

By Randy Whalen

Legends.

When it comes to Lockport Township athletics, there have been many of them.

On Friday, July 26, the school honored its first class of individuals in an inaugural induction ceremony to honor absolute legends in Lockport athletic history.

The wonderful event started at 6 PM at Mistwood Golf Club in Romeoville.

"Legends was something we have been talking about for several years," Lockport Athletic Director Mike Dwyer said. "For it to finally come together was really surreal. To hear the stories and create the bios, you could truly see and feel the impact Lockport and its people have had on so many.

"It wasn't only these individuals' athletic accomplishments that led to their recognition, but also the impact these inductees have had on those around them."

With a long list to go through, it wasn't easy to choose the initial inaugural class. There were 22 names on the list. But 1984 graduate, Ron Coomer, who played nine seasons of Major League Baseball and was an All-Star in 1999, is a current Chicago Cubs broadcaster and couldn't make it. So he deferred to the next class in order to attend the event.

"The committee really wanted something to recognize the great history of Lockport Athletics," Dwyer said. "To recognize the people who have helped make our athletic family so special."

The committee consists of 10 names familiar to those involved with Porter athletics. They are, Dwyer, Matt Eber – Assistant Athletic Director/head boys golf coach, John Greenan – Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Joe Cunnane – Head Athletic Trainer, Matt Bartley – Assistant Principal East Campus, Chris Marzalek – retired girls track and field coach, Larry Thompson – retired cross country/boys basketball head coach, Josh Oster – Assistant Principal for Student Services and former head wrestling coach, Marissa Chovanec – head softball coach, and Grant Ferkaluk – head girls swim coach.

Long-time sports reporter/writer, Curt Herron, a 1982 Lockport graduate put together the bios of all the inductees. Here they are.

SALLY ANDERSON

Sally Anderson established a standard in girls' basketball that may take a long time to be duplicated. She earned All-American honors in her senior season of 1981-1982 and was invited to the National Sports Festival in Indianapolis after averaging 24 points, seven assists, and four steals as a guard for a team that went 25-4 under coach Jo Ellen Southerland which won the program's third-straight regional title and its first sectional championship before falling 60-54 in the super-sectional to East Aurora. Sally scored 1,896 points in her four-year LTHS career, where she earned all-conference and all-area honors each season and also was a two-time All-State player. She also was a four-time starter and letter winner in softball, competing as a senior for a team that went 26-5, a new best for wins, and also earning All-State honors in 1980. After spending a year at Illinois State University, Sally transferred to DePaul University and starred for the Blue Demons, where she earned All-American honors. During her three-season career from 1984-1987, she scored 1,722 points, which still ranks eighth all-time and that total placed her second, just 72 points behind Barbara Atsaves, a four-year performer when she concluded her career. She scored 669 points in her senior season, a 21.6 average, and collected 527 points as a sophomore and 526 points as a junior. Sally ranked in the top 10 in eight statistical categories when she graduated and she still ranks fifth in career average (20.0), seventh in career field goals (689), and eighth in career free throws (342). Season records from 1986-1987, where she still is in the top 10, include fifth in free throws (147), tied for ninth in points (669), and tenth in field goals (260). She also led the Blue Demons in assists all three seasons and in scoring in both 1984-1985 and 1985-1986. DePaul posted a 63-24 record during her three-season career. She is a 2006 DePaul Athletics Hall of Fame inductee. Sally went on to have a long and successful teaching and 22-year coaching career at the school that she attended, Kelvin Grove, before retiring at the end of the 2024 school year. A highlight as a coach was winning the Illinois Elementary School Association Class A softball title in 2008 with a 7-4 win over Sumner Red Hill. In honor of her service to District 91, Kelvin Grove's softball field is named in honor of an individual who left a great legacy as an athlete, teacher, and coach.

BOB BASARICH

Bob Basarich was a second-year freshman boys basketball coach when Lockport Township accomplished its greatest success at the time, defeating defending state champion Pekin in the Peoria Super-Sectional to earn a spot in the IHSA Elite Eight for the first time, where the Porters lost to eventual champion Collinsville in the quarterfinals. Following the next season, he was tasked with taking over varsity coaching duties from Bill Connors, following his successful eight-season run and he certainly proved to be the right candidate. Bob served as head boys basketball coach for the next 21 seasons, posting a 496-99 record, which was good for a .834 win percentage, and it still ranks him among the best in IHSA history. His teams won 20 or more games 19 times with the other two seasons being 18-win efforts. The program's greatest moment came in the 1977-1978 season when the Porters finished with a perfect 33-0 record to cap a memorable season where the three levels compiled a 78-0 record. LTHS beat St. Joseph, led by coach Gene Pingatore and standout Isiah Thomas, 64-47 to capture the IHSA Class AA title in Champaign. The Porters got past Ottawa Township in the quarterfinals and Collinsville in the semifinals and then had an easier time of things in the finals to become just the eighth team in state history to finish undefeated at the time. LTHS also advanced to the state Class AA semifinals in 1973 but fell 83-67 to eventual champion Hirsch and then lost 67-45 to West Aurora to finish in fourth place with a 29-3 record. His other trip to the state finals came one year after the state title in 1979 when the 29-2 Porters fell 43-39

to Benet Academy in the Class AA quarterfinals. Bob had four other teams that advanced to the Sweet 16, in 1968, when a 28-2 team lost to eventual champion Evanston Township. In 1972, LTHS finished 23-4 after running into a team still regarded as the state's best-ever, Thornridge. The Porters dropped a 46-45 heartbreaker to eventual champion Springfield Lanphier in 1983 to finish 20-8. Also in his final game, the 27-4 Porters lost 43-42 to Quincy Senior in 1987 in the super-sectional. Five other teams fell one win of the Sweet 16, losing in the sectional finals. During his career, his teams won seven sectional championships, 16 regionals and 16 conference titles. Along with longtime assistant Rollie Bolattino, he coached 13 All-State players with Jeff Hickman and Scott Parzych earning All-American honors. He led the Porters to three of their four titles in the Pontiac Holiday Tournament. In his 20 years of coaching at Lockport Gym, the Porters went 223-25, a .899 winning percentage. He was 71-10 in three seasons as freshman coach from 1963-1964 to 1965-1966 and had a 165-56 record at Kelvin Grove, where he coached from 1958-1959 to 1962-1963. He also made history during his time coaching the boys' golf program when he led the Porters to a second-place finish to New Trier in the 1966 IHSA tournament, the second trophy that the school won in any sport at that time and the first since 1919. His last assistant, Lawrence Thompson, Jr., would be the only other Porters coach to lead two different sports to IHSA trophies. An original board member of the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association and a two-time coach of the year selection, he was inducted into the IBCA Hall of Fame in 1979 and the Joliet Area Sports Hall of Fame in 2005. Bob, who spent most of his years at LTHS leading its Cooperative Education department, passed away on November 7, 2022, at the age of 89.

