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TOP STORY

Worth the wait: Fayette Sports Hall of Fame reveals stellar new class after lost year

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Submitted photo

Geibel Catholic graduate Shelley Bortz is shown during her playing days at Gannon University. Bortz was the leading vote-g in the Fayette County Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2020/2021 member voting and will be joined by 12 other new inductees.

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The Fayette County Sports Hall of Fame is back with another stellar group of inductees and uplifting news for next year.

The Class of 2020/2021 has been introduced and is headlined by Geibel Catholic graduate Shelley Bortz, the leader among Hall of Fame membership voting.

Also included in the new class are Jason Bodnar (Laurel Highlands graduate), Krystal Brooks (Brownsville), Lauren George Clemmer (Uniontown), Terence Jackson (Uniontown), Ross Kershey (Dunbar Township), Jarrod King (Connellsville), Chad Salisbury (Frazier) along with deceased inductees Adam Donnelly (German Township), Dr. Ted (Konetsky) Kell (German Township), Fran Lemansky (Uniontown), John Lozar (German Township) and Wilfred Minor (Uniontown).

“We’re off and running again,” said Hall of Fame Executive Chair/Co-Founder George Von Benko. “For our 12th year this remains a very, very strong class. There’s great quality in this group. If you look at the cross-section it’s a diverse class.”

Von Benko also announced that, although there will be no banquet this year due to COVID-19 restrictions, the banquet is already set to be held next year on June 18, 2022, once again at Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus.

“Inductees from this year’s class will be honored at next year’s banquet,” Von Benko said.

As for this year, the 13 new inductees and representatives will be recognized at the Hall of Fame golf outing/luncheon/social on June 25, starting at 9 a.m. at Pleasant Valley Golf Club in Connellsville (to attend, see details at the end of this story).

The group will be enshrined through Von Benko’s Sports Line Talk Show (heard every Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon on WMBS radio), the Herald-Standard, the Hall of Fame web page (www.fayettecountysportshalloffame.com) and the new Hall of Fame Facebook page.

Shelley Bortz joins George Bortz as the first father-daughter combo in the Hall of Fame. The only father-son combo is Gene Franks Sr. and Donald "Doc" Franks. Shelley Bortz was a standout basketball player for the Lady Gators and at Gannon University.

Bodnar was a track and cross country stalwart for the Mustangs and Pitt. Brooks was a basketball star for the Lady Falcons and James Madison.

George Clemmer is the first golfer to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. She played for the Lady Raiders and at Kentucky. Jackson was a track star for the Red Raiders.

Kershey was a Hall of Fame basketball and track & field coach at Coatesville High School. King was a standout wrestler for the Falcons and Edinboro University. Salisbury had a star-studded career with the Commodores and then at New Mexico State and Buffalo in college before moving on to arena football.

Donnelly was a successful football and basketball coach at German Township, winning a WPIAL title in the former. Kell was a star football player for the Uhlans who also played at Pitt. Lemansky was a trailblazing boys soccer coach for the Mustangs.

Lozar was a football coach at Masontown and Albert Gallatin, winning a WPIAL title at the latter. Minor was a football and basketball standout for the Red Raiders.

Following are additional highlights on each of the new inductees:

Krystal Brooks (Brownsville 2001)

Basketball: Totaled 1,360 points and 900 rebounds at Brownsville. ... Earned all-section and All-WPIAL honors. ... Four-year letter-winner at James Madison where she was a team captain her junior and senior seasons. ... 642 points, 360 rebounds and 57 blocked shots in JMU career. ... Inducted into the first Brownsville Hall of Fame class in 2015.

Ross Kershey (Dunbar Township 1950)

Coach: Head basketball coach for 28 years and track & field coach for 14 years at Coatesville High School. ... 462-129 record in basketball, including 12 Ches-Mont championships and one district title ... Track record 103-1 in dual meets with 13 Ches-Mont Championships, 14 League Relay Championships and two Districts 1 titles. ... Coatesville's basketball facility is named after him. ...

