

2015 Hall of Honor Inductees - BCAM

Gene Aho – Official

It is probably not a stretch to suggest that Gene has loved the game of basketball all his life. First he was a record setting player at National Mine HS, then went on to have a successful basketball career at Suomi Junior College and Michigan Tech University. After college he went on to play some Independent League basketball. At every level, he received several MVP honors and even assistant coached under Bill Gappy at MTU for a bit in the midst of it all.

We honor Gene Aho today however, for his career as a basketball official. He has been a registered official for 42 years—working both high school and college in the GLIAC Conference. He has worked approximately 120 district tournament games, 40 regionals, 10 quarterfinals and even a state final game in 1987. He still works a minimum schedule for the colleges and a full schedule for high school.

Off the court, Aho is a member of both the Negaunee Lions Club and Elk Lodge, was a past member of the Negaunee City/School Recreation Committee, and is an avid tennis player. Gene has just retired from working at the Presque Isle Power Plant in Marquette after 40 years.

Gene has received lots of positive support over the years from his family. He would like to thank especially his ex-wife Nancy, son Cory, daughter Cami and special friend Susan.

Steve Kelley – Official

Steve has officiated boys' and girls' basketball for over 30 years. He was also a women's college official for 15 years for the GLIAC and MAC conferences. Kelley has officiated in the MHSAA high school tournament every year since 1990. This includes working 2 semi final games, a boy's final in 2009 and a girl's final in 2012. He also works football; where he has had the honor of officiating two semifinal games and one final. He will be retiring from football after this fall season.

A member of the Bay Metro Officials Association, Steve has been vice president of their board of directors for the past 15 years. The Bay Metro Association honored him in 2011 with the Karl Newingham Award for outstanding character both on and off the court.

Kelley has attended a basketball camp every year since 1991. He has been a clinician at several Thumb area basketball camps and clinics as well as a camp at Northwood for the last 5 years. He has voluntarily officiated many Special Olympics events in the Tri City area and coaches his 3rd grade grandson's basketball team.

Together with Vicci, his wife of 40 years, Steve has two children: Kacy and Erin; and three grandchildren: Emma, Ella and Brady.

Dennis Mayer – Official

“Denny” Mayer has done almost everything it seems, in the world of basketball officiating. His career spanned 36 years and it all began back in 1972 when he became a registered official with the MHSAA. From there he spent 26 years also officiating NCAA Women’s basketball and 7 years with NCAA Men’s basketball. He has been selected to officiate in multiple MHSAA boys’ tournament games including a State Championship game in 1998. Mayer also officiated NCAA Division I Women’s Tournament games for 20 consecutive years (1989 to 2009)—the second longest streak of officiating in Women’s NCAA Tournament history. This streak included a 1998 Women’s NCAA Final Four Championship.

Not only was Denny a “working” official. He was also a “teaching” official. Mayer spent three years teaching Athletic Officiating classes at NMU (Tom Izzo was one of his students), as well as 12 years at MSU where he recruited, trained, and evaluated hundreds of intramural officials. He helped many of these student officials register with the MHSAA and go on to officiate various high school contests. Mayer has worked Officials Camps in Michigan for 18 years—helping new officials learn and succeed in the profession.

Denny’s work has not gone unnoticed. In 2010, he was named Naismith Women’s College Official of the Year, which is like the “Hall of Fame” for college officials. In 2005, he was awarded the Jack Breslin Distinguished Staff Award from Michigan State University. In 2008 came an induction into WMU’s Alumni Honor Academy for Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

Mayer’s love of officiating has apparently rubbed off on his sons: Tim is a professional ice hockey referee in the American Hockey League, while Robby is a USA and MHSAA ice hockey referee.

Art Adamec – Assistant Coach

Art has 37 years of basketball coaching under his belt. He started coaching freshmen in 1978 and over the years has worked his way through 4th – 6th graders, 7th graders and finally 8th graders at Gladwin Community Schools. He finally decided to hang it up after last season with more than 500 victories.

He didn’t really keep track of the exact number of wins/losses. He says that was never important to him. Fostering the love of basketball, learning life lessons, and watching the players’ skill development was what he was most proud of. Art says he “enjoyed all of the teaching of fundamentals while coaching. Our philosophy was man-to-man defense so we prided ourselves on good help defense, taking charges, and communicating with each other on the court. The growth and development that I saw in so many young men was a tribute to their commitment to the program.” He is looking forward to watching the

upcoming Gladwin varsity season—apparently he has some former players who are now seniors. They went undefeated when he was their 8th grade coach.