BARB BURK

Barb Burk and softball will always go hand in hand. After all, she finished her historic 30-year career at Lockport Township in 2002 as Illinois' all-time winningest coach with a 685-193 record as well as being 17 wins shy of the national mark at that time. Highlights included an IHSA championship in 1997, second-place finishes in 1987 and 1990, and a third-place showing in 1999 to go along with a top-four effort in 1980 as well as quarterfinals appearances in both 1991 and 2001. When the Illinois Softball Coaches Association inducted its inaugural class in 2001, only two coaches were selected, Barb and Casey-Westfield's Denny Throneburg. But Barb was much more than just a softball coach for Porters' athletes during the early years of girl's sports at the school from the time that she began her career in 1973. She played a key role in implementing five additional girl's sports, basketball, bowling, golf, tennis, and volleyball, in addition to serving as the girl's sports coordinator for 15 years. She finished her softball career with a .780 winning percentage and each of her 30 teams had winning records. Once her main sport began to develop, she led teams to 19 or more victories each season from 1979 through 2002 with seven of those squads finishing with 30 or more victories. The Porters also captured 19 conference titles under her guidance, as well as 12 regionals and seven sectional championships. Her 1997 team capped a 37-3 season by winning the program's first IHSA championship by prevailing 3-2 over Morton in 15 innings in the Class AA title game. In 1987, the Porters went 35-3 and fell 1-0 to Moline for the AA title, and in 1990, LTHS posted a 30-3 record after dropping a 1-0 decision to Thornwood in the AA championship game. Her first state team in 1980, which went 21-6, advanced to the semifinals but lost 7-6 to Herrin and did not receive a trophy in the one-class system. Two years after winning the state title, the Porters went 34-3 and finished in third place in Class AA in 1999 after falling 2-1 in a 20-inning marathon against Glenwood in the semifinals. Barb's record-setting career ended in 2002 against a team that went on to establish history. Lincoln-Way East defeated LTHS 6-3 in the Morris Sectional Finals and then went on to win several nailbiters to become the first school to capture a state title in a tournament-bracketed sport in the initial year of its existence. Barb was also inducted into two other state

halls of fame, the Illinois Girls Coaches Association in 1997 and the Joliet Area Sports Hall of Fame in 2015.

Reached following the Legends event, Burk was happy to be in attendance and be honored. She was proud that she was a pioneer in girls' sports.

"It was such a great event and there were so many people there," Burk said. "I couldn't believe how big it was.

"I told the story that I didn't get paid anything for the first girls' seasons. I did volleyball, tennis, basketball, and softball. I told them I'd do it for free because I wanted the school to have it."

But it was all worth it. Burk mentioned that she's received National Awards for her service. Those included one for being a pioneer in starting girls' sports by the National Association for Girls and Women in Sports. She also received a Pathfinder Award in 2011 in San Diego, California, and the Illinois Coaches Association gave her a mentor service award.

"The best part was to see everyone and sit together," Burk added of the Legends. "It was amazing."

JOE CORCORAN

Joe Corcoran established a high bar as one of Lockport Township's first great athletes and later went on to become the school's first coach who served for a significant amount of time, leading the school's athletes in all sports from 1921 to 1935. Although early records are incomplete, it's known that he established a record for touchdowns with 17 from 1911 to 1913 and that he also scored 125 points during those three seasons while competing for coaches Julius Colonius and King Rawlins, which included a 1912 contest where the school set a scoring record that still stands, a 110-2 victory over Morris. Following his graduation from Lockport, he continued his education and athletic career at St. Louis University. Both of his LTHS personal scoring records lasted until he coached another member of the inaugural Lockport Legends, Les Lindberg, who scored 29 touchdowns from 1928 to 1931 and 180 points during the same time playing for a coach who he considered to be a father figure. He strung together six winning seasons in seven years between 1925 and 1931 in football, which he coached for 13 seasons and finished with a 45-38-7 record. But it was with basketball where the LTHS alumnus enjoyed his greatest success. In 14 seasons from 1921-1922 to 1934-1935, his teams went 172-85, good for a .669 winning percentage, which is still the third-best percentage of any coach with a career lasting for several seasons. That helped to lay the foundation for a school that eventually became one of the state's top programs in the sport. From 1926-1927 to 1933-1934, LTHS won seven of the eight Des Plaines Valley Conference titles, won its first district championship in 1932, and advanced to the sectional tournament again in 1934. He had winning records in all but his first season and produced the school's first 20-game winner when his 1932 squad stunned Joliet Township in the district finals before getting edged by Sycamore in its first-ever sectional game. LTHS also enjoyed a great deal of success on its home court during his tenure, going

53-10 at the Auditorium and then 36-15 in the first four seasons of the new Gymnasium. He also coached the lightweight team in football and basketball as well as the varsity baseball team, but records are sparse for that sport at that time. Corcoran's coaching career was cut short due to injuries that he suffered while serving in World War I and he passed away in 1945.

SAMANTHA FINDLAY

Samantha Findlay could always be counted to come up with a big hit when it was needed and her three-run double in the 2004 IHSA Class AA Softball Championship game while competing for Lockport Township and her three-run home run in the 2005 NCAA Division I Softball Championship game while playing for the University of Michigan will long be remembered for helping both teams to capture dramatic title wins. The 2004 LTHS graduate was a four-time All-State selection and Illinois Coaches' Association All-State first team as a junior (2003) and senior (2004) while competing for coach Barb Burk for two seasons and for coach Marissa Chovanec for two seasons, during which time she got to be joined by her sister, Angela. As a senior in 2004, she batted .542 with 12 home runs and 42 runs batted in and went 15 of 18 with six home runs and 15 RBI in eight state tournament playoff games. She connected for a solo home run and a game-winning three-run double with two outs in the bottom of the sixth as the Porters defeated Oak Park and River Forest 8-6 for the state championship. As a junior in 2003, she hit .480 with nine home runs, 49 RBI, 13 doubles, and three triples. She was an Illinois Coaches' Association All-State second team as a sophomore in 2002 and third team All-Stater as a freshman in 2001. Samantha was also a four-year letterwinner in basketball and volleyball with the Porters. At the University of Michigan from 2005-2008, she capped her freshman season with the most famous home run in Michigan softball history, a three-run homer in the tenth inning to clinch a 4-1 victory over UCLA that gave the Wolverines their first NCAA championship. She batted .409 in the Women's College World Series and was named Most Outstanding Player. She hit .361 that season with a team-high 77 RBI and tied the school record with 21 home runs. A first-team All-American as a second baseman in 2008, she set school career records at the time in home runs (62), RBI (219), and slugging percentage (.677) and still ranks second in those categories. She was named to the all-region team three times, the Big Ten all-tournament team twice, and was the 2005 Big Ten Freshman of the Year and a 2008 unanimous All-Big Ten first-team selection. For her accomplishments as a Wolverine, she was selected for the University of Michigan's Hall of Honor in 2022. Samantha played three years as a first baseman with the Chicago Bandits in the National Pro Fastpitch League from 2008-2010, playing on their 2008 Cowles Cup championship team. In her three seasons with them, she hit 31 home runs and had 73 RBI. She ended her career in 2011 with one season for USSSA Pride. In 2020, she and Alando Tucker were inducted into the Joliet Area Sports Hall of Fame, joining Lockport Legends Bob Basarich, Jeff Hickman, and Scott Parzych in that hall of fame at the Joliet Area Historical Museum. Samantha has been President of Lockport Junior Miss Softball since 2022 and has worked for 10 years as an HR manager at Ozinga Ready Mix Concrete.

