

Local Women’s Bowling Hall of Fame honorees are announced

By MIKE LEBOEUF

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PHOENIX — The Fulton and Oswego Women’s Bowling Hall of Fame Banquet will be held Saturday, Aug. 21, at RFH’s Hide-A-Way in Phoenix.

A cocktail hour starts at 5 p.m., with dinner at 6 p.m. and the ceremony to follow.

Dinner tickets must be purchased in advance by Aug. 11 by contacting Mary Smith (315-593-7804) or Margie Moore (315-345-0198 or 315-343-5460).

The Fulton Women’s Bowling Hall of Fame will welcome new inductees Crystal MacDougall and Brenda Rice.

The Oswego Women’s Bowling Hall of Fame will induct Mary Jane Sereno, Kathy Lacey, and Jeanne Baker.

Also honored that night will be Oswego Female Youth Bowlers of the Year Abigail Chamberlain and Lily Mathews.

Here are profiles of this year’s honorees.

FULTON INDUCTEES

Brenda Rice

Rice started bowling when she was about 16 years old. “I think I averaged about 93,” she said.

After deciding she liked bowling and wanted to improve, she got some pointers from local pro Joe Losurdo and another standout, Mike McCracken.

“They taught me the finer arts of throwing a hook,” Rice said. “There were days I could do it and days that I couldn’t, but I think that made all the difference in the world.”

She bowled in a few leagues including the Oswego City Women’s Classic League, and the Sears League at Pinarama Bowl. After Pinarama closed, Rice bowled in Fulton in the Thursday Night League. She bowled in a mixed league for more than 20 years.

Rice contributed as a league officer both in Oswego and Fulton, and served on the Fulton Women’s Bowling Association Board of Directors for about five years.

Her average climbed as high as 186, and she rolled a high game of 267 and a top triple of 691 along the way.

In the last tournament in which she bowled, Rice and her doubles partner won the city tournament doubles event. Rice placed in the top five in the singles event, and captured the all-events crown by one pin.

A back injury forced her to give up the sport, but her achievements were obviously not forgotten by the hall of fame selection committee.

“I’m flattered,” Rice said of being chosen for induction. “It’s quite a compliment, plus my husband (Dave) is in the Oswego Men’s Bowling Hall of Fame.”

Crystal MacDougall

Needing a night out of the house, MacDougall accepted a friend’s invitation to join the Friendly Girls league at Fulton’s Lakeview Lanes.

It was the start of a hall of fame career.

MacDougall has bowled in several leagues including Kimball’s Auto at Lakeview, the Monday Night Women’s League and the Monday Night Mixed League at the Recreation Club in Fulton, and the Thursday Night Men’s League at the Rec Club.

“Now it’s a mixed league. When I first joined it, it was just a men’s league and I was the only female. They needed somebody and my husband was in the league,” MacDougall said.

Her scores showed she could compete with anyone. She lists a career-high game of 279, a high series of 652, and a high average of 176. She and her husband Glenn bowled in the Monday Night Mixed and Thursday Night Mixed leagues, both at the Rec Club.

In the 2019 state women’s tournament, MacDougall was part of a team with her daughter, her daughter-in-law, and a friend. The team won its division. She has also taken part in other tourneys like the Lilac Tournament in Rochester, the Irish Rose Tournament in Canandaigua, and several other local events.

MacDougall has held many league offices, including president of the Thursday Night Mixed League and secretary-treasurer of the Monday Night Mixed League.

Even with all these credentials, MacDougall said the hall of fame selection took her by surprise.

“I’m happy, overjoyed,” she said. “It’s something you kind of dream about but you don’t think will ever happen.

“The other thing that makes it special for me is my husband is in the men’s hall of fame. Now I can needle him back as much as he needles me.”

OSWEGO INDUCTEES

Mary Jane Sereno

Many in the area know the name of the late Nick Sereno, a hall of fame bowler who, along with Bob Hoefer, owned Lighthouse Lanes in Oswego.

But Nick’s wife, Mary Jane Sereno, carved out her own hall of fame bowling career. She credited Nick for starting her long association with the sport.

“I was dating Nick, and almost every Friday night of our five years of dating was spent at the Pinarama because he was in the Classic League out there. That’s just what you did.”

She said she was about 20 years old when she began bowling with Nick in the Friendship League, a mixed couples league.

Sereno has been in several leagues, including the Monday Night League for about 30 years. She bowled “second shift” at Pinarama in a women’s league, and was part of the Elks Couples League for a long time.

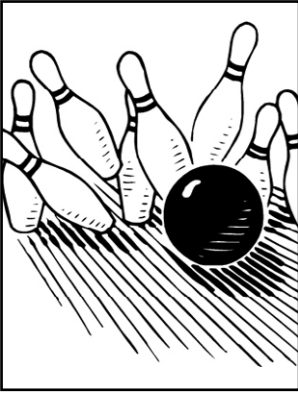
Sereno’s highest triple is a 556, and her best single game is a 240. She said her highest average has been about a 160.

Her tournament participation was confined to some city tourneys and a few events at the Recreation Club in Fulton.

She said she was honored to be chosen for induction into the hall of fame.