Outside of basketball, Coach Adamec has directed successful programs in both baseball and golf. Art coached the Gladwin JV for 3 years and the varsity baseball team for 18 years and was inducted into the Michigan High School Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame in 2003. This spring he will start his 10th year of coaching boys' varsity golf at Gladwin. Both programs celebrated several post-season titles and several of his baseball players went on to compete in college. If that wasn't enough, he is going into his 16th year of basketball officiating for the MHSAA as a member of the Midland Officials Association.

Cyndi has been Art's wife for 39 years. Both are now retired teachers from Gladwin Public Schools. They have two adult sons: Jeffrey and Justin.

Mike Coke – Assistant Coach

Mike Coke has pretty much “done it all” when it comes to coaching basketball. He has been a teacher and coach for 41 years between (Flint) Hamady and Goodrich schools. During this time he has compiled a combined basketball win-loss total of 486-119, which includes 10 undefeated seasons. He has coached every age from 7th grade to varsity, both boys and girls. But his experience doesn't stop there. Mike also kept the scorebook, ran the scoreboard and announced for a while back in the 70's. In addition, he has been a successful track coach for a combined 22 years at both schools, coached some football and cross country, conducted several summer basketball clinics, and run the intramural basketball program for 3rd and 4th grade girls.

Gary Barns, head boy's varsity coach at Goodrich, who nominated Mike for the Hall of Honor, says that “Mike has almost 500 sub-varsity wins and is still willing to help out both programs as needed. It is always about the TEAM with Mike. The players work hard for him as Mike brings a lot of energy.” Mike says that he has had the pleasure of working with great students and athletes, including players on back-to-back girls' state championship teams and many other basketball and track athletes who advanced to participate in collegiate sports.

Mike is married to Mary Ann and they have one son and three daughters: Mickey (Tracy) Coke, Elizabeth (Brian) Haller, Angela (Ray) Herek and AnnMarie (Jason) Smith, along with 11 grandchildren.

Randy Jager – Assistant Coach

Randy Jager is an alumni and former basketball athlete of Imlay City High School. His passion for basketball led him to coaching—beginning as a volunteer coach for the Little League program in 1982 and as assistant coach for the boys in Imlay City Middle School. He was the head coach for varsity and freshmen boys for a combined 11 seasons. Randy was also an assistant coach each of those seasons. For 18 seasons he coached at the

middle school level, developing athletes by helping them improve their skills, teaching them plays and preparing them for the next level of play. For 8 of those seasons, he coached BOTH 7th and 8th grade teams. He has accumulated over 250 wins at the sub-varsity level. This winter, Randy will begin his 32nd year of coaching by leading the freshmen boys, helping his son-in-law with the JV and also assisting the varsity boys' team.

In addition to basketball, Jager has been known to volunteer as the scorekeeper for the wrestling program during their home tournaments. He also coached boy's track and field for two years at the middle school level.

In 2012, Coach Jager was honored to be named Friend of Youth by the I.C. Board of Education for his many years of service to Imlay City students. Athletic director, Don Gauthier, who nominated Jager for the BCAM Hall of Honor says, "Coach Jager is a fixture in the boys basketball program and the Imlay City community. He is extremely passionate about Imlay City, but even more passionate about mentoring young people and teaching them life lessons." Randy's success as a coach and mentor shows in the respect shown to him by his former players. He always encouraged them to get good grades as well as teaching them the game. He has had the pleasure of seeing former players come back to help him as his assistants with the basketball program.

Lori Jager is Randy's wife. They have one daughter Ashley (Chad) Halsted and one son Jordan.

Bill Jones – Assistant Coach

Bill Jones coached basketball at Okemos for 30 years. He began in 1968 coaching seventh and eighth grade boys at Kinawa Middle School. He continued through 1998 and during this time amassed just over 500 games with a 78% winning percentage. Jones added the JV girls' team to his workload in 1979 and coached this age group in addition to the middle school boys for 19 years. He coached 365 JV girls' games and had a 74% winning percentage with them.