This will be his seventh Hall of Fame induction, following Pa. HOF, Coatesville HS Sports HOF, Ches-Mont League HOF, Chester County Sports HOF, Pennsylvania Track and Field HOF and Connellsville HS HOF.

Chad Salisbury (Frazier 1995)

Football: During junior year at Frazier completed 154 of 293 passes for 2,346 yards and 26 touchdowns. ... Senior year with Commodores threw for 2,095 yards and 20 touchdowns. ... All-conference both as junior and senior. ... Named to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's Fabulous 22 as a senior. ... Passed for 2,291 yards and 11 touchdowns at New Mexico State in 1996. ... At Buffalo in 1997-1998 at the University of Buffalo passed for 4,947 yards and 31 touchdowns. ... Played eight seasons in the Arena Football League, passing for 12,104 yards and 217 touchdowns.

Basketball: Tallied 1,534 points and over 1,500 rebounds in career at Frazier.

John Lozar (German Township 1943)

Coach: Served as head football coach at Masontown and Albert Gallatin. ... Coached Masontown from 1950-59 with a record of 41-44-2, including undefeated 10-0 season in 1959. ... Coached Albert Gallatin to a 39-13-2 record from 1960 until his death midway through 1965 season. ... Career record of 80-57-5. ... Guided 1961 Colonials to WPIAL Class A title with a perfect 11-0 record. ... Led AG on 20-game winning streak from 1960 to 1962.

Wilfred Minor (Uniontown 1966)

Football: Quarterbacked the 1965 Red Raiders' WPIAL Class AA Champion football team. ... Uniontown beat Butler 14-7 to finish the season 10-0. ... Minor only suffered one loss in his football career with the Red Raiders. ... Originally went to Nebraska to play football, but wound up playing two years at Slippery Rock, 1969 and 1970. ... In 1969 rushed for 240 yards on 83 attempts and caught six passes for 87 yards and two touchdowns. ... Named 2nd team All PSAC Defensive Back in 1969. ... Named 2nd team Defensive Back AP All-State College Team in 1970.

Basketball: Starter his junior season on team that lost to Aliquippa in the playoffs, snapping a 52-game winning streak. ... His senior season the Red Raiders lost to Schenley in the PIAA Western Finals in double overtime, 71-67. ... Uniontown won the WPIAL title, beating McKeesport 81-63.

Shelley Bortz (Geibel Catholic 1992)

Basketball: Geibel Catholic's all-time leading scorer (boys and girls) with 1,977 points. ... Named all-section three years in a row (1990-1991-1992). ... Named WPIAL Class AA All-Star by Post-Gazette. ... WPIAL Class AA Player of the Year as a senior. ... Led WPIAL in scoring senior year at 27.2 ppg. ... Played in the 1992 Girls' Roundball Classic. ... Set the then WPIAL Class A championship game scoring record of 35 points in 1991. ... Played college basketball at Gannon, scoring 600 points.

Lauren George Clemmer

(Uniontown 2001)

Golf: Won Uniontown Country Club Women's Club Championship at age 13. ... Two-time WPIAL girls' golf champion. ... Four-year PIAA girls' state championship qualifier and a Top-Ten medalist. ... Post-Gazette Athlete of the Week (1998 & 1999). ... Tribune Review Athlete of the Week in 1999. ... Four-year starter on boys' golf team. ... AJGA Sand Barrens Champ in 1998. ... 2001 AJGA Polo Golf All-American. ... Received full scholarship to the University of Kentucky. ... Two-year letter winner at Kentucky, with a second-place finish at the UK/Vanderbilt Challenge in 2003. ... Recorded several top 40 finishes in the SEC Championships.

Dr. Ted (Konetsky) Kell (German Township 1937)

Football: Standout tackle for the Uhlans. ... Went on to play at Pitt. ... 1938 All-City College Grid Team. ... Team captain his senior year and was again named to the PITT NEWS All-City Team. ... Named to several "All Opponent Teams" along with selection to the Eastern College All-Star Team. ... All-Star named to play in the first annual "Smoke Bowl Game." ... Passed on pro football and became a dentist.