“It’s something I never expected. I don’t have any 600s or anything close to a 300,” Sereno said. “I feel like they’re honoring me more because of my longevity in the sport.

The only time I didn’t bowl in the



Crystal MacDougall
Fulton Inductee



Brenda Rice
Fulton Inductee



Abigail Chamberlain
Youth Honoree



Mary Jane Sereno
Oswego Inductee



Kathy Lacey
Oswego Inductee



Jeanne Baker
Oswego Inductee



Lily Mathews
Youth Honoree

last 35 years or so was when Pinarama closed for a few years.”

She said she’s happy to join her husband as a hall of famer.

“I’m very proud. Nick was in both halls of fame, Fulton and Oswego,” she said. “I’m pretty sure wherever he is up there he’s probably going ‘Oh my God.’ This is totally unexpected.”

Kathy Lacey

A native of Camillus, Lacey recalled her first taste of bowling.

“My parents took me to the Marcellus bowling alley when I was 10. I was horrible, but it was fun,” she said.

She began her league career in her early 20s in Eastwood, and served as a league secretary.

When she got married and moved to this area, Lacey started bowling at Pinarama Bowl and later at Lighthouse Lanes.

She mentioned that she bowled in a lot of leagues, some with another of this year’s inductees, Mary Jane Sereno.

“I took a lot of pointers from Nick Sereno, Al Hare, and Dave Jermyn. They taught me how to bowl,” Lacey said.

They obviously taught her well. Lacey’s achievements include a high triple of 672 and a top game of 278. Both of those occurred on the same night while she was bowling against another hall of famer, Courtney Radick.

“The strikes just kept happening. I am not a strike bowler. I’m a spare bowler. So it was like, what is happening?” she said of that night. “I couldn’t believe it.”

As if bowling isn’t challenging enough, for the past several years Lacey has contended with an additional challenge, a neurological disorder called dystonia.

“I have a rare form of it. What happens is certain triggers will make my eyes close,” she said. “By the time I get to the line, my eyes are closed. It’s all muscle memory. I don’t even see where the ball is going. Once in a while it will go right in the gutter. It’s very hard to maintain any kind

of a decent average with that, but the people have been great.”

Lacey said she was stunned about the news of her hall of fame selection.

“I had no clue that I had been nominated. I’m just extremely surprised. I was happily amazed,” she said.

Jeanne Baker

Growing up in the Pulaski area, Jeanne Baker started open bowling at a center there.

In the 1970s, she joined an adult league in Oswego with some friends, and she has loved her time at the lanes ever since.

“When I really started bowling was when I moved to Oswego in 1976. I used to go to Pinarama,” she said.

Although she bowled in just one league a week, she also regularly went in for practice.

Over the years Baker has bowled in several women’s and mixed leagues. She said her highest single game score was a 289, with her highest average a 168. She has several series in excess of 600 to her credit.

Baker entered several tournaments, including the 500 Club and 600 Club events at Lakeview Lanes in Fulton.

She is the vice president of her summer league, and said she is thrilled that the sport is back after being halted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

“I enjoy the sport of bowling and it’s a nice socialization time. It definitely gets us out once a week in the winter time,” Baker said. “The ladies are nice. It’s a fun game, it’s great exercise, and you get socialization.”

Always an active bowler, Baker has been sidelined recently, but she plans to come back.

“I was (active) until a couple of months ago. I’m going through some health issues, but I plan to get right back into bowling as soon as I can,” she said.

Regarding her selection for hall of fame induction, Baker said, “I was stunned. It was so surprising. I never thought that I’d get there, so it was a big surprise.”

YOUTH HONOREES

Abigail Chamberlain

Chamberlain contributed to the success of the Oswego Buccaneers’ varsity bowling team in recent years.

“I joined the team because one of my friends was joining, and I just thought it was fun. I played two other sports in the fall and the spring and I didn’t have a winter sport, so I just decided to bowl. It turned out to be a lot more than just something to do,” Chamberlain said.

The daughter of Christina and Jeff Chamberlain, Abigail helped the Bucs qualify for the sectionals as a senior. She has rolled a high game of 238 and a high triple of 534. She averaged about 140 for the season.

She thanked her parents, along with Coach Kristen Maxon and Bob Hoefer, for their help with her bowling game.

Regarding the Youth Bowler of the Year recognition, Chamberlain said, “I was very surprised and very honored to be recognized.”

Lily Mathews

Lily got a late start with bowling, but caught on quickly.

“I started bowling my sophomore year of high school with a group of friends,” she said. “We tried bowling and we all loved it.”

A senior at Oswego High School, she just completed her third season on the varsity bowling team.

“It was a really cool experience. I’ve learned a lot from bowling. My coach (Kristen Maxon) has been a good mentor for me. She’s someone I look up to. I’ve made a lot of friends through bowling.”

She was also a key contributor to the team. On the Bucs’ Senior Night, she bowled her high game of 217. She averages about 150, and owns a high series of 490. She also works at Lighthouse Lanes.

The daughter of Kelly and Jason Mathews, Lily said she was surprised to hear of her Youth Bowler of the Year honor.

“They said it’s for the impact I’ve made on the bowling community. It’s such an honor for people to recognize that,” she said.

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