



CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

HERE WE GROW AGAIN

-A Message from the President

A new year is upon us and there is much to be done. New athletes to be inducted. New votes to be cast on the state level. New community service projects to undertake. New volunteer opportunities to be accepted. New business alliances to be formed. New scholarship winners to be announced. New t-shirts to be made. New banquet to be planned. New committees to be formed. New members to be welcomed. New friends to be made. This is a long and lengthy list for sure, but one that I am confident can be proudly accomplished. Our written goal is to perpetuate the memory of local athletes who have brought recognition to themselves and their communities through athletic achievement and community service. This organization is still growing and evolving into something more than a collection of trophies and certificates stuffed inside a display case (although our display at the airport is awesome). But now, the people who have been enshrined inside the glass are now actively walking outside of it and helping our organization do some wonderful work. In turn, they are shining a brilliant light on themselves and our chapter. Please take the time to read all about it all in this newsletter. And, if anyone out there is interested in helping take care of this 2022 laundry list of chores, we welcome the help.

NEWSMAKERS

-Still Making Headlines

Three of our inductees have found themselves in the spotlight once again. Kelsey Kolojechick Class of 2019



was recently appointed as Head Field Hockey coach at Bucknell University. Misericordia's Chris Wadas, also inducted in 2019, was recently named MAC Freedom League Indoor Track Coach of the Year. Finally, Mary Wazeter-Mannhardt, Class of 1997, has penned her second book titled "Client to Clinician: Moments on

My Path," a retrospect of her how her athletic and personal struggles fueled her professional triumphs. Our congratulations to all three.



ALEXIS HAS HER DAY

-PA Sports Hall of Fame

Meredith Alexis was finally inducted into the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame, in October of 2021. An unstoppable athlete from Bishop Hoban High School, James Madison University, and eventually the professional ranks, Meredith met her match during the pandemic of 2020. The top vote-getter was selected unanimously, but the pandemic put a full stop to the official induction ceremony that was eventually held in Pittsburgh this past October. Alexis was first team All-State basketball and volleyball in high school. Her basketball talents took her to Division I James Madison where she rewrote the record books and punctuated her career with her induction into the JMU Hall of Fame. Alexis continued to play pro-ball in Europe and the WNBA. The long-awaited ceremony was a thrill for Alexis shown pictured second from the right among the elite members of the PA State Hall of Fame Class of 2020.



NEW PARTNERSHIP

-Joining Forces



Our organization recently decided to join the Greater Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is designed to guide and promote the interests of local businesses and community service organizations. With a membership in the hundreds, the Chamber acts as a conduit to valuable information, resources, and network relationships that help businesses grow. President Jim Martin hopes through this affiliation, we grow too. According to Martin, “We know that this membership will provide us with access to all kinds of helpful information. Also, it can help point us in the direction of some new opportunities to help us grow as community servants. Connecting to such a large group will give us access to training and guidance. It will also connect us with other groups who are out there working on their community service and fundraising games. I really believe this membership will be a big win for us.” Ellen Welch (Corey and Shana Welch Class of 2021) will be our contact representative with the Chamber. For more information on the Chamber itself, their website is www.wyomingvalleychamber.org



SPREADING GOOD CHEER

-From Here to Kentucky

Over the holidays, you could find chapter volunteers doing their best to help spread hope and good cheer. Their efforts ranged from helping place toys under the tree for local kids by Christmas morning to delivering relief some



eight hundred miles away to families ravaged by holiday disaster. Locally, Judy Sholtis (2020) volunteered to shop and deliver toys to a local business collection point on our behalf. Those toys were distributed through the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program. Judy jumped at the opportunity to help citing personal experience as her motivation. Sholtis shared, "I was happy to assist with the Toys for Tots drive. I taught for 26 years in Wildwood, which is an extremely low socio-economic district. I know first-hand how important it is to be able to help families in need, especially at the holidays." So, Judy channeled her best "inner elf" and helped the Marines and Santa deliver a merrier Christmas. Meanwhile, over this very same holiday, Mother Nature made a horrific delivery of her own in the form of a tornado that devastated Mayfield Kentucky. Though Mayfield is clearly not in our backyard, it struck a

chord reminiscent of Hurricane Agnes for some members. That sentiment, combined with the timing of the holidays, made it hard not to want to do something. So, when it was suggested to help in some way, we did.

"It was so rewarding to get the donations together for the victims of Kentucky, The Luzerne County Sports Hall of Fame organizational response was so quick. Their funds made it extremely easy to get the household supplies and toys together for the Pulverman Drive. Everyone at Pulverman was so thankful for our contributions. The Luzerne County Sports Hall of Fame proved that NEPA truly represents 'A Valley with A Heart'."

