

Wall of Fame Induction Ceremony

On Saturday, October 1, 2011, the fourth Pine Valley Central School District Wall of Fame Induction Ceremony was held at the South Dayton Activities Hall at 6:00 pm. This year's inductees were Helen (Sweeney) Merrill, Norman Merrill and Karen (Warner) Strickland. The purpose of this program is to honor graduates from Pine Valley Central School, living or deceased, who have distinguished themselves in a specific field of endeavor, in civic affairs, in humanitarian affairs, or in activities which merit special recognition.

Helen (Sweeney) Merrill, Class of 1955: Since moving to Jamestown in 1963, Helen has been involved in the performing arts. She has volunteered with the Lucille Ball Little Theatre in every aspect for the past 47 years both behind the scenes and on stage including: artistic director for numerous musicals, actress, costumes, make-up, props, stage manager, set artist, set dressing, back stage dresser and lights. Co-founder and director of the Junior Guilders for 27 years, she is proud of the many outstanding accomplishments of this group including performances at: The White House, The Kennedy Center, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade (back up chorus for Shari Lewis), Disney World Resort (four occasions) and Palace of Versailles in Paris, France. She has been active in many church and community functions as well and has received many awards including: City of Jamestown Woman of the Year 1993 and Sertoma Outstanding Woman Leader 2009.

Norman Merrill, Class of 1954: Norm spent 55 years in the construction industry in the Jamestown area working for LH Ludwig Construction Company and then organized and was the head of the construction department at WCA Hospital, responsible for much of the renovation of Jones Hill and WCA Hospital. He has worked alongside his wife Helen at the Lucille Ball Theatre serving on the house committee and maintaining, repairing, building and helping with set construction. Since his retirement in 1998, he has volunteered at the Theatre as set designer and builder responsible for 75 different sets. He has also assisted Helen with the Junior Guiders since its beginning by building sets, setting sound for all travel and stage shows and assisting with chaperone responsibilities. Additionally he has served on many church and community boards including the YMCA Building Committee, Town of Ellicott's Economic Development Committee, and Jamestown Rotary. He is an active member of the Jamestown Harmony Express Barbershop Chorus.

Karen (Warner) Strickland, Class of 1959: Karen has been a public servant for the Village of South Dayton serving as a village trustee (1980-1989 and 2005-2007) and as mayor for 18 years (1989-2002 and 2007- currently serving). In her role as mayor, she has the distinction of being the first woman mayor and the longest running mayor for the village. While she is quick to give credit to others, Karen has worked tirelessly for the village of South Dayton. Some of her accomplishments over these past 30+ years include: petitioning the NYS DOT to get the traffic light at Balcom Corners, helped to get the old Pine Valley School converted into Pine Valley Apartments, helped start and sponsor South Dayton's first free library, helped get a grant for South Dayton's water and sewer systems, helped the village to purchase the train depot to be used as a museum, helped get a grant for homeowners and small businesses to repair and update homes and buildings. She has been recognized with numerous achievement awards from Southern Tier West Development and Cattaraugus County. Many know Karen from her work at the Gowanda Pharmacy where she has been employed for 33 years including 15 years as manager.

These three join past inductees: Randy Allnatt, Bill Bergey, Bruce Bergey, Robert Brown, Tim Brown, Cindy Burkhardt, Rhodella (Ennis) Brown, Albert "Ab" Butcher, Ronald Chase, Betty (Hodges) Earle, Brenda (Young) Hendricks, Chuck Howard, Janet (Farley) Kirkton, Jeanne (Kendall) Matteson, Brenton Mosher, Herbert Nobles, Tim Nobles, Harold "Bus" Ray, Sylvia (Bergey) Reynolds, Genevieve (Earle Moffit) Rowland, James Sauberan, Albert "Willie" Sheldon, Craig Skurcenski and Larry Waite.

Mike Bailey, former Booster Club President, served as emcee. A buffet-style dinner prepared by Zollinger's Hotel was held in their honor. Plaques were presented to each recipient commemorating their induction.

Check out the Wall of Fame page on the Pine Valley website for additional pictures from the evening's induction. (www.pval.org) When you are in the Jr./Sr. High School, please be sure to view the Wall of Fame located to the left of the new gym entrance (outside wall of the band room). There you will see plaques displayed for each recipient that include their name, date of graduation and year of induction along with their picture.