ED FLINK

Ed Flink served in a variety of roles after joining the staff at Lockport Township, the school he attended and where he enjoyed a successful athletic career. Hired by Superintendent James Smith in 1936, he was a civics and economics teacher, coach in multiple sports, athletic director from 1936 to 1950, dean of

boys, dean of students, assistant superintendent, and finally principal at LTHS, retiring from that position he held for over a decade in 1966. He was head baseball coach for 17 years from 1936 to 1953 and won district titles in 1941, 1945, and 1947. He was also a football coach for three years from 1943-1945, with his first and last teams both posting 6-2 records. The baseball field at the Athletic Field is one of the oldest in the state, dating back to 1921. The field, which also hosted football games and track and field meets before the stadium at East was built, was officially named Edward "Ed" Flink Field in ceremonies at the field on May 16, 1981. Although athletic records from his era are very incomplete, it is known that he competed in football, basketball, and track and field at LTHS. His most significant accomplishment was finishing second in the 220-yard dash at the University of Illinois B Division Finals in 1919, which was the official IHSA competition. As a result of a title won by Emil Viskocil, a third-place finish in that same event from an athlete named Fitzgerald, a runner-up finish in the hammer throw from George Kasper, and Ed's second in the 220-yard dash, LTHS finished third in the competition with 15 points, which was four points behind the champions, the University of Chicago Laboratory School, and one behind the runner-up, Georgetown. That was the first IHSA trophy that LTHS has been credited with. He was also a two-time scoring leader in basketball (1917-1918 and 1918-1919). No records of his football career are available. He was in the inaugural class of inductees for the Lemont High School Athletic Hall of Fame in 2004. After being a three-sport athlete at Lombard, a college that was located in Galesburg, Illinois, he began his coaching career at Lemont, becoming its first three-sport head coach of football, basketball, and baseball, and he helped start the baseball program at that high school.

JIM HALL

Jim Hall epitomized one of the great strengths that has helped to explain the success that Lockport Township has enjoyed in so many sports. So many of the first Lockport Legends who are being honored earned the recognition because of all of the great assistant coaches and lower-level coaches that they had on their staff. Jim served as an invaluable assistant coach for 32 years in football under Bill Zimmer and Bret Kooi and in baseball for 15 years under Clyde Odle from the time that he started coaching at LTHS in the mid-1970s so it's not surprising that when he became head coach of the baseball team in 1991 that he would continue the winning ways and he certainly did that. During his 16-year tenure that concluded in 2006, Jim's teams posted an impressive 448-151-1 record, which was good for a .748 winning percentage. The highlight was in 2005 when LTHS had its winningest season by going 40-3 and capturing the IHSA Class AA championship with an 8-4 victory over Mount Carmel. The Porters just missed winning a Class AA title in 1997 when they fell 5-4 to Schaumburg in nine innings to finish in second place and conclude a 37-6 campaign and they claimed fourth place in Class AA in 1992 to close out a 34-7-1 season. He also had a state qualifying team in 1998 that went 31-8 and besides those four sectional champions, he led five other teams to regional titles, including three in a row from 1996-1998 and five straight from 2001-2005 in one of the state's top areas for the sport. All of his 16 teams had winning records, 14 finished with 20 or more victories and six squads captured 30 or more wins. As a result of all of that success, Jim has been recognized by his inclusion in several baseball halls of fame and received numerous honors. He was inducted into the Illinois High School Baseball Coaches Association in 2005, selected as the IHSBCA Man of the Year in 2000, and as the Class AA Head Coach of the Year in 2005. Jim was also inducted into the National High School Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame of America in 2022 and elected to the American Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2011. Has had a 50-year membership in the IHSBCA and served on the association's Administrative Council for 17 years. He served as an assistant varsity coach from 1976 to 1990 under Clyde Odle, which featured four straight teams with 30 or more wins from 1984-1987 with the 1984 team becoming the first one to qualify

for the IHSA Finals. For 14 years, he served as coach of the Great Lakes 16 and 17-year-old teams at Cary, North Carolina for the USA Baseball NTIS. He also traveled internationally for 10 years to promote goodwill through baseball. He was also involved with USA Baseball as a coach for the Tournament of Stars and evaluated players for the national teams. Another highlight of his long career at LTHS was assisting on the back-to-back IHSA Class 8A championship football teams of 2002 and 2003 who posted 13-1 and 12 records, that was during a 17-year run as defensive line and special teams coach for Kooi, which followed a 15-year stint as defensive coordinator under Zimmer. He also coached tennis for one season.

TOM HALLER

Tom Haller was such a good three-sport athlete at Lockport Township that he was able to continue on in that same fashion in a much bigger setting, at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. But when the opportunity came for him to make his next move, the quarterback in football and consistent scorer in basketball opted for a baseball career. And while being a catcher may not have been as exciting of a position to play as he could have had in other sports, the decision clearly paid off for him as he enjoyed a 12-year career in Major League Baseball playing for three different teams and later led him into coaching and eventually to executive positions with several teams, remaining in significant roles in the sport until 1986. He signed as a free agent with the San Francisco Giants and moved up through its minor league system to join the Giants during the 1961 season. He would be with the team through 1967, playing in the 1962 World Series against the Yankees and earning All-Star recognition in 1966 and 1967. In 1968, he was traded to the Los Angeles Dodgers, a first between the teams since their move west and he would play for them through the 1971 season. He was selected as an All-Star in his first year with the Dodgers, his third-straight appearance in the event. He was traded again, this time to the Detroit Tigers, and he played for them in 1972 and was on a team that made the American League playoffs. That year he made history when he caught in a game in which his brother Bill, another LTHS graduate and a 20-year American League umpire, was behind home plate. That's the first time, and the only time, that such an event has occurred in Major League history. After being sold to the Philadelphia Phillies later that year, he decided to retire. He played in 1,294 games, had 1,011 hits, a .257 career average, hit 134 home runs and had 504 runs batted in, and finished with a .992 fielding percentage as a catcher, which was one of the best percentages at that time. His top home run and RBI totals came in 1966, when hit 27 homers and drove in 67 runs. He returned to the Giants between 1977 and 1979 to work as a coach and then became their vice president of baseball operations from 1981 to 1985. In 1982, Giants fans voted him to their 25th anniversary team and he was named as a member of the Giants all-time team in 1999. After a brief stint managing Birmingham in Class AA in 1986, he had another short stay as the General Manager of the Chicago White Sox before resigning at the end of that season. He died in Los Angeles on November 26, 2004, at the age of 67.