-Ellen Welch



Jim Martin organized a quick collection of

donated money from the membership and handed it over to Ellen and Corey Welch, parents of Corey and Shana Welch (2021). The Welch's organized, shopped, collected, and delivered supplies to Pulverman in Dallas. Our donations combined with others became part of the "Pulverman Drive" which concluded with a 14 hour drive down the I-81 corridor. The entire effort was an amazing showing of kindness and cooperation and a wonderful example of what happens when goodness and charity take the wheel. Paying little mind to her own selfless effort, Ellen Welch instead praised the efforts of both the hall and Pulverman for their generosity and heart. We, in turn, need to thank Ellen, Corey and Judy for their heart and their volunteer spirit. Their kindness and actions speak not only for themselves but also for our whole organization. Both

the community and the hall are grateful for their efforts. Pictured above are Judy Sholtis and Corey and Ellen Welch.



AT THE RINK

-Free Lessons are Nice

There is a new ice-skating rink in the downtown of the Diamond City. Compliments of Mayor George Brown and the city of Wilkes Barre, the Smart Rink sits right on public square. A synthetic surface that imitates the feel of real ice was dedicated to city residents to provide a free and safe outdoor activity to be enjoyed right in the middle of town. One event scheduled to help bring skaters to rink was a learn to skate clinic. Mayor Brown asked Karel Zubris (2013) to host the event. Karel, who has been teaching ice-skating for over 30 years was thrilled to be asked. "It is an honor and a privilege to host the first learn to skate program at the new rink and to represent the hall of fame by doing so. Skating outdoors is a fantastic way to enjoy the fresh air after being cooped up for so long. Also, the rink is much safer than being on an outdoor pond or lake. My goal here is to teach some simple skills that can be key to getting a jumpstart on a great sport like ice-skating." The day of the event proved to be a challenge however, as Mother Nature dumped a giant snow squall on the rink just as the event was due to start. In minutes, the day went from sun to white-out conditions. This put a huge

damper on participation and covered the rink and gathered dignitaries in snow. We want to thank Karel, Mayor Brown, Congressman Matt Cartwright, and TUX from the WB Penguins for giving it their best shot. Hopefully, there will be more free lessons down the road. Pictured in the photo below, President Jim Martin, Tux, Karel Zubris, Congressman Matt Cartwright, Mayor George Brown, and VP of LCSHOF David Kanavich.



AND IN THE DRINK

-Helping Things Go Swimmingly



"Seventy one percent of the world is water. Children are one hundred percent curious. Teaching children how to be safe around water is not a luxury, it is a necessity." These words can be found on the Safety Around Water program's websites. This program, run in conjunction with the YMCA, is designed to teach kids skills that will reduce their risk of drowning and give them confidence in and around water. Hopefully, teaching them the skills needed should they unintendedly wind up in the water. Hall of Famer Paul Richards (2020) brought the program to the attention of our community service committee to see if there was something we might be able to do to help. Some programs solicit sponsors for kids and families of limited means to be able to participate. The committee agreed to provide enough funds to sponsor several eligible kids through the local YMCA's program. President Jim Martin presented the scholarship money to Jim Thomas, President and CEO of the Greater Wyoming Valley Area YMCA and Sam Reinhardt, Aquatics Director of the YMCA pictured left.



THEY ARE THE CHAMPIONS

-Past Honors Present

The Wyoming Valley Basketball Championships collapsed under the power of the pandemic last year. This year we welcomed the return of the Wyoming Valley Conference Championship tournament for both the boys and girls. With that return, our chapter was able to crown the Dallas Area boys and the Lake Lehman Area girls as champions and award them with their trophies immediately following their victories. The boys were presented the George Miller Trophy by George Miller (2008) himself, along with Neil Corbett (2014). The girls received the Annette Barbini Trophy awarded by Elaine Morehead (sister of Annette 1987) and Kathy Goeringer (2020). The Luzerne County Sports Hall of Fame is so proud to sponsor these championships. It truly is our honor to be associated with the Wyoming Valley Conference and the winning ways of the athletes who compete and champion the sport of basketball.



SAYING GOODBYE

-The Final Farewell



Gerald Robzen 2004

Our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of these fine athletes and gentlemen. As George Halas once said, "Nobody who ever gave their best ever regretted it." If this is indeed true, these men moved on leaving tremendous legacies and few regrets. We are so sorry for their loss but grateful that they will continue to live on in our hall of fame.



Gary Scavone 2009



Buddy Rushinski 1994



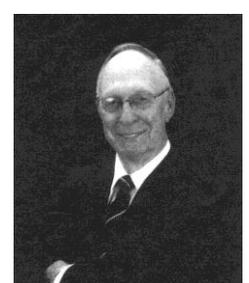
Nicholas Dardes 1995



John Reese State 1990



Frank Wadas 2007



David Richards 2010

