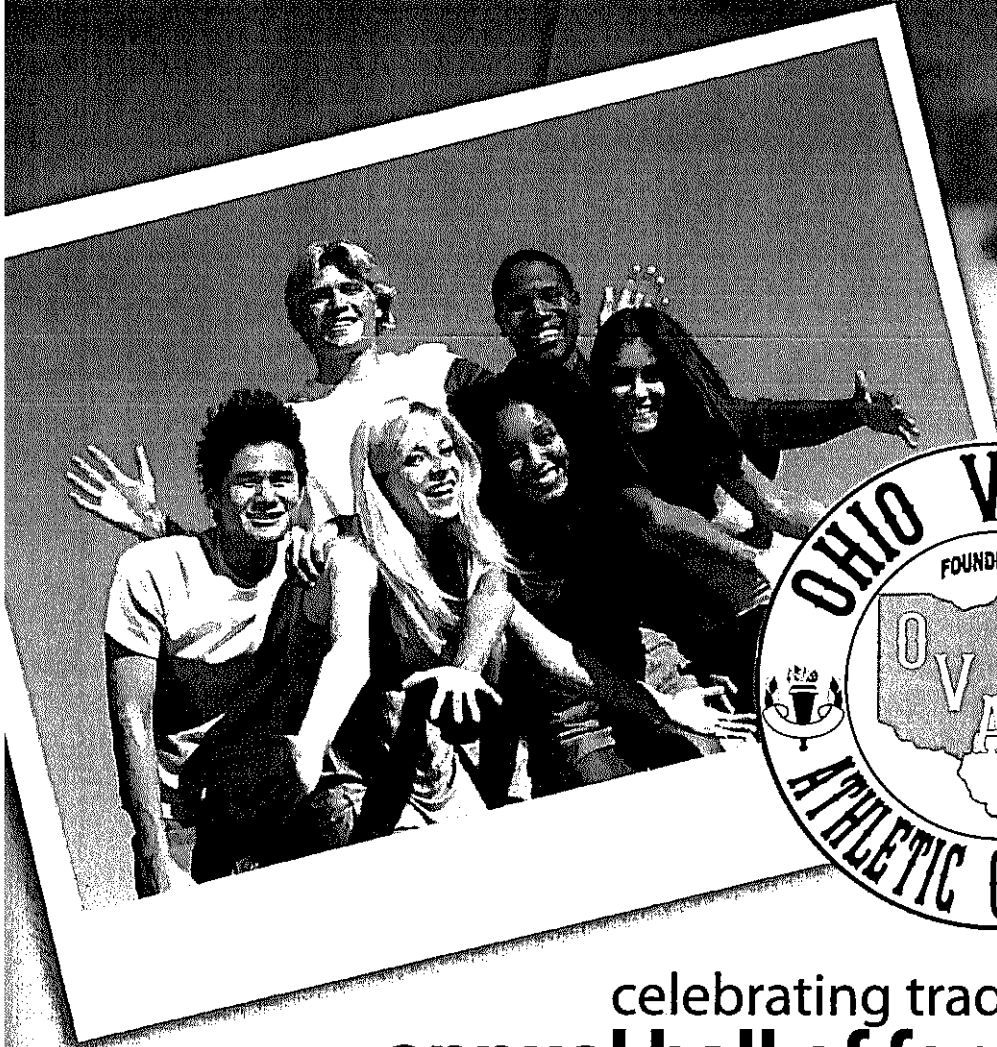
Today, the OVAC is the largest and most functional high school conference of its kind in the United States. A total of 50 schools supply the upper Ohio Valley with more than 12,000 athletes in the various competitive athletic areas.

It is the basic objective of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference to continue the promotion of all high school athletics and to serve in the overall development of proper school relationship, scholarship, and sportsmanship within the conference.

Current OVAC Member Schools

Barnesville	Fort Frye	Shenandoah
Beallsville	Frontier	St. Clairsville
Beaver Local	Harrison Central	St. John Central
Bellaire	Hundred	Steubenville
Bishop Donahue	Indian Creek	Steubenville Catholic Central
Bridgeport	John Marshall	Toronto
Brooke	Linsly	Trinity Christian
Buckeye Local	Magnolia	Tyler Consolidated
Buckeye Trail	Martins Ferry	Union Local
Caldwell	Meadowbrook	University
Cambridge	Monroe Central	Valley
Cameron	Morgantown	Weir
Clay-Battelle	Oak Glen	Weirton Madonna
Conotton Valley	Paden City	Wellsville
East Liverpool	Parkersburg South	Wheeling Central Catholic
East Richland Christian	River	Wheeling Park
Edison	Shadyside	

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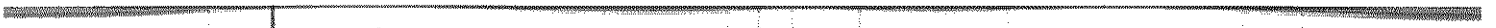
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