

Our Opinion

Night of Champions

THE OHIO Valley Athletic Conference is rolling out the red carpet tonight.

The nation's largest functioning athletic conference drops the curtain on another successful year when it stages the annual OVAC Banquet of Champions at Wheeling WesBanco Arena. Tonight's affair is the cadillac of prep fetes.

Teams claiming conference titles this past academic year will be recognized, receiving championship pennants to be hung in their respective schools.

Along those athletic lines, five coaches have been singled out as finalists for the prestigious Bill Van Horne/Wheeling News-Register Coach of The Year Award presented by StratusWave. The winner will be announced as one of the banquet's highlights, an award of major significance as the conference boasts some 500 head coaches.

But the OVAC Banquet of Champions is more than just ath-

letic recognition.

Far from it.

More than \$27,000 in scholarships, encompassing 37 awards, will be handed out tonight.

That is a most noteworthy and generous statement from individuals and companies who believe in the conference. It's a refreshing investment in the future of our student-athletes.

While tonight's banquet plays out seamlessly in a few hours, it is a happening which takes countless amounts of time to put together. That is the thankless task of Ron White, an undertaking he performs with great expertise.

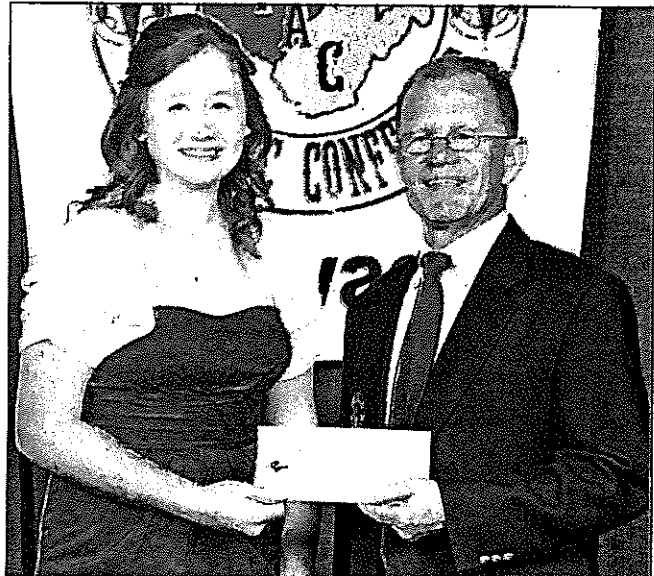
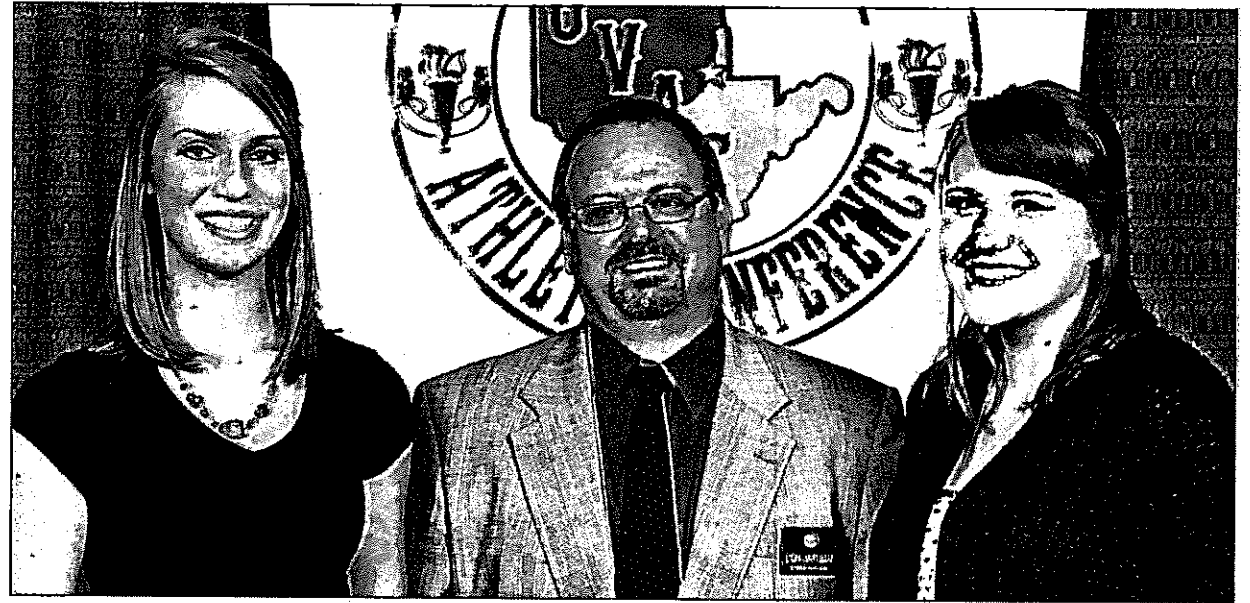
Athletes and coaches will gain the majority of tonight's limelight, but what should not be overlooked is the selfless actions of scholarship donors, OVAC Executive Secretary Tom Rataiczak, the conference's executive board and White.

