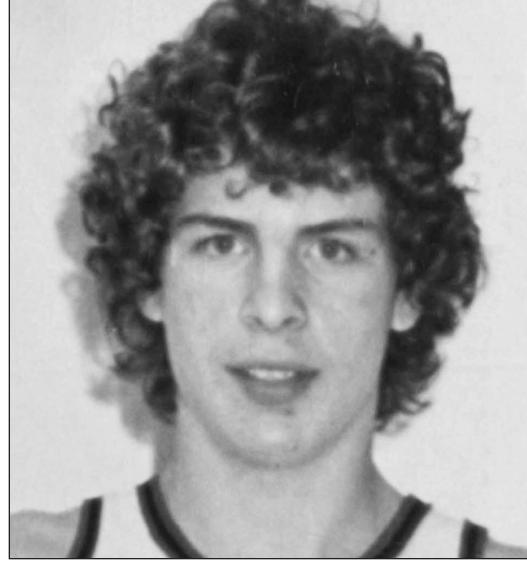




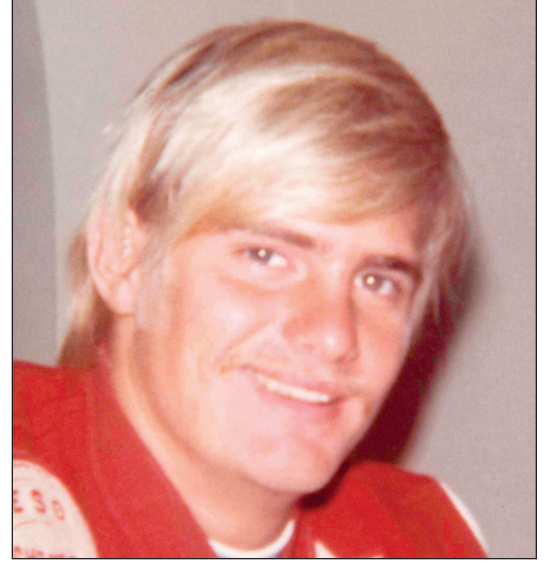
Nancy Burgess



Molly (Smith) Evans



Randy Gross



Bob Lynch

PHOTOS: PHOTOGRAPHY BY JERRY

Four To Enter YHS Hall

Burgess, Evans, Gross And Lynch To Be Inducted Into Athletic Shrine

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Two second-generation Hall of Famers, a star athlete turned longtime Yankton coach and a longtime Yankton High School contributor make up the four members of Yankton High School's Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2012.

Nancy Burgess, Molly (Smith) Evans, Randy Gross and Bob Lynch will be inducted during the YHS All-Sports Recognition on Thursday, May 10, at the YHS Theater. A reception for the Hall of Fame inductees and their families will take place at 5:30 p.m. in the YHS Commons, with the All-Sports Recognition beginning at 6:30 p.m. The inductions are first on the program at the event.

Here is a look at the four inductees:

NANCY BURGESS

A 50-year nurse whose volunteer resumé alone is longer than most people's lifetime achievements, Nancy Burgess turned personal tragedy into support for Yankton athletics, in particular the golf teams.

Burgess was already active in golf and in the community when son Steve passed away from Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome (SADS) as a sophomore at YHS. Instead of pulling away, she and her family connected further with the school, starting a scholarship for a YHS sophomore, a cash award that would help those students further their education at the collegiate level. The last of the 50 students selected for those scholarships will graduate from YHS this year.

More than 20 years later, SADS also claimed son Chris, who was at the University of South Dakota at the time. The family started another scholarship, this time presented to a senior. Two honorees have already been selected for this year, and will be honored during the All-Sports Recognition.

Unlike many of the scholarships presented during the YHS athletic honors program — where the namesake of the award or their family is not present — Burgess has made it a point to not only be on stage when the award is presented, but to also make sure they get a hug from her.

Many of the scholarship honorees have returned the favor, keeping in touch with Burgess over the years.