Track: As a senior at German he retained the county record set the previous year and also established a new discus record of 123 feet, 9 inches. ... Won two first-place medals at the WPIAL competition at Pitt Stadium in 1937, one for discus (127-0) and one for shot put (47-1¾). ... Double gold-medal winner at the PIAA championships in both the discus and shot put. ... Also participated in track at Pitt.

Jason Bodnar (Laurel Highlands 1988)

Track/Cross Country: Captured WPIAL championships in 1988 in the mile and two-mile events. ... Won WPIAL title in cross-country in 1988. ... Ran track at the University of Pittsburgh. ... All-American at Pitt, ran in NCAA cross country championships. ... Ran in the Olympic Trial Marathon in 1996 and 2000. ... Was a member of the US National Cross Country team at the World Championships in 1998. ... Has run six Boston Marathons, several Pittsburgh Marathons, as well as New York and Chicago. ... Won a marathon in 2013 in Asheville, N.C.

Terence Jackson (Uniontown 1982)

Track: Broke Uniontown high jump record as a sophomore with a jump of 6-10. ... Won the PIAA high jump in 1980 with a jump of 6-10. ... Set a new WPIAL high jump record in 1980 of 7-0. ... Won PIAA championship again in 1981 with a new (and still standing) record of 7-5. ... Placed second in state in 1982 with a jump of 6-10. ... His medal haul in high school included three PIAA gold medals and one PIAA silver. ... Attended Hagerstown Junior College from 1982-84. ... Went to nationals three out of four times at Hagerstown, taking second all three times with jumps of 7-0.

Football/basketball: Also lettered in football and basketball for Red Raiders.

Jarrod King (Connellsville 2004)

Wrestling: Lettered all four years at Connellsville. ... three-time PIAA finalist and two-time state champion. ... Was a United States Wrestling Association national champion in freestyle wrestling his senior year. ... Attended the University of Oklahoma before transferring to Edinboro University. ... Connellsville's first-ever NCAA Division I wrestling champion, won 165-pound title in 2009 at Edinboro. ... National third-place finish in 2010. ... Three-time National Wrestling Coaches Association Academic All-American. ... Named the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference "Male Scholar Athlete of the Year" in 2010. ... This will be his seventh Hall of Fame induction, following the Southwestern Pennsylvania Wrestling HOF, Dapper Dan Wrestling Classic HOF, Eastern Wrestling League HOF, Connellsville High School HOF, Pennsylvania Wrestling HOF and Edinboro HOF.

Adam Donnelly (German Township)

Coach: German Township compiled a record of 45-38-5 in his nine years as head football coach. ... One undefeated football season, 10-0 in 1969. ... Defeated Coraopolis, 8-0, to capture WPIAL Class B Championship. ... As head basketball coach German Township compiled a record of 206-192. ... Won one basketball section title. ... Coached track until German dropped the sport. ... Produced several top notch sprinters in the 1950s.

Fran Lemansky (Uniontown, 1960)

Coach: Started the Laurel Highlands High School soccer program in 1987. ... Coached the Mustangs until 2000. ... In 14 seasons, Lemansky compiled a coaching record of 120-113-11. ... LH made the playoffs in 1992, 1994, 1997 and 1999. ... Lemansky won coach of the year honors in 1992. ... The Mustangs pulled off one of the biggest upsets in WPIAL playoff history in 1992 defeating top-seeded Mt. Lebanon, 1-0. ... LH was the first soccer program in the county. ... Helped organize other high school and junior high teams in the county. ... Helped organize and coach the Fayette County Youth Soccer Association and YMCA. ... Coached a traveling team on Cup level, one of which qualified for the state playoffs and premiere status.

Those interested in attending the Fayette County Sports Hall of Fame golf outing may contact Katie Propes by email (kpropes@occluss.com) or phone (724-415-2211).