JEFF HICKMAN

Jeff Hickman is still regarded by many observers who saw him play as being the best basketball to come from the Joliet area, which is quite an honor for the 1968 Lockport Township graduate considering all of the many quality players who've performed for Will County schools. He scored 1,729 points from

1965-1966 to 1967-1968, which was good for a 20.6 average. That's 157 points more than second-place, which was set from 1998-1999 to 2001-2002 by Alando Tucker and 182 more than was scored by Scott Parzych from 1974-1975 to 1977-1978. All of those top-three scorers are being honored in the first induction class of Lockport Legends. Hickman joined Maury Adamson (1930-1931 to 1932-1933), Parzych, and Tucker as the only Porters to lead the team in scoring for three straight seasons. He capped his career with 796 points in just 20 games for a 26.5 average in 1967-1968 when LTHS earned its second visit to the Sweet 16 by going 28-2 and losing to eventual state champion Evanston Township in the super-sectional. In 1966-1967, playing for a 24-5 team led by first-year head coach Bob Basarich that lost in controversial fashion in the sectional finals to Toluca, he scored 589 points in 29 games for a 20.3 average. As a sophomore in 1965-1966 playing for Bill Connors on a team that went 20-5, he collected 344 points in 25 games, which was good for a 13.8 average. The Porters won their first two Illini-Eight Conference titles in his junior and senior seasons and also won their second of four Pontiac Holiday Tournament championships in his senior season. LTHS was ranked second in the AP poll in 1968 and third in the same poll in 1967 heading into the playoffs, their top placement in those rankings up until that time. Jeff also finished his career with 862 rebounds, which was good for a 10.3 average. That ranked him second in that category to Bill Ford at the time and he's still in the top-five in career rebounds to this day. His 44 points against Thornton Township on March 15, 1968, is still a school-best. He was selected as the top player in the Illini-Eight in both his junior and senior seasons, making him and Parzych as the only LTHS players who were able to achieve that honor. He was the Porters' second All-State selection and also its first All-American, an honor only Parzych would later claim. Jeff also was selected as the Chicago Area Player of the Year. He was LTHS's first inductee in the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1973, which was also the initial year of that hall of fame. In 2004, he was inducted into the Joliet Area Sports Hall of Fame. He went on to attend the University of Houston, where he played for legendary coach Guy V. Lewis. The effects of a freak car accident affected him for the rest of his career and he averaged 13 points and five rebounds in his sophomore and junior seasons to help the Cougars advance to the Sweet 16, but another injury prevented him from competing as a senior and he was unable to pursue a professional career. Jeff passed away on February 1, 2020, just shy of his 70th birthday.

JULIA HUDSON

Julia Hudson established such a good volleyball program from her debut season in 1980 that for many years it was a foregone conclusion that Lockport Township would be at least advancing to the sectional round of the IHSA playoffs, and also very likely beyond that. The Porters won district or regional titles in 19 of her first 22 seasons, during which time they also claimed 10 sectional championships and advanced to the IHSA Finals on eight occasions, collecting five trophies for top-four finishes during that incredible run, including a championship in 1993, a runner-up finish in 1990, third-place efforts in 1984 and 1991 and a fourth-place finish in 1996. The Porters' first losing season came in their 21st year under her direction and she only had two other teams that lost more matches than they won during her 32-year career with the Porters, which lasted through the 2011 season. She concluded her career at LTHS with a record of 857-371-3, good for a .697 winning percentage, and won 23 district and regional titles and 11 sectional championships to go along with the eight state appearances and five trophies. The program's highlight moment came in 1993 when they finished 40-3 and captured the IHSA Class AA championship with a 15-9, 15-4 victory over Downers Grove South in the title match. The Porters rolled in the quarterfinals over Lincoln 15-9, 15-4, and in the semifinals over Crystal Lake South 15-9, 15-8. The school's fourth trophy winner and second state finalists, who were led by sisters Jennifer and Nicole

Peterson and Tara Pasch, didn't lose to any Illinois team, falling only to highly-ranked teams from other states. In 1990, the Porters reached the finals for the first time but fell 15-13, 15-3 to Belleville West to finish with a 34-9 record. LTHS placed third in its first state trip in 1984, bouncing back from a three-set loss to eventual champion Mother McAuley in the semifinals before winning in five sets (the playoffs that season were best of 5) over Downers Grove North to cap a 41-4 season, the school's highest win total. The Porters placed third again in 1991, falling to Belleville West in the semifinals and beating Mother McAuley to take third and finish 39-4. In 1996, LTHS reached the Final Four for the last time in 1996 and fell in three sets to Downers Grove South in the semifinals and lost to Stagg for fourth place to finish 34-9. The Porters also lost quarterfinals matches to Mother McAuley in 1992 and to Downers Grove South in both 1994 and 1999. Her 857 victories rank 13th in IHSA history but was sixth-best in the state when she stepped down in 1991. LTHS won 20 or more matches each season from 1980 to 2000 and then again in all but one season between 2005 and 2011 while nine of her teams won 30 or more matches and 21 squads captured 25 or more victories. In 2023, Julia, who was assisted for many years by Denise Hadley, was inducted into the Illinois Volleyball Coaches Association in its second class. She concluded her career in her native Indiana at Evansville North and had a 963-516-3 record.

KENT IRVIN

Kent Irvin didn't have very much experience leading athletic programs when he became Lockport Township's athletic director in 1992. But the decision to hire an individual who got his start at Joliet's Dirksen Junior High and then had a short stint as AD at Joliet West between 1990-92 before beginning his new role as the Porters' A.D. certainly paid off in a big way for LTHS athletes throughout his time in that position, which lasted until 2007. Beginning with the girls' volleyball team winning the 1993 Class AA championship and capped by the competitive cheerleading team winning a championship in 2006-2007, a total of 14 teams won IHSA titles and 12 others captured state trophies. Other IHSA championship teams during his tenure were 1994 girls bowling, 1995 badminton, 1996 cheerleading, 1996 and 1997 boys cross country, 1997 softball, 1999 girls bowling, 2000 poms, 2002 and 2003 football, 2004 softball, and 2005 baseball. Before Irvin's time as A.D., the Porters only had one champion, the 1977-78 unbeaten boys basketball team, and just nine total teams had placed at state. Besides providing support for the quality group of coaches that were already at the school when he took over, Kent continued to raise the bar by bringing in many new coaches who proved to be very successful. He also benefited from being able to work throughout his career with quality assistant athletic directors, most notably Chris Marszalek, who worked very closely with him. He also had Donna Pesavento Pattison as his longtime trusted secretary. Some of his proudest achievements as LTHS's athletic director were collaborating in the design and utilization of new athletic facilities at the school, such as the field house and indoor track, natatorium, and athletic training rooms at both the East and Central campuses. Other key additions were a new wrestling facility, dance studio, fitness center, strength and conditioning facility, locker facilities, and remodeling of the main gym facility. Kent also designed a new athletic hall of fame, developed transition procedures for athletic contests being transferred to new facilities, and collaborated with Lockport booster clubs to improve outdoor facilities and field improvements. He developed the first code of conduct for LTHS athletes, initiated parent/player/coach preseason meetings for all sports that defined the athletic department and team/coach expectations, and restructured the Lockport Athletic Boosters. Kent instilled new coaches' evaluations centering on self-evaluation, goal setting, and remediation procedures and initiated rules and procedures governing all tryouts to ensure equity and fairness. He also developed the first Lockport coaches athletic handbook and saw to the utilization of the Lockport Township Community Wellness Center for residents of the district. He also developed the initial in-house athletic trainers

program with head trainer Joe Cunnane and worked with him on the first concussion testing program (IMPACT) for football players in Illinois. Other achievements he was proud of were initiating the Athletic Community Service Award to recognize outstanding individual and group support, developing the first media day for athletes, collegiate signing day, developing the SICA Media Guide while serving as president of the South Inter-Conference Association, in which he served several roles. He was recognized for his work as LTHS's athletic director with the Division 3 IADA Athletic Director of the Year Award in 2007.