It all adds up to a championship night for a conference filled with champions.

OVAC SCHOLARS

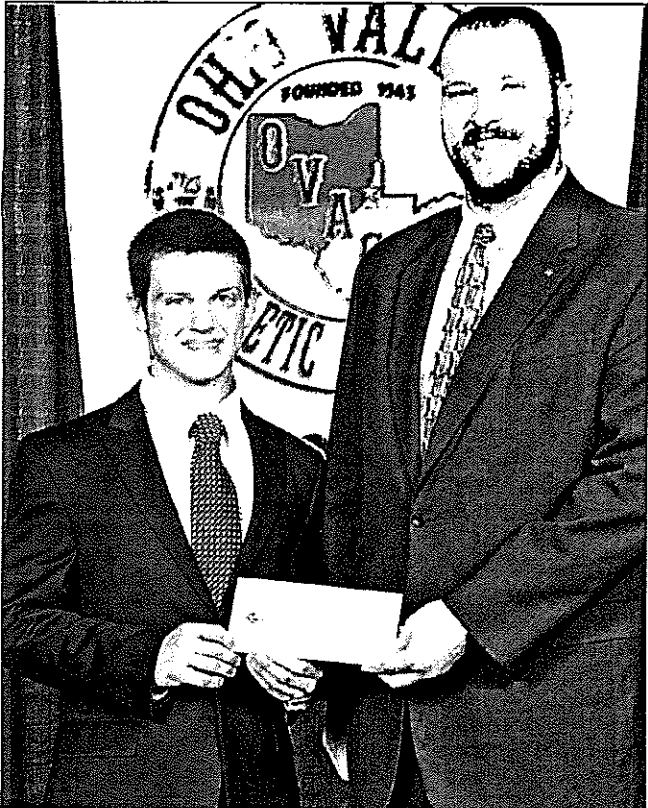


AMANDA ROSEPAPA Memorial Scholarship recipient Karen Murphy of Bellaire High School presented by Rose Rosepapa.

