



Magic Hall Of Fame Induction Banquet Apr. 13

The thirteenth annual Meramec Magic Hall Of Fame Induction banquet will unfold on Monday, April 13 at 6:30 at the Holiday Inn Southwest at Watson and S. Lindbergh. The 2009 inductees are longtime athletic department secretary Karen Brandt, former basketball star Marvin Moorehead, and former two-time wrestling All-American Bob Georger.

Contact Sharon Bosslet for ticket information at 314-984-7398. Below is an in-depth look at this year's inductees.

'Super Secretary' Brandt Heads To Hall, Retirement

For someone who has shied away from the spotlight her entire life, **Karen Brandt** will be thrust front and center into the bright lights for a two week period between Mar. 31 and Apr 13.

That's when the longtime and well-respected STLCC-Meramec secretary will retire as well as be inducted into the Magic Hall Of Fame. Brandt becomes just the second non-athlete/coach among its 39 honorees. Ironically, the man who hired her, former athletic director Robert Murrey, is the other.

"It's a very humbling experience," said Brandt. "I was shocked, I teared up. When I went home that night I thought 'Did I really hear him right?' 'Someone must have thought that I did something good here, I guess.'"

There would be little doubt among the thousands of athletes who have passed through Meramec's doors over Brandt's 32 years that the super secretary has done many good things. Head men's basketball coach Randy Albrecht, who has been at Meramec during Brandt's entire tenure, would agree.

"Karen proved immediately she's highly professional," said Albrecht. "She's very organized, she likes detail, she wants to do things in advance which made an immediate conflict with me who's not detail oriented and does not plan a great deal in the future. She was always pushing 'Let's sit down and do this! Let's get a plan.' I would usually say 'I don't have time now, how about next week?'"

Brandt's planning and organization skills were honed at an early age. She started answering the phones for her father's heating and cooling business at age 12. Following four years at Southwest High School and raising children Julie and Steve along with husband Carl, she started to work at Meramec in a part-time role in October, 1977 in the counseling department.

Two years later Brandt would shift her skills to the athletic department, an irony for someone who is the first to admit she knew virtually nothing about sports at the time.

“Mr. Murrey and I had lots of laughs over that,” said Brandt. “He’s quite the person for hiring me but he must have seen something good in me. It’s been a really good ride. It’s going to be hard because this is my work family. I have my family, my church family, and my work family - all three are an integral part of my life.”

Brandt’s stint has spanned four athletic directors, as well as six U.S. presidents. Among her most fond memories are those of athletes’ successes.

“When the women’s soccer team won (nationals) two years in a row, it was so exciting,” said Brandt. “Some of us from the office went to the airport to meet the team when they came back. They’re a part of you, too. You’re proud of them.”

Proud would describe how Bob Bottger reflects on his years as Physical Education chairman and Manager of Athletics with Brandt. Bottger says her cheerful demeanor and organized habits quickly stood out to him when he first met Brandt in 1990.

“People here are very conscientious,” said Bottger. “What I think was lacking here in the office overall was organization. It’s also her energy and her enthusiasm. Every morning it’s a ‘Good morning, how are you Bob?’ ‘How was your weekend?’ So I’ll miss that. That’s my morning greeter every day.”

Brandt’s sunny disposition also spread throughout the office as no frowns were allowed in her presence.

“When (facilities manager) Joe Swiderski came in I found out that Karen had a sense of humor,” said Albrecht. “She could find ways to get Joe to laugh once in awhile and you really have to be funny to do that.”

Among the major projects she helped organize and run were the Scholarship Walk, the Hall Of Fame Induction Banquet, and program books for all sports including the massive, 54 page Holiday Basketball Tournament guide. Brandt’s philosophy is one of help.

“My perspective is I try to do the very best to represent Meramec,” said Brandt. “I think the student is our focus here. I also try to help other people get their jobs done, I enjoy that, it’s like a fulfillment. If I can help somebody, that’s good. You go home and you sleep good at night.”

Brandt should sleep very well following her induction into the Magic Hall of Fame Apr. 13. She was voted for induction in her first year on the ballot, an honor that caught her by surprise when Bottger called her in to break the news last December.

“It’s going to make my day to tell you that you’ve been voted into the Meramec Hall of Fame,” recalled Brandt of Bottger’s words. “I go, ‘What? You’re kidding me! I couldn’t be nominated, I’m not a coach,’ and he said ‘But there’s contributors,” said Brandt. “But I didn’t give any money!’ was her retort, ‘I was shocked, and I told him I didn’t think I should accept it and he said ‘Too bad, you’re going to anyway.’ Then I accused him of counting the votes wrong.”

