

NEIGHBORS MICHIGAN

THE BLADE, TOLEDO, OHIO ■ FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2008

Runner who teaches at Bedford among 7 Hall of Fame inductees

By MARK REITER

BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — Running and Bedford Local Schools always have been a big part of Joe Caruso's life.

The aspects of education and athletics will come full circle with Mr. Caruso's induction into the Bedford High School Hall of

Fame.

A drafting and design teacher at the high school, Mr. Caruso, 55, began running competitively at age 13 after his family moved into the township from a Detroit suburb.

He got caught up in the excitement of the high school's successful cross country and track

teams, and became a disciple of Steve Danforth, a state champion miler and 1968 Great Lakes League individual cross county champion.

Mr. Danforth said he was hooked on running and remained close to Mr. Danforth as he pursued running at Bowling Green State University.

The friendship with Mr. Danforth produced a meeting with BGSU track and field athlete and Olympic champion Dave Wottle.

"It wasn't so hard to get motivated back then. Steve lived like a mile from where we lived," Mr. Caruso said. "I had never dreamed that I would come back here to teach. I had the desire,

but I never thought it would happen.

Mr. Caruso excelled in cross country and track at the high school. As a senior, he was third in the two-mile event in track and field at the state championships and was a top-five individual finisher in cross country

See FAME, Page 4 +

Fame

Continued from Page 1

state meet.

He continued his running career at Eastern Michigan University after graduating from high school in 1972. He taught emotionally impaired students at Adrian Public Schools before being hired at Bedford High School in 1991.

Through the 1970s and 1980s and into the 1990s, Mr. Caruso was among the region's elite long-distance runners, winning numerous events, including the 1980, 1981, and 1983 Blade 10,000-meter Run.

He estimates that he has completed 30 to 40 half marathons and as many as 18 marathons during his lengthy running career. Mr. Caruso, who lives in Holland in Lucas County, is still an active runner and runs 55 to 60 miles a week.

Also being inducted into the hall of fame are:

● Michelle (King) Andrews,

a 1983 graduate and the high school's first female to letter in volleyball, basketball, and softball. She was all-state in volleyball as a senior.

● Mary Linzie, a 1989 graduate who lettered in volleyball, basketball, and softball. She was named to the All-Michigan High School Volleyball second team as a senior and state scoring records she made in the sport in high school have not been broken. She earned a scholarship to play volleyball at Grand Valley State University.

● Jennifer (West) Bringman, who graduated in 1992, was team captain, and lettered in volleyball, basketball, and softball. She earned all-state honors in softball as a senior and all-state second team in volleyball as a senior. She attended Wright State University from 1992 to 1996 on a scholarship to play volleyball.

● Kellie Nowak, a 1996 graduate who was captain of the volleyball squad as a junior and senior. She made all-state second team as a sophomore and all-state first team as a junior and

senior. She attended Kent State University on a volleyball scholarship. She coaches volleyball at Adrian High School.

● Kevin Vogel, a 1987 graduate who was a two-time state champion in wrestling. He holds the single-season record of 52-0. He won three Mid-American Conference championships at Central Michigan University. He was University Greco-Roman national champion in 1990.

● Terry Banks, a 1979 graduate, will be inducted posthumously. Mr. Banks was killed in a traffic accident in the summer after graduating from Bedford, where he played football and basketball and ran track. He was voted to the All-Great Lakes League basketball team in both sports.

The seven graduates are the ninth class of inductees in the hall of fame and will bring its membership to 54 people. The inductees will be introduced to the community at the Feb. 27 high school basketball game.

A banquet to recognize the inductees will be Feb. 28 at the high school.