

Tap Off Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, New Haven, Connecticut
Barbara Hall
Lea Dickson
November 14, 2018

Introduction by Bernice Nicolari,
Girl's Head Basketball Coach of the Shelton High School Gaelettes. 1962-1979

This year marks the 40th Anniversary of United States District Court Civil action B-77-41, mandating, by law, the implementation of Title IX.

Yes, Title IX became the law of the land in 1972. No, it was NOT being implemented- not in Connecticut and not in most other states because school and college administrators chose to embrace the status quo- and the status quo always favored boys.

In 1974, two Full years AFTER TITLE IX became the law of the land, two young untenured Connecticut teachers said: "Enough!" Barbara Hall and Lea Dickson were realizing what ALL women were realizing: "We've won the legislation BUT NOT THE REALTY."

Lea and Barb- and ALL working women everywhere- clearly saw the strategy being used by the Favored: "We do nothing till they sue us. That is an exact quote.

SO ___ two young untenured teachers, just starting out in their careers, SUED their school system for failure to implement the provisions of Title IX.

This groundbreaking Federal lawsuit would have national implications. What Barb and Lea were telling ALL of us through their lawsuit was: STOP ACCEPTING THE UNACCEPTABLE!"

1974 passed; then 1975; 1976 passed; then 1977. Finally, in December of 1978, a Federal Court Decision was handed down. During this time the careers of two young women hung in the balance.

PATIENCE was required- AND COURAGE- but women know about patience and courage, don't they. IT'S THE STORY OF OUR LIVES..

When I asked Barb years ago how she and Lea had dared to do what they did, Barb said- as if it were self-evident: "You have to stand up for what you believe in!"

THAT is the definition of courage: two quiet, patient women, standing up for what they believed in.

In December of 1978, Lea Dickson and Barbara Hall won their lawsuit- and changed for all time how society MUST, BY LAW, treat women. "Equal terms and conditions," said the court "regardless of the group."

Barb and Lea received no medals For their victory. No parades were held in their honor. There were no 21 gun salutes, no bugles blaring, no statues raised in their honor. In fact, almost no one knew who they were or what they done.

But the repercussions from their victory touch all girls and women to this day- because it's not just about athletics. It's about LIFE. "Equal terms and conditions- regardless of the group."

Every girl and woman here tonight- and every father who loves his daughters as mine did- owes Lea Dickson and Barbara Hall a HUGE "Thank You" for the risk they took for ALL of us.

It is my honor to present for induction into the New Haven Tap-Off Club Hall of Fame,
Barbara Hall and Lea Dickson