For perhaps the first time, Brandt has no advance planning for retirement time, other than to enjoy her four grandchildren. As she has her entire life, Brandt will place her future in her faith.

“God has a plan for my life,” she said. “I’m not sure right now what that step’s going to be.”

Moorehead Rides Jump Shot To Magic Hall Of Fame

He was a 5’10” guard, a year out of high school, who wasn’t even being recruited by coach Randy Albrecht one summer afternoon in 1988 when Albrecht made what would turn out to be a fateful trip to the Wohl

Community Center in North St. Louis. The STLCC-Meramec coach was there to watch and talk to another young player in a summer league game that day.

“I don’t think I even talked to the kid I went there to see,” said Albrecht. “They were playing against each other and Marvin was just eating this guy up, and I thought ‘Why am I recruiting that guy, I should be recruiting this guy! I did a 180!’”

That “180” would eventually become a 55 - 55 wins for Meramec during **Marvin Moorehead’s** two years on the squad - the most ever in a two year span for the program and its highest national finish ever, advancing to the national title game in 1989.

“He made shot after shot and that’s when I walked up to him and introduced myself,” said Albrecht. “He really had a grooved jump shot - the shot was the same every time. He had an uncanny ability to wind up on the baseline and he could shoot with people real close to him.”

That “grooved shot” was honed at an early age thanks to another St. Louis area basketball mentor many years prior to Meramec. Moorehead, as a 13 year old, was playing on sheer instincts with little or no coaching at that point, and was shooting an unorthodox two-handed jump shot. That is, until local hoops guru and sports broadcaster Frank Cusumano took him under his wing for training sessions over one summer.

“He saw my two handed shot and said, ‘no, no, no, you can’t shoot like that,’ recalled Moorehead. “He showed me how to put my forearm up and release the ball. Then I moved back to California with my mom and I was practicing what he taught me on the schoolyard pavement everyday - shoot, shoot, shoot. I later played in a game and just started jumping and shooting and it was there. When I came back to St. Louis people were amazed that I was shooting that way. He actually taught me how to shoot.”

Cusumano still recalls his work with the 13 year old Moorehead. The Emmy Award winning Channel 5 Sports broadcaster was a sophomore in college at the time, playing hoops for the University of Missouri - St. Louis and working with inner-city kids during the summer. Moorehead’s two handed jump shot needed immediate attention.

“It was almost like you were looking at video of guys playing in the 1950’s,” said Cusumano. “He had one hand on each side of the ball and it was Phyllis Diller ugly.”

But, the finished product left “Coach” Cusumano pleased. “He’s the reason why any of us get involved teaching or coaching - to see hard work and a great attitude be rewarded with a great finished product. There wasn’t a kid who was more obsessed with making his jumper look better than Marvin and the end result became perfection.”

That hard work would earn him a full slate of honors his sophomore year - first team All-Conference, All-Region, and All-American. The historic season, and two year career, has earned Marvin Moorehead a spot in the Meramec Magic Hall Of Fame as a 2009 inductee.

“It means a lot because of where I came from, how I got there, the opportunity that Albrecht presented to me,” said an emotional Moorehead. “It’s amazing that this accomplishment is being brought to my attention. Tears first came to my eyes when I got the phone call.”

Tears also came to frustrated opponents’ eyes when they would have to guard Moorehead, who averaged nearly 20 points a game his second season. The quick and agile guard would burn them time after time.

“They thought I was going to go all the way to the cup and I never did,” said Moorehead. “I always stopped and had a mid-range shot. I was taught that a mid-range shot was the best shot you could have. If you give me a little space, I’m able to get my shot off. I mainly kept players off balance with the quickness and the speed.”

In 1989 Moorehead led the Warriors to their first ever (and since) national championship game. The eighth seeded Meramec team was the Cinderella squad all the way, having knocked off the top seed in their opening round game. In the title tilt, they had to play Delta College, who, coincidentally, was hosting the tournament which gave them an enormous home floor boost.

“If we weren’t on their home floor, I guarantee you we would have won that game,” said Moorehead. “We had like five fans there, they had 500. They beat us 77-71.”

But, thanks to his hard work, Moorehead has become a winner in the game of life through the sport of basketball and junior college athletics some 20 years ago. He now lives in St. Charles with his wife and children, and works for Verizon.

“It helped me out considerably in my life, it made me a different person it kept me off the streets, it kept me concentrating on playing basketball as a vehicle to not get involved in other things,” said Moorehead. “The opportunity that Albrecht presented to me actually gave me a chance to be more successful than I ever thought I would be.”