"It was such a nice night," Irvin said. "It was like a reunion. Mike Dwyer did a great job and I was humbled to be there among the Legends. It was a really nice night."

Looking back, the fact that the Porters won 14 of their now 24 IHSA State Championships in his 15 years as AD is incredible.

"It was fun, God it was fun," Irvin said. "The 2002 (Class 8A) state semifinal football game (a 41-38 win in the final seconds at Hinsdale Central) was one of the best ones I've ever seen. That was special, especially with the comeback."

When it was all said and done, Irvin knew that it was all about the people.

"That's what it's all about, the relationships," he said. "I was blessed to get the Lockport job and it was great. Lockport was always at the epitome of athletics in the area."

LES LINDBERG

Les Lindberg set a new standard during his playing career from 1928 to 1932 by becoming not only LTHS's only 16-time letter winner in four sports but also established a record for scoring in football that would stand for 67 seasons. After being one of the first Porters athletes to enjoy an excellent athletic career at a major college program, the University of Illinois, he returned to LTHS to begin a 40-year career as a teacher, coach, and administrator that was only interrupted by service in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Competing for one of LTHS's first great athletes and its initial full-time coach and athletic administrator, Joe Corcoran, who would have a great influence over him, Lindberg won four varsity letters in football, basketball, baseball, and tennis. He scored 29 touchdowns, including 24 rushing TDs, and collected 180 points during his football career from 1928 to 1931, standards which surpassed those set by Corcoran that would not be broken until 1998 by Craig Duppong. His single season-highs of 14 TDs and 87 points during his sophomore season of 1929 would remain as a school-best until 1966 when John Handy scored 21 touchdowns and collected 126 points. While several Porters followed him by leading their teams in scoring and touchdowns in one season and tying for top honors in another year, Lindberg was the only one to lead in both categories two seasons in a row when he collected seven touchdowns and 43 points in 1930, and that would not be duplicated until 1976 and 1977 when Don Daniels pulled off the same feat. Injuries limited his scoring abilities in his final two seasons and he also scored seven

touchdowns as a senior, being edged by one touchdown by Joe Bolattino. He played on squads that went 26-7-2. In basketball, he scored 316 points and was on teams that posted a 70-22 record and went 35-0 in Des Plaines Valley Conference play and also won the school's first regional title in 1932. Competing at the University of Illinois for legendary coach Bob Zuppke, he lettered from 1933 to 1935. Picking up the nickname, the 'Flying Swede', the halfback and punter earned All-American honors in 1934. Following his career with the Illini, he could have pursued a career in the NFL with the Detroit Lions but opted to return to LTHS for a career in education. He led the Porters football program from 1936 to 1941 and again from 1946 to 1949 and in 1953. His 11-year varsity head coaching career in football, the fourth-longest in school history, featured six of the school's 10 winning seasons from 1932 to 1960. He was LTHS's varsity basketball coach from 1937 to 1942 and also from 1947 to 1949, tying him with Bill Connors for the fifth-longest tenure at the school. He also served as LTHS's athletic director from 1951 to 1952 and from 1954 to 1959 and was an assistant coach in baseball. Lindberg also taught at Lockport West and later became an assistant principal at Romeoville and Bolingbrook before retiring in 1976. Les died on February 1, 1988, at the age of 76.

GLENN MALONE

Glenn Malone ended the longest drought between IHSA championships for any athlete from Lockport Township, 50 years when he captured the title at 133 pounds at the 1969 IHSA Wrestling Finals in Champaign. Glenn, who was a senior, finished with a 32-1 record while competing for head coach Bill Zimmer and assistant coach Tom Heniff, who both would be inducted into the Illinois Wrestling Coaches and Officials Association Hall of Fame. All of his opponents were also seniors and he won four of his matches in narrow decisions, including 2-1 over the favorite at the weight, Reavis' unbeaten Tom Mirus, and then 7-3 in overtime over United Township's Rick Ramirez. LTHS finished in 11th place in the tournament, one point away from a tie for eighth place. He also qualified for state as a junior but lost his opening match at 127 pounds and was eliminated when the individual who beat him lost in the next round. As a result of his surprise title, he became the school's first IHSA champion since 1919, when Emil Viskocil, who later would be a doctor and school board member in Lockport, captured the Division B title in the javelin at the University of Illinois Finals, which were the IHSA state finals. He was just the fourth Porter wrestler to reach the title match at the IHSA Finals, as Stu Brown (1960), Vernon Voss (1960), and Ted Lincoln (1961) all settled for second-place finishes. Also in 1969, junior Jerry Turley made a run at a medal at 127 pounds but he finished sixth, and only five medals were awarded. LTHS got its second state title from Ken Lewis in 1972 at 155 pounds, but then it would be 32 until it had its next champion, another one of this year's Lockport Legends, Jake Oster, who finished first at 112 in Class AA in 2004. After graduation, Glenn enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and retired after 19 years of service and he later worked at Stateville Correctional Center. He passed away on April 9, 2020, at age 69.

JAKE OSTER

Jake Oster snapped a 32-year drought of state champions for LTHS when he won the Class AA title at 112 in 2004 to become the program's third title winner. The Porters junior defeated Naperville North's Nick Fanthorpe 8-5 in the championship match to cap a 40-2 season where he also won a title at the Lincoln-Way East Sectional. It was also the first state title won by one of the Oster brothers as four-time

All-Stater Jameson became the school's fourth champion when he took first place at 119 in Class 3A in 2009 and three-time medal winner Shayne claimed top honors at 138 in Class 3A in 2015. He was a two-time state qualifier, also advancing to Champaign in 2003 and finishing with a 32-11 record. His senior season got cut short due to an injury after bringing a 33-2 record into the sectional. At the conclusion of his career, he had the most victories in LTHS history with 135. He competed for Illinois Wrestling Coaches and Officials Association Hall of Fame head coach Joe Williams and also for his brother Josh, an assistant who succeeded Williams and took six teams to Dual Team State from 2012 to 2020 and won a state championship in 2017, took third in 2016 and placed fourth in 2015. After initially going to the University of Illinois, he briefly coached at LTHS. Then he restarted his career at Elmhurst College and he became the first wrestler in that school's history to capture an individual national championship, winning the 125-pound NCAA Division III title during the 2008-09 season while posting a perfect 27-0 record that season. Named Elmhurst's Male Athlete of the Year for two consecutive years (2009 and 2010), Jake was the first Bluejay wrestler to earn All-American accolades in each of his four years. He placed seventh in the nation during his freshman season and finished fifth during his sophomore campaign in 2008. After winning the NCAA title in 2009, he placed third in the country in 2010 for the fourth All-America honor of his career. Jake won three consecutive College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin Individual titles from 2008-2010 and was named the league's Most Outstanding Wrestler during the 2009 season. He competed for IWCOA Hall of Fame coach Steve Marianetti at Elmhurst. Jake closed out his career with a record of 97-20, recording the fifth-highest win total in Elmhurst history (now ranked seventh). He also tied an Elmhurst record for most individual tournament championships in his career with 11. He was inducted into Elmhurst College's Hall of Fame in 2015. In 2016, Jake became head coach at Yorkville and owns a 114-66 record in eight seasons. His 2024 team went 22-5 and defeated Naperville Central and Libertyville to advance to the IHSA Class 3A championship dual meet against Mount Carmel, where they fell 59-6 to finish in second place. One year earlier, the Foxes went 18-7 after claiming fourth place following a 45-16 loss to his brother Jameson's Porters in the third-place dual meet, the first-ever matchup of brothers in the IHSA Dual Team Finals.

