

CENTER COURT

June 2021

Newsletter of the Connecticut Women's Basketball Hall of Fame

A Message from the Executive Director.....

What a year it's been!

We've all been dealing with the endless ways in which COVID 19 has affected our lives. Efforts to keep everyone safe resulted in postponements and cancelations that mounted daily, including our own thirty-third annual induction ceremony and dinner. Originally slated for April of 2020, I'm excited to remind you that it will finally take place on Wednesday, April 27, 2022! More good news - Did you know that a 2005 inductee of our own Hall of Fame, Carol Stiff, was named president of the Board of Directors of the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville, Tennessee?

How about that 2021 NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament?! I happily channel-surfed, determined not to miss a moment of the action! It resulted in me being a little short on sleep, but what great entertainment! The culminating games, including the Elite 8 through the Finals, were unbelievably exciting! From the amazing talent and drama of the competition to the unfortunate and disturbing inequities of the NCAA's treatment of the women's teams, the players and coaches didn't disappoint. Gritty, inspirational, incredible, unforgettable my words can't possibly do them justice! It was thrilling to see the women's game get more positive exposure than ever before.

Yes indeed, what a year it has been! I can't wait for next season!



What's Happening?

NEW WEBSITE! The CWBHOF is working to make our organization more "interactive." We are completely revising our website. The new website will have a crisp, new look and be more user friendly. www.cwbhof.com

NEW FACEBOOK PAGE! Like us on Facebook! www.ctwbbhof.com We are reactivating our Facebook account. Our page will provide an avenue for communication to our members and other interested people. We want to hear from you! Please share your promotions, job changes, and milestones with us.

INDUCTEES - WE NEED ACTION PHOTOS! We are also beginning an effort to obtain at least one "action" photo for each of our inductees. We request that inductees look through scrapbooks and yearbooks and forward your favorite "action" photos to us. Please send them to ljwooster@gmail.com.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

CT Women's Basketball Hall of Fame Ceremony will be held on April 27, 2022

Linda J. Wooster,
President/Executive
Director/Founder

Louise Albrecht,
Vice President/Treasurer/ Founder

Ann V. Fariss, PhD
Co-Banquet Coordinator/
Founder

Tony Candido,
Fundraising Chair/
Founder

Brenda Reilly, PhD
Founder (Posthumous)

Lee Franzman,
Nomination Committee Chair

David Strong,
Historian/Archivist

Marge Dolan,
Banquet MC

Sue Crisafi,
Secretary

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Tracey Flynn,
Special Projects



The Connecticut Women's Basketball Hall of Fame

A Story of Our History as Recollected by The Founders

In 1986, five friends from various athletic backgrounds met to discuss the possibility of starting a basketball organization to honor those individuals who had made extraordinary contributions to girls and women's basketball in Connecticut. These five, who became known as "the Founders," were: Tony Candido, Women's Basketball Official; Louise Albrecht, Associate Athletic Director at Southern CT State University; Dr. Ann V. Fariss, Director of Athletics at University of Bridgeport; Dr. Brenda A. Reilly*, Associate Athletic Director at Central CT State University; and Linda J. Wooster, Associate Athletic Director at Quinnipiac University. At the time, there were no other women's basketball state halls of fame in the country, a fact which did not discourage this intrepid group. They set out to develop an organization which eventually served as a model for the softball, field hockey, and volleyball halls of fame in Connecticut.

The group met in Lordship at Ann's restaurant, Sign of the Gull, for two years, to establish a constitution for this new venture. They reviewed constitutions from other organizations throughout the country and eventually created the framework which would become the Connecticut Women's Basketball Hall of Fame (CWBHOF).

The group would obviously need funds to move forward with their vision. Tony was acquainted with a man who sponsored baseball card shows -- fundraising events where vendors and professional baseball players were obtained to provide paraphernalia and autographs. Tony approached his friend about the prospect of our group conducting a show in return for a percentage of the proceeds. We would be responsible for obtaining the site, providing security and refreshments. Louise Albrecht was able to procure Pelz Gymnasium at Southern Connecticut State University as the site.

Several of us visited area stores to procure hamburgers, hot dogs, candy, soda and paper goods -- usually as a donation or at a reduced price. Others made signs, obtained coffee pots, portable grills, and electrical cords to set up along the hallway behind Pelz Gym.

The Founders, and every friend they could convince to help, conducted two very successful shows. Major league baseball players -- José Canseco, Steve Garvey, Reggie Jackson, Sam Horn, Ellis Burks, Mike Greenwall, Daryll Strawberry, several up-and-coming young stars, and manager Bobby Valentine, signed autographs and posed for pictures with fans.

More than 30 years later, the Founders still have vivid memories of the shows. We still remember the long lines and hundreds of fans who gathered outside the gym door, waiting to get into the show. Since there was no kitchen area, hot dogs were boiled in a 100-cup coffee pot (which had to be trashed at the end of the season because it reeked of hotdogs). These cards shows provided the seed money for our treasury.

Our Constitution was developed by gathering bits



The Founders Front: Brenda Reilly (*deceased), Ann Fariss
Back: Louise Albrecht, Tony Candido, Linda Wooster