Two-Time All-American Georger Makes Life Of Mat Career

Combining his two passions, wrestling and teaching, **Bob Georger** has spent virtually his entire life with the pair and has been successful by anyone’s count. Georger, the first two-time All-American wrestler in STLCC-Meramec history, will round out the trio of inductees entering the Magic Hall Of Fame.

“I can never remembering wanting to do anything other than teach school,” said Georger. “That was embedded in me at a young age and a lot of that has to do with going to school at Cleveland. I felt we had some excellent teachers there. But, Ron’s approach with people that he worked with - he was always there to listen, his input in my life to this day if there’s something I really need to know I’ll give him a call.”

Georger refers to his head coach at Meramec, Ron Mirikitani, with high esteem. Under Mirikitani, Georger finished fifth nationally as a freshman in 1973, and sixth in 1974, earning All-American accolades both seasons in the heavyweight division.

“There was rapport there that was really awesome,” said Georger of Mirikitani, still the head coach of the Magic who just completed his thirty ninth season. “He treated us really well. He expected us to behave like young gentlemen. He was just a super role model for us, for anybody to follow, and I don’t think he’s changed much since I met him.”

Georger has followed in his mentor’s footsteps, teaching and coaching wrestling at DeSoto High School for the last 32 years. The lessons he learned on the Meramec mat he still carries with him to this day at DeSoto.

“I probably emulate him more than anybody else that I’ve been instructed under as far as wrestling goes,” said Georger. “I really liked his approach. He was there and on the mat doing things with us. He spent a lot of off-season time running. I spent a lot of time running alongside of him, or quite a bit behind him actually.”

The conditioning obviously paid off. He racked up a two tear personal mark of 50-12-2 with the Meramec Warriors., while also winning a post season Central Zone championship. Then, he transferred to NCAA Division I Florida International College and continued his success, setting new school records there for most wins in one season (29), and in two years with having his arm raised in victory a total of 62 times. Georger feels the success was due to the practice room and superior conditioning.

“Practices were as tough as he wanted to make them,” said the former All-American. “Ron was always there showing us new things and trying to get us to improve on what we had. I thought he was, for me, the perfect coach, he was just the kind of person I needed. They were usually very hard and I can remember he

would have me dress to run and we would go run around the pool for 30 or 40 minutes after practice to try to add to my conditioning.”

Having a strong second wind would become critical his sophomore year at nationals when Georger was wrestling for sixth place, a spot that would mean All-American status. In 1974, there were no weight limits on the heavyweight division and Georger found himself facing a grappler from Idaho who weighed over 500 pounds.

“I spent a good bit of that time trying my darndest to not let him get me. I wound up winning the match by a point or two,” said Georger.

He also wound up during his prep career at Cleveland High School a state champion as a senior, and ironically coached a state heavyweight champ at DeSoto exactly 20 years later. And, even though Georger left his mark some 35 years ago at Meramec, he’s still remembered for his feat through another Mirikitani tradition - the display case of photos of Meramec All-Americans.

“I have kids in schools I competed against that I run into who are now coaching too and I hear, ‘I wrestled at Meramec, I saw your picture!’ I can’t say how many people have told me they saw my picture, that happens three or four times a year,” said Georger. “It says a lot about his tradition - he has touched thousands in his lifetime and has left nothing but good in them.”

Georger will always look back on his two historic seasons at Meramec with nothing but pleasant memories. “My two years at Meramec were awesome, they were truly great years.”

Softball Squad Brings Back Valuable Lessons From Arizona

Learning some valuable lessons from their recent Spring Break week in Arizona, the softball team has made much improvement, winning five of six games late in March.

“We’re getting better all the time,” said head coach **Linda McQueen**. “Arizona really taught us a lot about things we need to do. They’re really starting to develop from that and work together as a team. The pitching is starting to come on strong, and so is the defense and hitting, so we’re starting to put it all together.”

During a recent busy week since returning from the Cactus State, the Magic swept St. Charles and East Central Colleges, while splitting with Florissant Valley for a 5-1 week. The Meramec Invitational slated for the weekend of Mar. 28-29 was cancelled due to weather.

“They never say die,” said McQueen of the scrappy Magic. “We can be down but we’ll come back kind of like that St. Charles game when we got down. They know we can do it. The thing is we’ve got to stop giving up runs early in the game. But, they never say die, they keep battling.”

In that game against St. Charles, the Magic were trailing 4-2 into the bottom of the seventh. Without even making an out, Meramec pushed the winning run across the plate on a walk off base hit by **Linzi Bereitschaft** (Lindbergh.) Bereitschaft, the cleanup hitter, has been a bright spot this year.

“I’m just sure she’s going to break records,” said McQueen. “She’s also stabilizing at first base, she’s hitting over .500, she has at least 30 RBI’s and we’re only halfway through the season. She’s just been hitting really great, a real consistent hitter for us.”