"I love those kids," she said of the scholarship winners. "I still have some of the boys that won the award that still write."

Burgess has also been instrumental in helping out the YHS golf programs. She was instrumental in starting the DSCB Celebration Scramble, a memorial golf tournament in honor of the late Donna Sundleaf, Steve and Chris Burgess, as well as Bob Burgess, Nancy's late husband. Proceeds from the tournament help the golf team with a number of expenses.

"We started the tournament because both boys were in golf," she said. "We decided to set up the golf teams, because they weren't getting funds like some of the other sports."

Those moneys have helped the Bucks' and Gazelles' golf teams with team polos, rain gear, range ball fees, even extra nights in a hotel and team meals when the team is headed to state.

"She loves the game and has always wanted to support the golf team," said Yankton High School golf coach Brett Sime. "She wants to do as much as she can for the kids at YHS."

Besides being a financial supporter of YHS and its student-athletes, Burgess has been a supporter in the stands as well.

"She's probably attended more athletic events in the last 40 years than anybody I know," said former YHS Activities Director Bob Winter. "Many young people have benefited from her generosity."

MOLLY (SMITH) EVANS

An impact performer in three sports, Evans was an integral part of Gazelles' success in gymnastics, basketball and track in the early 1990s.

The daughter of YHS Hall of Famer Roger Smith and granddaughter of YHS Hall of Famer Morgan T. Smith, Evans broke on to the Yankton varsity scene as a seventh grade gymnast. She went on to be a six-year varsity competitor, earning sixth in the vault as a senior.

"Molly was a super-talented athlete. She was very

dedicated," former Gazelles gymnastics coach and current University of South Dakota cross country coach Dan Fitzsimmons said. "She instantly made the team better when she walked in the gym."

Evans competed for the Gazelles prior to the new Yankton High School-Summit Activities Center facility, meaning that gymnasts practice meant playing "musical buildings."

"I remember all the different places that we had to practice," she said. "We practiced at the state hospital. We practiced in the cafeteria on wrestling mats. We practiced in city hall, with the boys practicing on one side and us practicing on the other. At the 4-H grounds, we had to pull everything out before practice and take everything down after each day."

Even without a dedicated gymnastics room or the spring floor currently used by the team, Evans was performing at a high level, Fitzsimmons noted.

"On a layout, she would get so high in the air that I could not touch her," he said. "Even with a spring floor, there were very few gymnasts that could tumble as high as she could off a wrestling mat."

Having Evans and Darci Isburg, two of the top athletes in the school at the time, on the gymnastics team also helped with the squad's image.

"When you have the most talented athlete in the school coming out for the gymnastics team, it helps your program," Fitzsimmons said.

Two years after cracking the gymnastics varsity lineup, Evans made varsity in track and field. A multiple state placewinner in both the 100- and 300-meter hurdles, she was also a leg on the 1600 and 3200 relays.

"I ran the hurdles, then turned around and ran the four-by-eight. Not a lot of people did that," Evans said. "I remember rushing around a lot."

Evans' energy was part of what made her valuable across the board, noted Fitzsimmons, who was also an assistant track and field coach in the 1990s.

"Molly had an engine that never quit," he said. "That's probably why we used her in everything."

Jim Miner, Yankton's head track coach during Evans' career, remembered her competitive spirit. "She was one of those people who didn't like to lose. She was a feisty young lady," he said. "She would do anything to help the team win."

After coming back from a knee injury the summer before her junior year, Evans made the varsity lineup in basketball as well, splitting time with Jenny Mehrman at point guard.

"Whether it was practice or games, Molly was always a competitive kid," Yankton girls' basketball coach Doug Pesicka said. "What she lacked in physical size she made up for in heart and determination."

Evans was a big part of the 1993 team that finished third in the state, beating WNBA all-star Becky Hammon and the Rapid City Stevens Raiders in the third place game.

"I had some great teammates, like Jenni Larson, Carissa Becker and Dixie Rupiper," Evans said. "We had great team chemistry and leadership on the team."

