



# Honoring the Past to Inspire the Future

Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Foundation  
Newsletter — November 2002

## Inductees share memories

### Annual ceremony honors all

They came together to be honored, but they honored those who came with the wisdom of their experience.

That's how the Nebraska High School Hall of Fame's annual awards program went Sept. 29 in Lincoln.

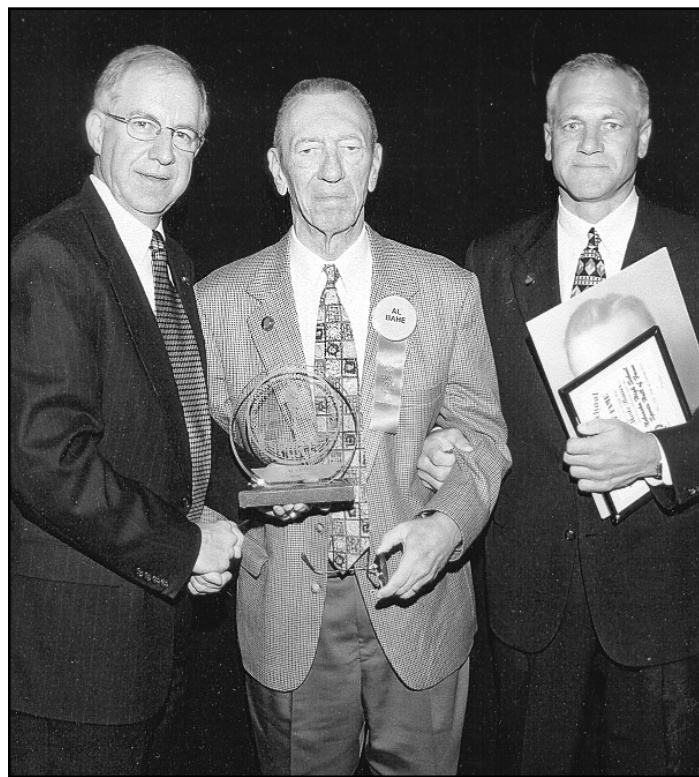
A crowd of 650 at the Lied Center auditorium enjoyed a parade of award winners, including the Hall of Fame's ninth induction class. With each and every presentation, the crowd also heard heartfelt responses, all illustrating some positive, meaningful values gained from participation in high school sports.

The hall inducted 21 people at its ninth annual ceremony. Among those attending were U.S. Congressman Tom Osborne, a former inductee, and his wife, Nancy.

This year's inductees were:

-- Coaches Bob Schnitzler of Battle Creek, Dick Koch of Omaha Northwest, Wes Shepard of Lincoln Christian, Jo Dusatko of Omaha Central, the late Merle Bauer of North Platte and Bob Gates of Omaha.

-- Athletes John Sanders (1964) of Grand Island, Carol Nunnally Countryman (1983) of



Jack Martin Photography

**Al Bahe, center, receives his Hall of Fame award from Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame President Bob Whitehouse, left, during this year's induction ceremony at the Lied Center in Lincoln. At right is Al's son, Ritch, who was also inducted into the Hall of Fame.**

Lincoln High, Harold Beck (1952) of Minden, George Andrews (1974) of Omaha Burke, Ritch Bahe (1971) of Fremont, Barney Cotton (1974) of Omaha Burke and Trudy Veerhusen Nolin (1987) of Adams.

-- Pioneers Charles Brock (1935) of defunct Columbus Kramer, the late Ralph Langer (1939) of Ainsworth, Les Mann (1909) of Lincoln High, Darrell Mudra (1946) of Omaha South, Al Bahe (1946) of Wayne and Bus Whitehead (1945) of

Scottsbluff.

"Today is my birthday and I don't think I've ever had a nicer present," said Dusatko, the first female inductee chosen solely for coaching achievements.

With the 21 inductees of the Class of 2002, the Hall has inducted 197 former greats of Nebraska high school athletics. Those former greats were among those acknowledged by the incoming class of inductees.

The September ceremony "was a special time honoring out-

standing athletes from the State of Nebraska," said Hall of Fame Board of Directors President Bob Whitehouse. "The afternoon was one of our finest yet due to the dedication and organization of an outstanding Board of Directors. The ceremony was one of the best planned and administered of all times. Much gratitude goes to the selection committee, and the planning committee for the huge success of the afternoon."

The day's events brought together athletes from many eras. But memories for some were experiences for others and stories were shared.

Gates coached at his alma mater, Omaha Holy Name, before coaching at Pershing College in Beatrice, serving as an assistant in baseball and basketball and as a football recruiter at Nebraska, and as head baseball coach at Nebraska-Omaha.

"I was fortunate to be able to sign Budge Porter and George Andrews to their national letters of intent," said Gates. Porter received the Ron Gustafson Inspiration Award.

Gates and Whitehead were starters on the last University of Nebraska men's basketball team to win a regular-season conference championship.

"Bob was a great passer . . . and I really appreciated that," said Whitehead, who once held seven Husker scoring records.

Andrews and Cotton were teammates at Burke, then were teammates with Ritch Bahe and

# Improving Hall's image, visibility among Executive Director's early activities

When Dick Beechner of Kearney was appointed the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame's first

Executive Director in February, he said he wanted to increase the Hall's viability and visibility while generating an increase in funding for a proposed building to house the Hall of Fame and its memorabilia.