SCOTT PARZYCH

Scott Parzych will always be a name to remember for future followers of Lockport Township athletics since he was the star player on one of the greatest moments in Porters sports, the 33-0 1978 Class AA Basketball champions, and also since he was the school's second All-American in the sport after making the third team by both Basketball Weekly and Street and Smith. He also ranked second in scoring at the end of his career to the school's only other All-American, Jeff Hickman. Scott finished his career from 1974 to 1978 competing for coaches Bob Basarich and Rollie Bolattino by scoring 1,547 points in 98 games, good for a 15.8 average. In his final game, he surpassed the second individual, Chester Green, who finished with 1,542 points. Alando Tucker eventually surpassed Scott with 1,572 points to move into second place on the all-time scoring list. In his senior season, he received All-State honors from the Chicago Tribune and Chicago Sun-Times for the second-straight year as well as the Most Valuable Player in the IBCA All-Star Game, was named to the All-Chicago Area Team by the two Chicago papers and also made the IHSA Finals All-Tournament team. Scott was a three-time Illini-Eight Conference selection and was the I-8's Player of the Year in both 1978 and 1977. He also made the Joliet All-Area team in 1978 and 1977 and was its Player of the Year both times. In his senior season, he scored 707 points in 33 games, good for a 21.4 average. As a junior, he collected 487 points in 27 games for an 18.0 average and as a sophomore, he scored 324 points for a 12.0 average. He became just the third player at the time to lead the Porters in scoring for three straight years with Maury Adamson in the 1930s and Hickman being

the others. Scott actually had more field goals in both his career and in a season than Hickman had. He also led LTHS in rebounding in those three seasons, averaging 11.4 as a senior and 12.3 as a junior. Bill Ford was the only player at that time who had led the Porters in rebounding three years in a row. Scott ranked second at the end of his career with 921 rebounds, behind only Ellis Files. He went on to play basketball at North Carolina State University from 1978-1979 to 1981-1982 and played two seasons apiece for two coaches who won NCAA championships at NC State, Norm Sloan and Jim Valvano. He was a letter-winner all four years, was a starter during his junior and senior seasons, and was a member of the Atlantic Coast Conference All-Star Team in 1982. Following his time with the Wolfpack, he played in the European League (Turkey) for three seasons and was the leading scorer and rebounder each year. Scott was inducted into the Illinois Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame as a player in 1983 and then was inducted as a member of the 1977-1978 undefeated team in 1985. He was voted by the Chicago Tribune as one of the 12 top players during the decade of the 1970s and then in 2017, he was inducted into the Joliet Area Sports Hall of Fame, joining both Basarich and Hickman.

"Jim Greenan reached out to me and I said I'd be there," Parzych said of attending the Legends Night. "It was an honor to be thought of in that regard."

Parzych is a humble person but back in 1977-78, he led the Porters to unprecedented heights as they won the Class AA Basketball State Championship, playing before sold-out crowds the entire time.

"I'm one of the older ones," Parzych said. "But I've watched many of the other honored individuals, many who came after me and some of whom are no longer with us."

Parzych's Porter Pride shines on because that's what he grew up with.

"We had plenty of teams to look up to from before our title team that set the example," he said. "They were there and we had a sense of pride watching them that they were from Lockport and watching them compete. We had a roadmap to get to state."

There was a correction that Parzych had to make at the event though.

"I had to correct that I was the third leading scorer behind Jeff Hickman and Alando Tucker," Parzych said. "I might be the third leading scorer but I'm the only one with a championship ring."

But he knows that he didn't do that alone.

"I know that the rest of that team should be inducted too," Parzych said of the 1977-78 State Champs. "I believe that teams should be in here too. We took that title season a game at a time but many of us prepared for those games by playing on The Hill in Fairmont."

TONY PASHOS

Tony Pashos definitely epitomizes the great American dream. The son of immigrants from Greece who came to the United States in hopes of having a better life for their family, Tony was motivated by his parents to achieve big things and used his skills as a football player that he honed at Lockport Township to become one of the top offensive linemen to ever play at the University of Illinois. Thanks to his performance in Champaign, he was not only able to take the next step and play in the National Football League, but he did that at a high level for 11 seasons before setting out to achieve another goal that he had, earning a law degree, which he also achieved. An All-Stater along with teammate and fellow Lockport Legend Nick Setta in 1997, he played on a 9-2 team coached by Bret Kooi as a senior that beat perennial power Wheaton Warrenville South 31-27 in the first round of the IHSA Class 6A playoffs before getting edged 20-17 in the second round by Addison Trail, which went on to be the runner-up in Class 6A to Lincoln-Way. He was a two-time first-team All-Big Ten selection in 2001 and 2002, as well as helping lead the Illini to the 2001 Big Ten championship and berth in the 2002 Sugar Bowl. He finished his career with 47 games started, the second-most in school history at the time, and was a four-time Academic All-Big Ten selection, graduating with a degree in history. He anchored an offensive line that helped pave the way for 390 points, 32.5 points per game, 5,041 yards of total offense, and 1.33 sacks allowed per game in 2001, all of which were school records at the time. And with Tony as a captain in 2002, the Illini set school records for 5,356 yards of total offense and 446.3 yards of total offense per game. He also helped lead the way for Antoino Harris' school-record season of 1,330 rushing yards in 2002, and Kurt Kittner's record-breaking 27 touchdown passes in 2001. Tony graduated from the U of I in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History. In 2008, he was named as one of the 10 greatest offensive linemen to have played at the U of I. In 2012, Tony and his wife, Michelle, were honored in a ceremony at the 77 Club inside Memorial Stadium for their donation to establish the Tony Pashos Offensive Lineman Meeting Room, thus becoming the first naming rights holder of a position room in the Memorial Stadium complex. Drafted in the fifth round of the NFL Draft by the Baltimore Ravens, he played six games in 2004, all games in 2005, and all consecutive games in 2006. After a year playing in NFL Europe for Cologne, he returned to the NFL with Jacksonville Jaguars from 2007-2008 and started in 31 games over two seasons. for the San Francisco 49ers in 2009. After playing for the Cleveland Browns in 2010-2011 Tony finished his NFL career with the Oakland Raiders in 2013. He played 104 games in the NFL and started in 82 of those contests. Following his playing days, he served an internship at the Office of the Vice President in 2018, went to Northwestern University's Pritzker School of Law, and graduated with a law degree from there in 2019. He is a licensed attorney in Illinois and a member of the Illinois Bar Association, Chicago Bar Association, and Hellenic Bar Association.

