

RiverCity

TV Listings
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Dr. Robert Beilby ■ Class Of 1944

Dave Bitterman ■ Class Of 1977

Jenni Larson Dietrich ■ Class Of 1995

Lance Wipf ■ Class Of 1993

4 Bound For Shrine

Beilby, Bitterman, Larson Dietrich And Wipf Set For YHS Athletic Hall

■ The top receiver in Buck history, the top shot putter in Buck history, one of Yankton's first volleyball players and a longtime contributor make up the 2010 induction class for the Yankton High School Athletic Hall of Fame.

Dr. Robert "Bob" Beilby, Dave Bitterman, Jenni Larson and Lance Wipf will be inducted into the hall during the

STORY BY: James D. Cimburek
PHOTOS COURTESY: Photography By Jerry

Yankton High School All-Sports Recognition, scheduled for May 11 at the YHS Main Theatre. The event begins at 6:30 p.m., with a social for the Hall of Fame inductees and their families beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the YHS Commons. An "all you can eat" pizza social for students and families will follow the Recognition.

Here is a look at the four individuals being honored.

BOB BEILBY

Bob Beilby was not one of the great athletes YHS has produced, but the 1944 Yankton graduate has left a lasting legacy on Bucks and Gazelles athletics through his support of the programs.

Born in Yankton in 1926, Beilby attended Central, Lincoln and Garfield schools before moving up to YHS. His love affair with Yankton athletics, though, began before he strolled the halls of YHS.

"I started going to basketball games in sixth grade," Beilby said. "In those days, there were very few parents at the games, but probably three-fourths of the school. We used to have pep rallies before each game, and we'd whitewash the sidewalks the night before with messages like, 'Beat Madison.'"

At YHS, Beilby joined the basketball team, where he was on the "first 10" for all four years.

"I didn't get to play much, but I bonded with those kids over the years," he said. "In those days, gas was rationed and you had to drive 35 miles an hour. We'd drive in two cars, and we'd get home at two, three in the morning."

"It was all the more time to get to know your buddies and your coaches."

Excused from serving in World War II due to health reasons, Beilby continued his academic career, first at the South Dakota

School of Mines, then at Yankton College before doing his graduate work at Northwestern University of Chicago.

After graduating from Northwestern in 1951, he returned to Yankton to start his dental practice and marry Nancy Seeley. The couple had five children: Chris, Meg, Jon, Jayne and Matt.

The third child, Jon, wrestled at YHS for four years. "That was the extent of my family's participation in athletics," Beilby noted. "There were no athletics for girls in those days. My oldest daughter (Meg) was a cheerleader and was on the drill team. That's about all there was available to the girls."

While the Beilby's children were not big athletes, the couple was still supportive of the Yankton teams. "When the kids were in high school, Nancy and I joined 10 or 15 other couples to go to the state tournament," he said. "We'd spend three days, usually in Sioux Falls, with the other parents. We looked forward to being there with all those parents."

Beilby also enjoyed taking in Buck football games. "Our house was a block and a half from Crane (now called Crane-Youngworth), so I could walk across the street," he said. "I used to sit on the west side, two or three rows from the top. Back then, it was to see; now, it's to get some exercise."

Beilby was also active in the schools. Several years ago, he became the director of a youth mentoring program, Kids Hope USA. It was there, while at Lincoln Elementary, that he began to hear about another great Yankton sports team, cross country.

"I didn't know too much about cross country until 10-12 years ago," he said. "One day at Lincoln, I heard about these four young girls breaking a state record."

Beilby went to his first cross country meet in 1998 and was hooked.

"It was the first athletic event I'd been to where I never heard a 'boo,'" he said. "There were always shouts of encouragement, which was important to me."

Beilby retired from his dental practice after 47 years, and has spent much of his time since following Yankton teams, especially the cross country team. He made the trip to Oregon for the inaugural Nike Team Nationals meet, which included Yankton.

"I don't think people realized how good those teams were," he noted.

Beilby was also instrumental in helping raise funds for Williams Field, the track and field facility YHS and Mount Marty College opened in 2008.

"He is always a positive supporter and contributor, never critical of coaches, programs or athletes," said Yankton activities director Bob Winter. "Dr. Beilby is exactly the type of sup-

porter that we need in athletics. His attendance at events, knowing our young athletes, especially in track and cross country, and talking to them on a personal level is extremely beneficial to young athletes."

DAVE BITTERMAN

Look through the Yankton High School football record books, and you'll see a slew of records from the 1975 and 1976 seasons, including all of the receiving records and nearly all of the passing records. One big reason for this is Dave Bitterman.

For two seasons, Bitterman was the primary receiver for an offense that still holds school records for passing yards (1,314), rushing yards (3,061) and first downs (170), as well as part of a school-record 20-game Eastern South Dakota Conference win streak.

Bitterman had 12 catches as a junior, but set a school record with a 32.4 yard per catch average.

"My junior year, I had 12 catches, but I think five or six of them were for touchdowns, a lot of long touchdowns," he said. "I think from what I did my junior year, they knew they had somebody they could throw to my senior year."

That year started with a bang — Bitterman returned the opening kickoff of the season for a touchdown — and kept going strong. As a senior, Bitterman set YHS career standards for catches (40), yards in a game (187) and yards in a season (687). His career total of 1,076 yards stands more than 300 yards ahead of the next Buck on the list, and his senior season total would rank fourth in the Bucks' career charts.

His efforts earned him all-state recognition as a kick returner.

"He played for Max Hawk, and that's what's amazing because Max wasn't known for throwing. But Max was known

for doing what worked," said former coach Jim Miner, who was an assistant under Hawk in the mid-1970s. "He had caught a lot of balls as a junior, because we had all-state quarterbacks both years, and they were all-state quarterbacks primarily because of the quality of receivers they had."

Bitterman may not have been the fastest athlete on the team, but he found ways to create space, according to Miner.

"Bitterman had just an uncanny ability to get open. He had something you can't teach kids," he said. "It looked like he was making moves before he made his moves. You just couldn't read where he was going, and he was always open off the break for a couple of steps. It was something he could do that other receivers don't do naturally."

The receiver was a part of the most prolific offense in Buck history that season. Paul Kanago still holds quarterback

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Holiday Specials

Cinco De Mayo

Zesty Hot Seats - May 5th

We'll draw one winner every ½ hour from 12:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. to spin the wheel for a chance to win a cash prize ranging from \$25 to \$100. Play any slot machine or table game to participate.

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MEGACUBE

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HOURS OF OPERATION:

12:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
2:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m.	10:00 p.m.

DON'T MISS OUR MAY ENTERTAINMENT

Evening entertainment show times are:	Fri. & Sat. April 30-May 1	Outback Band.....COUNTRY
Friday and Saturday	Fri. & Sat. May 7-8	Burgundy and Gary.....VARIETY
8:00 - 9:00 p.m., 9:30 - 10:30 p.m.	Fri. & Sat. May 14-15	The Bubblebee's.....VARIETY
11:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.	Fri. & Sat. May 21-22	Vince Two Eagles.....VARIETY
	Fri. & Sat. May 28-29	Unified Soul.....VARIETY

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