The 1993 tournament run was early in Pesicka's run as the Gazelles' head coach, and he gives credit to that squad for helping set the stage for later success, including the 1996 state championship team.

"Molly's first year on varsity was the first year I took over for Bob (longtime YHS basketball coach Bob Winter)," Pesicka said. "Molly was a big part of helping get the program going in the right direction with me as its head coach."

After graduating from YHS in 1994, Evans went on to the University of Kansas, where she competed in track and field. A multi-event competitor, Evans saw her competitive career cut short by a hip injury.

But while one door closed, the door to a career in sports administration opened.

"The NCAA headquarters was located right in Kansas City, so when I went to the University of Kansas, that was always in the back of my mind from very early on," Evans said. "Right after I graduated, I got my foot in the door doing an internship in the men's basketball championship department."

The NCAA's move from Kansas City to Indianapolis opened up a "dream job" for Evans.

"There were a lot of people who were like, 'We're not moving,'" she said. "I was single and right out of college, and I was willing to do whatever it took, so I ended up getting a full-time position on the Division I men's basketball championship staff."

"It was my dream job, but I think it was also my dad's because he got to have Final Four tickets."

Evans moved on to the American Junior Golf Association, helping to conduct golf tournaments for top junior golfers. After a year in that position, she decided to try her hand at something outside athletics, working as a sales representative for Glaxo-SmithKline Pharmaceuticals.

"For whatever reason, I wanted to try something else," she said. "Athletics helped me be successful in

that, because sales is very competitive and I came from a competitive background."

While Evans was successful at sales, ranking among the top 5 percent of salespeople for GSK, she decided quickly that it was not for her.

"It wasn't a complete loss. I met my husband while I was there," she said. She married Christian Evans nine years ago.

After leaving sales she returned to college, receiving her masters in higher education with an emphasis on student development administration from Seattle University. She put those skills and her life experiences to work at the University of Washington, serving as life skills assistant director and recruiting chair in the athletic department, a position she called her "second dream job."

"I love to advise, council and guide student-athletes," she said. "When I think back, that was exactly where I wanted to be, helping student-athletes. It was a great fit for me."

Evans left Washington in 2006 and has been "CEO of mi casa" since. The couple has three daughters: Zoe (6), Macy (4) and Emme (8 months).

"It's a completely different ball game, but there is somewhat of a parallel to my life as an athlete," she said. "I feel like it all helped me carve out what

I wanted to do and what I want to be like as a mother."

All of her experiences have also helped her appreciate her time in Yankton.

"As a teen, of course, you don't appreciate what you have, but as an adult I can see it clearly," she said. "I've traveled a lot of places, and Yankton is a unique and special little town. It has great people, kind people, people who are genuinely interested in you as a person. That's hard to find."

RANDY GROSS

For nearly four decades, Gross has served as the face of Yankton boys' basketball.

On the court, he was a star on Yankton's most recent state championship team, earning all-state honors in 1978. For the last 27 years, he has mentored Buck basketball from the sidelines, first as a sophomore and JV coach, then spending the last decade as a varsity coach.

"Randy was one of the most gifted athletes we've ever had," said Winter, who was a coach and activi-

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Welcome to the World

The following babies were born at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in April 2012:

ADELYN	ETHAN	LEEYANA	PARKER
ANDREW	EVELYN	LEO	ROBERT
ANEKEN	FRANKLIN	LIAM	RYLEE
ARIANA	JACEON	LIAM	SHANISE
BENTLY	JACOB	LOVE'LY	SISALEE
BRITTYN	JADYX	MADILYN	STELLA
COLIN	JAMES	MASON	TENLEY
COLTON	KAMRYN	MEMPHIS	TESSA
CONNER	KARSEN	MICHAELA	THOMAS
DACIEN	KAYSON	MILEY	UNIQUE
DE'ANDRE	K'DRIAN	OAKLEY	VAYDYN
ELLA ANN	LANA	PALMER	

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