NICK SETTA

Nick Setta pulled off the rare feat of being an All-State athlete in three different sports while competing at Lockport Township. Not only was he one of Illinois' first great kickers in football but he was a state champion and four-year All-Stater in track and field and also helped lead the Porters cross country program to two state championships. During his four-year football career, he set school records for field goals with 30 and extra points with 96 for a total of 186 points. He still leads in field goals and ranks second to Matt Ludwig in extra points. He earned All-State honors in both 1997 when he had 11 field

goals and 37 extra points for 70 points, and 1998, when he kicked 12 field goals and 32 extra points for 68 points. His 59-yard field goal against Bloom Township in 1996 was an IHSA record until broken by a 60-yard kick in 2014. And his 30 career field goals still rank him third all-time in IHSA history. In track and field, he's best known for capping his senior season in 1998-1999 by winning the IHSA Class AA title in the 800-meter run in a time of 1:52.24, which was :0.41 better than the runner-up, while competing for coach Tom Razo. That came one year after he won three medals in Charleston, taking third in the 800-meter run, sixth in the high jump, and seventh in the 4 x 400-meter relay along with Jerome Parker, Aaron Edwards and Dan Schrock. In his first two seasons, he was a medalist in the 4 x 800-meter relay, finishing seventh as a freshman in 1996 and then in sixth place as a sophomore, running with Jason Olszowka and Jason Bialka on both 4 x 8 relays and with Jeff Johnson in 1996 and with Schrock in 1997. He was a three-time All-Stater in cross country, the only boys runner at LTHS to accomplish that feat, finishing fifth in 1996, 19th in 1997, and 11th in 1998. He was a member of two state championship teams in the sport, defeating Fenton 73-123 to win the 1996 Class AA title and behind the scoring of Setta, Bialka, Olszowka, Greg Targosz, and Chris Grajewski and then stunning perennial power York 134-135 behind the scoring of Targosz, Setta, Olszowka, Dave Grajewski and Jerry Jaskierny for the 1997 championship in Peoria, both times for coach Lawrence Thompson, Jr. He continued his football career at the University of Notre Dame from 2000-2003 and still ranks first in extra point percentage (.990), fourth in consecutive extra points made (92), fifth in career field goals made (46) and field goal percentage (.697), sixth in kicking points scored (242) and eighth in extra points made (104). He was signed by the New Orleans Saints and saw time with a few other National League Football teams. In 2006, he signed as a free agent with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats of the Canadian Football League and scored a league-high 167 points in his first season in 2007 and was a CFL All-Star. He remained with Hamilton until 2010 and was the first kicker for the Ottawa RedBlacks in 2014.

ALANDO TUCKER

Alando Tucker is one of those rare cases among basketball players who could not only be among the top scorers at his high school but also be the all-time leading scorer at his college. But that's just what the 2002 Lockport Township graduate was able to accomplish as he passed up Scott Parzych and Chester Green to become the Porters' number-two scorer all-time behind Jeff Hickman and then proceeded to become the all-time leading scorer at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He also has the distinction of being the only individual in the top 10 in scoring at LTHS who didn't play on a team that advanced to the Sweet 16 in the IHSA playoffs. He finished his four-year Porters career with 1,572 points in 104 games, which was good for a 15.1 average, falling 157 points shy of Hickman's standard of 1,729 points that has stood since 1968. In the last few weeks of his senior season, when he scored a career-high 589 points in 27 games for a 21.8 average, which was also the best in his career, he moved past Parzych (1,547), Green (1,542), and James Foster (1,489), who make up the rest of the top-five. He also averaged 7.7 rebounds and 5.7 assists to earn All-State honors. His junior season mirrored his last year as he scored 578 points in 27 contests for a 21.4 average that helped him to claim the first of two All-Area selections by The Herald-News. As a sophomore in 1999-2000, he scored 290 points and had an 11.2 average and as a freshman, he scored 115 points for a 4.8 average. After competing for Joe Gura as a freshman, he played for Lawrence Thompson, Jr. in his final three seasons. The Porters went 64-42 during his career with the best team being a 19-9 regional champion team in his senior season in 2001-2002 and the next-best being a 17-9 showing in Thompson's first year as head coach. He is Wisconsin's all-time leading scorer with 2,217 points, becoming a consensus first-team All-American as a senior in 2007. Alando also earned 2007 Big Ten Player of the Year and was a finalist for every national

player of the year award, winning the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award. A two-time first-team All-Big Ten selection, he finished his career ranked ninth in Big Ten history in career points and led the Badgers to a career record of 99-35, including a then-school record 30 wins in 2006-07 while competing for coach Bo Ryan throughout his Badger career. He was UW's first consensus 1st-team All-American since John Kotz in 1942 and he broke Devin Harris' single-season school record with 716 points in 2006-07. Alando finished his career ranking ninth in Big Ten history in both career points and free throws and fourth in conference history in free throw attempts. In 2007, he was the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award winner and the UWBWA District V Player of the Year as a senior. He's the first UW player to lead the Big Ten in scoring in league games (20.0 ppg, 2006) since Don Rehfeldt in 1950 and tied school record with five Big Ten Player of the Week awards. Alando was a consensus first-team All-Big Ten as well as NABC first-team All-District 11 and USBWA All-District 5 pick as a junior and a third-team All-Big Ten as a sophomore when led the Big Ten and set a school record for offensive rebounds after averaging 2.69 points per game and 86 points as a freshman. Alando finished his career ranking first or second in eight different UW season statistical categories, topping the charts in career field goals, free throws made, games played and minutes played. Following his historic career at Wisconsin, he was a first-round draft pick of the Phoenix Suns (29th overall) in the 2007 NBA Draft. He played professionally for 10 years, including three seasons in the NBA with the Phoenix Suns and the Minnesota Timberwolves. Alando was named to the UW Athletic Hall of Fame as part of its highly acclaimed 11-member class of 2018. Throughout his professional career, he also was the founder and CEO of a successful non-profit, Arcitec Basketball, that specializes in life skills development. Alando earned his bachelor of science degree in history from Wisconsin in 2007.