Bill was an excellent teacher and coach at the middle school level. He prepared the boys to be good citizens and to have good character on and off the court, as well as to be competitive at the next level of basketball. The girls' head varsity coach at the time, Ron Mott, says that "Bill prepared the girls for varsity level competition and was a helpful and available assistant coach. He cares about kids and developing their character. He is a great candidate for the BCAM Hall of Honor because of what he has contributed to the development of young boys and girls. He has given them an opportunity to compete and be successful and feel good about themselves."

Harvey Lucas – Friend of Basketball

"Harve" has been the "Voice of the Ramblers" for McBain High School basketball and football for the past 40+ years. He began scoring and announcing home basketball games

in the late 1960's and for several years traveled with the boy's basketball teams and became known for his singing of the national anthem with pride before every game. He also scored and announced girl's basketball games until the dual schedule became difficult to maintain. Harve has had the privilege of being part of several tournament runs including working the scoring table at state semi and final games at the Breslin Center.

As the vocal music teacher for almost 40 years, Lucas was able to stay in touch with his students who were active in the athletic programs. He began a congratulatory handshake with players and coaches and still today greets former players and students with his signature greeting.

Being no stranger to volunteer work, Harve can also be found serving as an elder in his church, on the McBain City Council, as secretary of the McBain Rural Agricultural School Foundation, as a director of the community men's chorus, and with several other groups.

Harvey thanks his wife Ev for her continued support over all these years.

Janet Stimson – Friend of Basketball

Janet Stimson worked for Brown City Schools for close to 44 years after she graduated from Brown City High School. She was the school's Business Manager for most of those 44 years. She was known as a meticulous bookkeeper whose fiscal expertise guided the school through many years of tumultuous economic times—keeping them one of the most financially stable districts in the state. Superintendent Doug Muxlow, who nominated Janet for the BCAM Hall of Honor says “Janet started as a student assistant in the Business Office at 16, graduated from Brown City Schools on a Sunday, was working in the Business Office on Monday, and was running the district within two years. Remarkable.”

Janet was also the scorekeeper the past 39 years for the boys' and girls' basketball teams. She was great at what she did for the programs. At halftime she would hand the coach a sheet of paper with the 3 pointers, 2 pointers, free throws and fouls made by both teams for their use in the halftime locker room. Janet worked both home and away games for each team—riding the team bus to the games. Janet would always have a small box at the scorer's table full of candy and gum. Players from both teams, the officials and really anyone could just walk by and take something from Janet's box of goodies.

On this past March 2nd, Stimson was on her way home to get ready to ride the girls' basketball team bus to their Monday night district game when she was in a car accident. Janet passed away four days later from injuries sustained in the accident.

Brown City Schools will dearly miss Janet Stimson for all she did to make the Brown City basketball program a success with her school pride, class and sportsmanship. She helped to teach their student-athletes to play hard but with respect.

Janet's award is accepted by her husband Roger, and their three daughters: Amanda (Aaron) Waun, Katy (Phil) Bakewell, and Megan (Stephen) Konkol—all three having played basketball at Brown City. She also has three granddaughters (Ella, Ava and Kinsey) and two grandsons (Ryder and Easton).

Margaret "Peg" Zink - Friend of Basketball

Peg Zink is a retired teacher from St. Johns Public Schools. She began helping the St. Johns athletic department in 1994. Her volunteering has evolved to being in a gymnasium, both home and away, three nights a week during the boys' and girls' basketball season! She keeps score for all three levels of boys' basketball and both freshman and JV girls' basketball. In addition, she keeps stats for the varsity boys and girls and occasionally will announce.

Along with basketball, Zink is just as involved with the boys' and girls' JV and varsity soccer programs at St. Johns. Both home and away, she scores, keeps stats and announces. She also is responsible for issuing, collecting and storing the soccer uniforms. If you are keeping track, this means she works all 3 sports seasons!

As a retired elementary teacher and administrator of 35 years, Peg says she enjoys the opportunity to stay involved with the youth of her community through sports. Chris Ervin, athletic director at St. Johns nominated Peg for the BCAM Hall of Honor. Chris writes: "As athletic director, I must rely on the efforts of many people to ensure that our events run smoothly. Peg Zink is as important as anyone in our program. Peg volunteers countless hours each of the three seasons, in every school year, to assist in providing wonderful opportunities for our student-athletes, coaches, spectators and programs. For 20 years, Peg has been a stronghold in our athletic department!"

Peg is supported by her husband Tom, sons Tommy (Christy) and Dan (Lisa), and grandson Parker.