

OFHS



WALL OF FAME

Inducted September 19, 2009



MICHAEL BAUMAN

Michael Bauman's family has been in Oconto Falls from the earliest part of the 20th century, when his grandfather, Harry Bauman, opened a clothing store. Like so many other immigrants, Harry Bauman was penniless when he arrived, but unlike most, he wanted to settle in an unspoiled rural area, rather than a city. A thriving mill town in northeastern Wisconsin seemed ideal. The store remained a family business for more than 60 years, operated by Michael's father, Joseph, and his uncle, Sterling after Harry retired.

By age 15, Michael knew he wanted to go into journalism. Several remarkable high school teachers gave him a head start in this direction. English Teacher Joyce Kilmer had a profound knowledge of the English language and a real appreciation for good writing, and offered a great deal of valuable insight and encouragement. Principal and Speech Teacher Bob Wiese believed in the value of a language that was used carefully and intelligently. Economics Teacher and Football Coach Sparky Adams was worth four years of arguments on a wide variety of topics.

Graduating with the OFHS Class of '65, he went on to receive a Bachelors and Masters in journalism from the UW-Madison. His first fulltime newspaper job, in 1971 with the Wisconsin State Journal, started as a general assignment reporter and advanced to covering politics. In the process he won an Inland Daily Press award for his coverage of a Madison mayoral campaign. The Madison Common Council adopted a resolution commending him for his service to the community through journalism.

He began investigative reporting with The Milwaukee Journal in 1977, and later covered politics at all levels. He became a writer for The Journal's Sunday magazine in 1981 and moved to the paper's Sports section just in time for the 1982 baseball playoffs. He became a Journal sports columnist in 1985. In the next 16 years he covered 16 Super Bowls, 12 World Series, and 6 Olympics. He won The Journal's Richard J. Davis Award for journalistic excellence in 1988 and the Wisconsin Sportswriter of the Year Award in 1989.

Moving to MLB.com, Major League Baseball's web site, in 2001, Bauman considered this an ideal situation covering baseball in depth on a national level, while still maintaining a home in Milwaukee.

Fortunate in his profession, he was more fortunate still with his family. He is married to Kathleen Dunn, talk show host on Wisconsin Public Radio. They have three sons, David, Daniel, and Andrew. Bauman's mother, Ruth, who imparted a love for the English language to her firstborn son, taught in Oconto Falls for more than three decades, and still makes her home just down the street from OFHS.