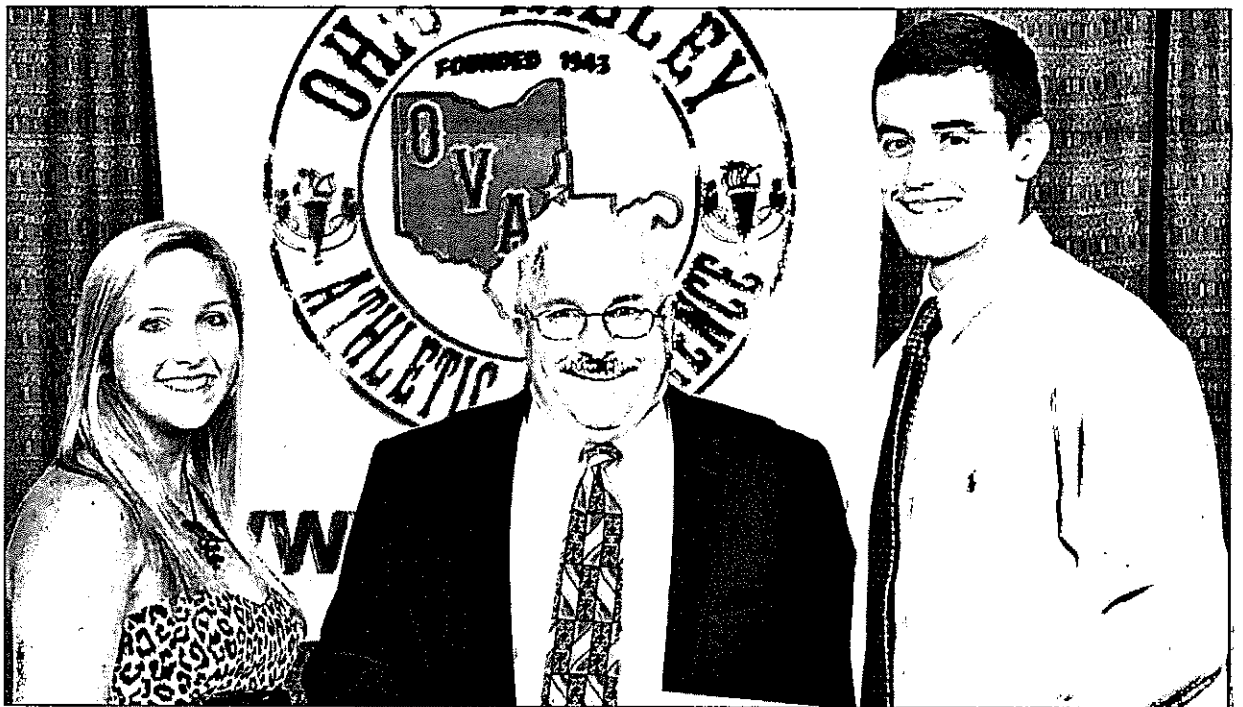




DOUGLAS S. PILNEY Memorial Golf Scholarship recipient Samantha Knowlton of River High School presented by Dan Doyle.



WESBANCO SCHOLARSHIP recipient Flint Postle of River High School presented by Tanner Russell.



Photos/Briggs Photography

ABOVE 1: Kroger Scholarship recipients Eleanor LeMasters of St. John Central and Stephanie Oddi of Weirton Madonna presented by Don Hardman.

ABOVE 2: OVAC Track Scholarship recipients Kiley Defibaugh of John Marshall and Matthew Riffle of St. John Central presented by Donna Joseph.

ABOVE 3: Pepsi-Cola Scholarship recipients Charlie Myers of Beallsville and Bobbie Jo Julian of Weir presented by Debbie Dremak-Porter.

ABOVE 4: OVAC Boosters Scholarship recipients Daryn Vucelik of John Marshall and Dorsey Moore of Martins Ferry presented by Rick DeLuca.

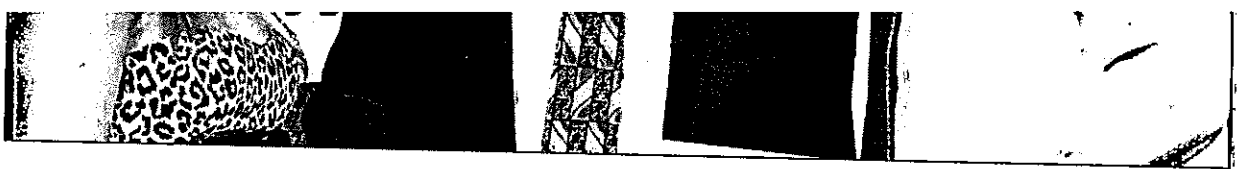


LOWER LEFT: James "Deadeye" Morris Wrestling Scholarship recipient Josh Bartrug of River presented by Paden Morris.

LOWER RIGHT: Lucas D. Sedgmer Memorial Scholarship recipient Dominic Prezzia of St. Clairsville presented by Kay Keyser-Sedgmer.



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CLARE KAPRAL memorial OVAC Track & Field Scholarship recipient Chelsey Smith of River High School presented by Dr. Dianna Vargo.



Congratulations



OVAC SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!