Also helping to energize the team is leadoff hitter **Erin Napier** (Marquette), the squad’s shortstop. Napier brings extra zest to the game, having been out of the sport since graduating high school three years ago.

“She’s doing a really nice job,” said McQueen. “She’s almost hitting .400. She’s been a key as far as she hasn’t played for three years so her game’s really developing and she’s a good ballplayer, she does a nice job in that leadoff spot.”

Sophomore **Tabatha Bahre** (Lutheran South) hits second and plays third base, while **Sam Reynolds** (Northwest), a transfer from William Woods University, bats third and catches. “She does a real nice job behind the plate and calling a game, a real stabilizing force for our pitchers,” said McQueen.

Following the clean up hitting Bereitschaft, the two pitchers, **Jessica Eichholz** (Washington, MO) and **Jessica Tranter** (Australia) flip-flop between the five and seven batting spots. Tranter, a power hitter, can bash the ball. ‘She can also hit for power, she’s hit several home runs and gotten some big hits for us,” said McQueen.

Batting sixth is dual threat **Bridget Schade** (Herculaneum), a center fielder who, much like former Cardinal center fielder Jim Edmonds, can win games with her glove and arm, or her bat.

“She’s really got a great arm, she’s very quick She can get on with a bunt or she can hit the ball - she hit two home runs in one game when we were out in Arizona,” said McQueen.

In the eighth slot is sophomore second baseman **Kristen Kaltenbach** (Herculaneum), while Webster University transfer **Michelle McQueen** (Lutheran South) bats ninth.

“She’s doing a nice job coming back because she’s been out, last year she didn’t play,” said McQueen, “but she’s done a nice job of getting back into the game and has some key hits, and some nice catches out in the outfield.”

Rounding out the 12 player squad is outfielder **Allie Petry** (Westminster), pitcher **Tiffany Stock** (Pacific), and outfielder **Ora Spivey** (Hazelwood East) who also played basketball for the Magic.

Meramec heads into April with a pair of key opponents - Forest Park on Apr. 1 (Wed.) and Florissant Valley on Apr. 3 (Fri.) Coach McQueen feels the team, at 11-16 following a tough Arizona trip, can make it as far as they wish.

“Our goal is definitely to get to nationals this year,” said McQueen. “It’s up to them, if they put it all together and they work hard they can achieve whatever they put their mind to.”

Baseball Sweeps Forest Park; Improves Conference Mark To 4-0

The baseball squad is picking its spots well, sweeping cross town foe STLCC-Forest Park 12-9 and 9-8 on Mar. 31 to improve to 4-0 in the early going of the conference race.

A week earlier, the Magic disposed likewise of STLCC-Florissant Valley with a sweep of those conference games.

The double win over the Highlanders would not be easy. The Magic squandered an 8-0 lead in the first game, giving up nine runs in the fourth inning for a 9-8 deficit. Center fielder **Ryan Humphrey** (Blytheville, AR) answered in the fifth with a two RBI double that would prove to be the game-winner in the 12-9 final.

Scoring on Humphrey’s double were catcher **Monty Cooper** (Sullivan, MO) and shortstop **Jerry Roam** (Francis Howell North), who had both been hit by pitches.

Reliever **Benny Carmona** (Austin, TX) was stellar, tossing three and two thirds innings and only giving up one run on one hit.

In the nightcap, the Magic learned their lesson, grabbing the early lead and never trailing in the 9-8 win. **Dallas Tew** (Scott City, MO) earned the win in relief, throwing two innings. **Mike Gumm** (St. Charles) had the big bat for Meramec, going three-for-four with two RBI’s, while **Brett Nelson** (Owensville, MO) was two-for-four with one RBI.

David Freese Makes Strong Bid For Cardinal Roster Spot

Hoping to make a late impression a good one on St. Louis Cardinals manager **Tony LaRussa**, former Meramec third baseman **David Freese** (Lafayette) has come on strong in the waning days of spring training as he hopes to capture a roster spot and his first Major League action of his career.

Freese, who played for the Magic in the 2003 and 2004 seasons, got off to a slow start in spring training due to a heel injury suffered in a January car accident. However, he has been turning heads since entering the Grapefruit League line up.

Making a statement against Boston Red Sox star pitcher **Josh Beckett**, Freese homered off Beckett last Friday (Mar.27) and had a three hit game. A day later, against the Baltimore Orioles, Freese stayed hot, going three-for-four with a pair of doubles and RBI's.

Many observers consider him a good bet to stay on the Redbird roster to help spell injured third baseman Troy Glaus, who January surgery may now take longer to heal than originally thought.