



STEVEN DRETT, contributing photographer

Eight new members of the A-K Sports Hall of Fame were inducted at the 35th annual banquet Saturday at the Clarion Hotel, New Kensington. Front row (from left): former Ken High and Arizona State football player Nolan Jones, former Valley High School and professional golfer Nancy Rubin-Sharff, martial arts award-winning competitor Nancy Caliguri of Lower Burrell and former Vandergrift coach and WPIAL baseball committee member Bill Miller. Back row: former Ken High and Arizona State baseball player John Regoli, former Leechburg and Allegheny College multi-sport standout Ron Lamendola, former Verona and Riverview basketball coach Jack Schmitt and former Springdale soccer and baseball standout Skip Yakopec.

## Hall: Women make history

From B1

arts for me," Nancy said, getting one of the biggest laughs of the night from the more than 400 spectators.

After earning a number of awards such as the first female inductee into the Tri-State Pioneer Hall of Fame, Nancy Caliguri turned her attention to teaching and "customizing self-defense classes to all walks of life."

The A-K Hall also welcomed two women simultaneously for the first time. Rubin-Sharff, the women's golf coach at Stetson University in Deland, Fla., recalled her days as a student manager for the Valley High School boys golf team before the school instituted a girls program.

"I don't know what team managers usually do, but I played a lot of golf," Rubin-Sharff said. The New Kensington native also credited Vic Cholico of Hill Crest Country Club, who was on hand to help honor his former

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student, Rubin-Sharff also honored Vic's late son, David Cholico, for his efforts as an instructor.

Miller, who served 17 years as the chairman of the WPIAL Baseball Steering Committee following a stint as Vandergrift High School baseball coach rhetorically asked, "How lucky can one guy be?" referring to great athletes he came in contact with during his tenure and Vandergrift and Kiski Area.

Jones talked about legendary Ken High football coach Don Fletcher's credo of "it's not what you do in the four years you're in college, it's the 40 years after college."

Jones has been traveling and writing for 38 years. His first

book, "Living in My American Skin," has been published, and Jones was there to autograph copies.

Jones also gave credit to Kush for his stance against Jim Crow segregation in the late 1960s and early '80s when the Sun Devils would travel to Texas and other places in the South. Laws forbade black players from staying in the same hotels with their white teammates, but Kush would have none of it.

Regoli, still rated as one of the top Arizona State baseball players of all time, said how proud he was to be from New Kensington and frequently showed people the football lineup cards where Jones and Joe Drake would be listed as coming from his hometown.

After coaching for 35 years, Jack Schmitt had plenty of ex-players and assistant coaches on hand. Schmitt often reminded his students to "never forget your roots."

The advice showed as many of his ex-players returned later to

help out the basketball program.

Lamendola, all-conference in football and basketball during the 1978-79 academic year, thanked all the people who instilled in him "confidence, courage, humility and desire."

The former Allegheny College standout choked back the tears when expressing memories of his late father and his effect on his athletic career.

Yakopec joined his late father, Lou, in the Hall of Fame.

"My father was my idol," Yakopec said. "I'm so proud and delighted to join him."

Yakopec, the WPIAL's leading career scorer in his playing era, also recognized his mother, Ellen, and wondered how she cleaned his soccer uniforms, usually caked with mud after playing in places like Bending, the coal mining town in Upper St. Clair.

The most amazing item of the banquet might have been the announcement that no members died during the past year.