STEVE WALKER

Steve Walker completed a fantastic football career not only becoming Lockport Township's all-time leader in all passing categories at the time but the quarterback also capped his senior season in 2002 by leading the Porters to their first IHSA championship in the sport with a 35-14 victory over Stevenson in the Class 8A title game at the University of Illinois' Memorial Stadium in Champaign. Competing for coach Bret Kooi, he finished his career as the school's leader in passing yards (5,728), total offense (6,198), touchdowns (51), and completions (394). He also established season records in 2002 for passing yards (3,897), total offense (4,262), touchdowns (34), and completions (268); and he set game records in 2002 against Hinsdale Central in the epic 41-38 semifinal game in Hinsdale for passing yards (510), total offense (525) and touchdowns (6) and for also in 2002 for completions (29 vs. Lincoln-Way East). His 2001 totals for passing yards (1,831), total offense (1,936), and completions (126) ranked him third behind Jake Christensen, who took over quarterback duties for the Porters in 2003. His 510 passing yards and 53 passes in the 2002 Hinsdale Central game is still a Class 8A record and his six touchdowns from that game ties him with Maine South's Sean Price, whose team fell to LTHS in the 2003 Class 8A Finals. Steve's 2002 season passing yards and completions still rank him in the top 10 in IHSA history. He and his favorite target, Spencer Jensen, both earned All-State honors in 2002. He was a two-time all-area selection by The Star Newspapers and an All-area pick by The Herald-News in 2002. He also earned All-State honors in baseball in 2003 while playing first base and going 9-1 as a pitcher for coach Jim Hall. Steve was selected as the Chicago Tribune's Athlete of the Year in 2002-2003. He competed at North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota from 2004 to 2007 and threw for 7,033 yards on 534 completions and 841 attempts to go with 60 touchdowns, which were all school records at the time and he currently ranks third in each of those categories. Steve still holds school records for passing yards in a game and is tied for first in completions and touchdown passes in a game. He played on teams that went

8-3, 7-4, 10-1, and 10-1 and won the Great West Football Conference title in 2006 when he was the league's Offensive Player of the Year and a finalist for the Walter Payton Award, which went to the top offensive player in NCAA Division 1-AA.

BILL ZIMMER

Bill Zimmer definitely made a significant impact on Lockport Township athletics during his 34-year career, reflected by the fact that he became the first Porters coach to earn a spot in two state Coaches Association halls of fame, for football and wrestling, being inducted into the Illinois High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1986 and into the Illinois Wrestling Coaches and Officials Association Hall of Fame in 1988. He played football at Bradley University and was inducted into the Bradley Athletics Hall of Fame in 1959. After serving in the U.S. Army for two years and then signing a contract to play with the San Francisco 49ers, he returned to Bradley as an assistant football coach, golf coach, and head wrestling coach, where he served for four seasons developing the program and he had two NCAA qualifiers. Before he became the school's third wrestling coach in 1959 and its 22nd football coach in 1960, LTHS had been struggling on the gridiron for nearly 30 years, which was a real concern with the school competing in the very challenging South Suburban League that featured many schools which were much larger than they were. During his 34 seasons leading the football program, Bill led his teams to a 170-136-5 record, with 21 of those seasons being winning campaigns and three others finishing with .500 marks. His teams won outright Illini-Eight Conference titles in 1966 and 1971, tied for I-8 championships in 1974 and 1979, were SICA West outright champions in 1987, and tied for the SICA West title in 1987. He took three teams to the IHSA playoffs, with the first one being in 1979 and the last in 1987. His 1985 team won the first playoff game in the program's history when it beat United Township 21-14 in its opener. He had two teams that went 8-1, the first in 1966, which only allowed 16 points, and the other in 1980, when it lost to Marian Catholic, who was the lone I-8 team to reach the playoffs. He coached 15 athletes who earned All-State honors, and one of those, John Handy, was an All-American in 1966. He was one of the first high school head coaches from the Joliet area who went to the press box during a game to get a better perspective of things on the field. He was also an early enthusiast of the passing game and he ended up coaching 11 quarterbacks who threw for over 1,000 yards during their LTHS careers, including seven who had that many yards in one season. In wrestling, his teams won over 200 dual meets between 1959-1960 and 1985-1986, captured four conference titles, won four district titles, and also a sectional championship in 1965. He had 39 athletes that qualified for the IHSA Finals and 13 place winners, including state champions Glenn Malone in 1969 and Ken Lewis in 1972 as well as three second-place finishers. He was a clinic speaker and was involved with camps and youth groups from the area. He also officiated the sport for more than 30 years, working regular season matches involving high school teams. After his son Mike, who played for him as a quarterback in 1972 and 1973, began his lengthy coaching career in the National Football League, Bill would show up to practices with him and the veteran coach was well respected by Mike's players. Bill, who also got the opportunity to coach his son, Bill, Jr., passed away on August 11, 2015, at the age of 84.

MIKE ZIMMER

Mike Zimmer did not get the opportunity to extend his athletic career much beyond his playing days at Lockport Township. In his second season of playing football at Illinois State University in 1976, he suffered an injury that ended his career. But that setback led him to go in another direction, following in the footsteps of his dad and one-time coach, Bill Zimmer, who was LTHS's football coach for 34 years and its wrestling coach for 27 years and a member of both state associations halls of fame. That has led to a 45-year coaching career that continues to this day and has involved stops at several universities as well as four National Football League teams, and it certainly is one of the most distinguished coaching careers of the many that have been undertaken by individuals who've competed for the Porters. Mike, a quarterback at LTHS, led the Porters in passing yards in 1972 with 649 yards and was an All-Illini Eight Conference selection who threw for 516 yards in 1973 to finish with 1,165 yards for his career. He began his college coaching at the University of Missouri in 1979-1980 and then joined coach Mike Price for stints at Weber State University from 1981 to 1988 and at Washington State University from 1989 to 1993, coaching linebackers and defensive backs at the former and being the defensive coordinator at the latter. In 1994, he moved to the NFL with the Dallas Cowboys, assisting on defense from 1994 to 1999 and then serving as defensive coordinator from 2000 to 2006, coaching under Barry Switzer, Chan Gailey, Dave Campo, and Bill Parcells. A few of Mike's highlights with the Cowboys included winning Super Bowl XXX in 1996 and an NFC championship in 1995. In 2007 he served as defensive coordinator for the Atlanta Falcons and took on the same role from 2008-2013 for the Cincinnati Bengals under coach Marvin Lewis. In 2009, he was recognized as the NFL Assistant Coach of the Year. And in 2010, he received the George Halas Award for the NFL player, coach, or staff member who overcame the most adversity to succeed. In 2014, he was hired as the ninth head coach of the Minnesota Vikings and he held that position through the 2021 season, compiling a 72-56-1 record, good for a .562 percentage. He led his 2015, 2017, and 2019 teams to the NFL playoffs, with the highlight coming in 2017 when they went 13-3 and beat New Orleans 29-24 to reach the NFC championship game where they fell 38-7 to the Philadelphia Eagles, who went on to win Super Bowl LII. He ranks third in wins for the Vikings behind Bud Grant and Dennis Green. In 2022 and 2023, he served as an advisor for an athlete he coached with the Cowboys, Deion Sanders, at Jackson State University and the University of Colorado, and has returned to the NFL this season as defensive coordinator, again for the Cowboys, this time for coach Mike McCarthy.

This may have been the first Legends event, but it certainly won't be the last.

"We will plan to get the date for next year set soon and continue to recognize the Legends of Lockport," Dwyer said. "Please visit lths.org under athletics and look for the Legends info and details about criteria and nomination information for new Legends!"