That commitment has led him to radio talk shows across the state, including the Average Joe Sports Show in Lincoln. He also worked with Jim Rose to get the Hall a plug during the Nebraska-Iowa State football game.

"I think all of those were good," said the former University of Nebraska at Kearney Athletic Director.

He also has helped organize booths promoting the Hall at the

recent athletic directors convention in Grand Island and the state cross country meet in Kearney.

"The Board of Directors and myself have re-established relations with the Nebraska School Activities Association allowing us the opportunity to present ourselves at the state championship events," Beechner said.

More visibility should provide more viability and lead to more donations.

"One main goal, right now, other than bringing more credibility and more visibility for the program, is to raise additional funds for a possible facility in

Lincoln. We've had contact with several entities in Lincoln to talk about that and I think that's moving along in good shape," Beechner said.

But raising additional funds has been slow.

"Because of timing, Sept. 11 and the status of the stock market, it appears to be difficult," Beechner said.

While traveling around the state to promote the Hall of Fame, Beechner has met with Dorothy Madden, widow of sports writer Bill Madden, to secure Bill's records and clip files would be housed at the Hall of Fame building, once it is secured. Bill Madden was an original member of the Hall of Fame's Board of Directors and inducted into the Hall as a contributor in 1996.

Beechner has also opened discussion with Dennis Scott, son of former Lincoln High coaching legend Harold Scott, in hopes of acquiring Harold Scott's records and files.

Beechner is also coordinating the Hall's efforts to establish a database of addresses of Hall of Fame members, supporters and contributors to provide a more effective distribution of the newsletter and other mailings.



## Executive Director's update

This is the first newsletter since the Board of Directors selected me as their first Executive Director. I would like to thank them for the opportunity to serve the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame Foundation. I look forward to continuing building on the firm foundation that they have established over the past eight years.

We have just completed the ninth annual induction ceremony at the Lied Center in Lincoln. It was an outstanding event headed by the induction committee with Al Papik as chair. They should be complimented on a job well done. As usual there were outstanding athletes inducted and deserving people were honored.



Dick Beechner

Efforts continue to move forward to acquire a location in Lincoln to house the Hall of Fame. I am encouraged by our recent talks with several entities in Lincoln. Several years ago the Board of Directors made a resolution that the location should be some place near the Bob Devaney Sports Center since there are so many state high school events held there. We hope that something positive can be announced in the not-to-distant future.

One of our main goals is to continue raising money for the building project. Another project is to bring duplicate awards up to the year 2002. This project alone will cost approximately \$7,500. All contributions are welcome.

We would like to thank the Nebraska School Activities Association for the opportunity to be present at many championships in 2002 and 2003. We hope that this will increase the visibility and credibility of the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame.

Until next time, be a good sport.

Visit our website at [www.nebhallowame.org](http://www.nebhallowame.org)

# The Hall of Fame Board of Directors would like to thank the following people who have donated to our organization:

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# Hall of Fame searching for intern

The Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame is seeking an intern to help promote the organization.

Duties will include assisting the Executive Director in all aspects of collecting and documenting articles, photographs, films and props for the Hall of Fame; promote the Hall of Fame at state championships and conventions; write media alerts, news releases and promotional materials; assist in layout and production of the biannual foundation newsletter; and maintain database records.

The internship would be ideal for a sports administration, business administration or communication major.

Resume and cover letter should be sent to NHHOF Foundation, 3214 20th Ave., Kearney, NE, 68845, or by e-mail to golopers@aol.com.

# Board re-elects officers for 2003

The Board of Directors unanimously approved the re-election of the board's officers for the upcoming year.

The re-elected officers are President Bob Whitehouse, Vice President Duane Haith, Treasurer Denny Smith and Secretary Steve Shanahan.

The approval of the officers came at the September Board of Directors meeting.

Also at that meeting, the Board approved the nomination of Jo Dusatko of Omaha as a new board member, filling a vacant position.

**Want to nominate someone?**  
 Nomination forms are available by contacting the Hall via e-mail at golopers@aol.com

## Donation Form

The Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame is a non-profit, tax-exempt (IRC Section 501(c)(3)) organization that relies on contributions from individuals, organizations, foundations, etc. Please consider making a contribution. You can copy this form or simply send your donation to:

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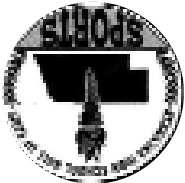
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## SHARE

Porter at Nebraska.  
"Most older athletes will tell you that the relationships formed with coaches and players and the moments in the locker room are the things that mean the most from athletics," said Andrews. "I've lived in California for the last 24 years, but I assure you, under this sports coat beats the heart of a Nebraskan. To see old friends and talk about the times we had was very nice."  
Bahe accompanied his father, Al, with his ever-present glasses on his forehead, to accept his award.  
"It's a role change where I do the talking and he does the listening. He touched a lot of lives in his career and he said a lot of those same people touched his life," said the younger Bahe.

Please share this newsletter with as many high school sports fans as possible by placing it in an accessible area.

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