

HOCKEY WEEKLY

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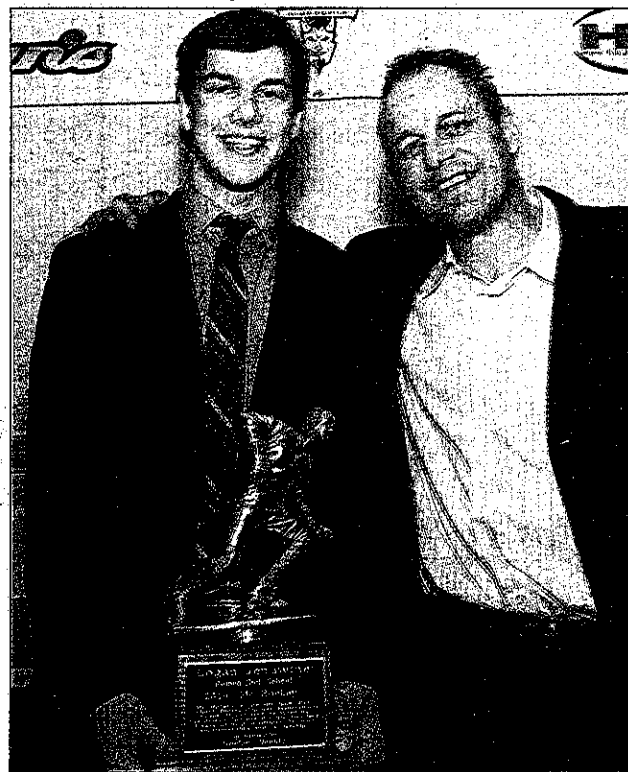


'He was a good guy, wasn't he?'

That good guy was John Stansik, one of the best-known and best-loved figures in the local hockey community. As owner of the Arctic Pond and the Victory Honda Hockey Club, Stansik was praised even by opponents, including Belle Tire owner John Kay, a good friend who said the above words. Stansik, who was also a vice president of Hockey has Heart, died unexpectedly earlier this month after a brief illness. Read about his generous life on Page 3.

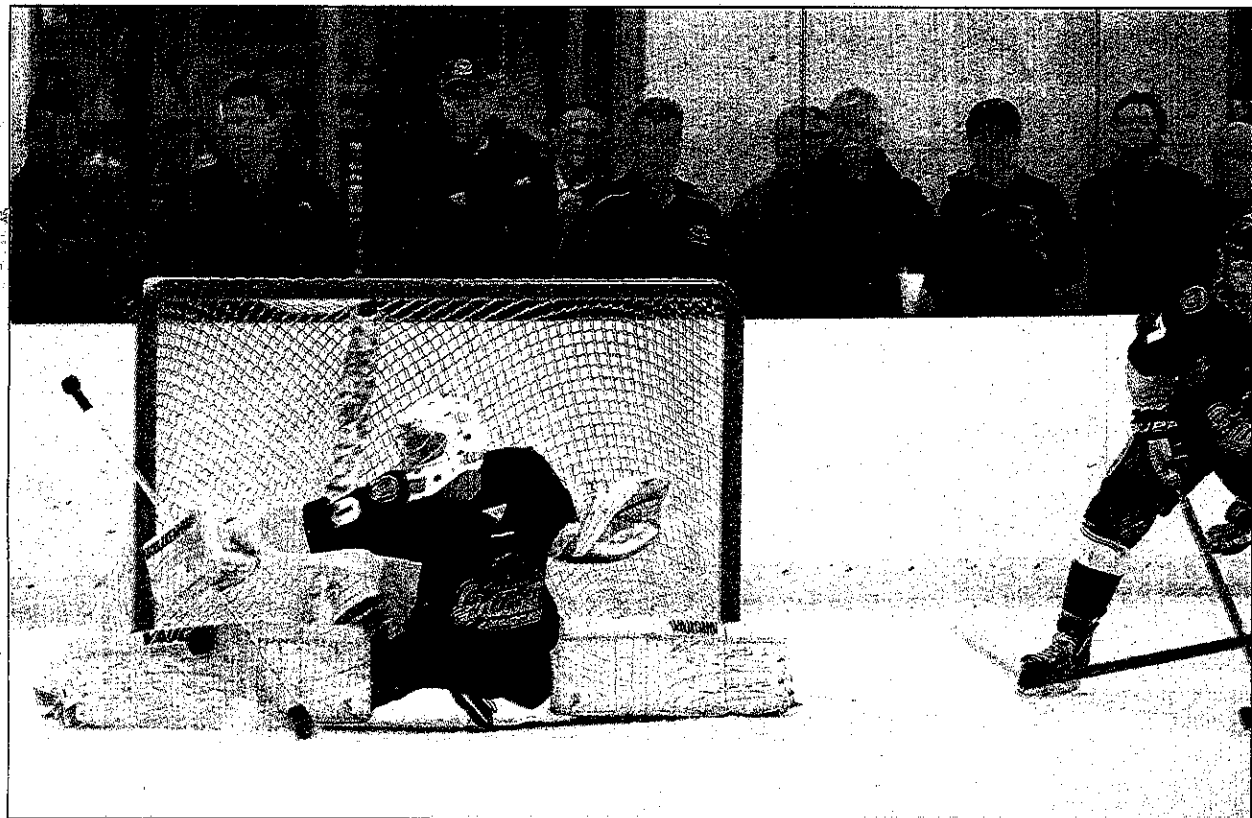


HS HOCKEY ROYALTY



Hockey Weekly photo by Rena Lavery

Romeo's Logan Jenuwine and Allison Stapleton of University Liggett received trophies and a photo with former Red Wing Darren McCarty when they were named Mr. and Miss Hockey at the 14th annual Hockey Weekly High School All-State Luncheon. Coverage on Pages 3, 5, 8-12.



Hockey Weekly Action Photo by George Asay

EYES ON THE PUCK: The fans on the other side of the boards watch as the goalie for the 18U AAA Oakland Jr. Grizzlies deflects a shot during the championship game against Victory Honda. VH went on to win the state title. For more on all the AAA championships, see Pages 18-22.



Hockey Weekly photo by Alexis Bohlinger

ORCHARD LAKE STARTING GIRLS 14U PROGRAM - P. 7

'It's going to be hard to get along without him'

John Stansik's death stuns local hockey community

By Paul Harris
Hockey Weekly Editor

It would be hard to find an individual who was as universally loved in the Detroit-area hockey community as John Stansik.

Stansik passed away on March 13, of esophageal cancer, at the age of 64.

He was the owner of the Arctic Pond Arena in Plymouth, co-owner of the Arctic Edge Arena in Canton, owner of the Victory Honda Hockey Club and vice president of Hockey has Heart.

Stansik is survived by his wife, Pamela Stansik; daughter Courtney; sons Christopher and Kyle Stansik, and siblings Patricia Northrup and James (Sally) Stansik.

Even the people he competed against in the Tier I Elite Hockey League were fond of Stansik.

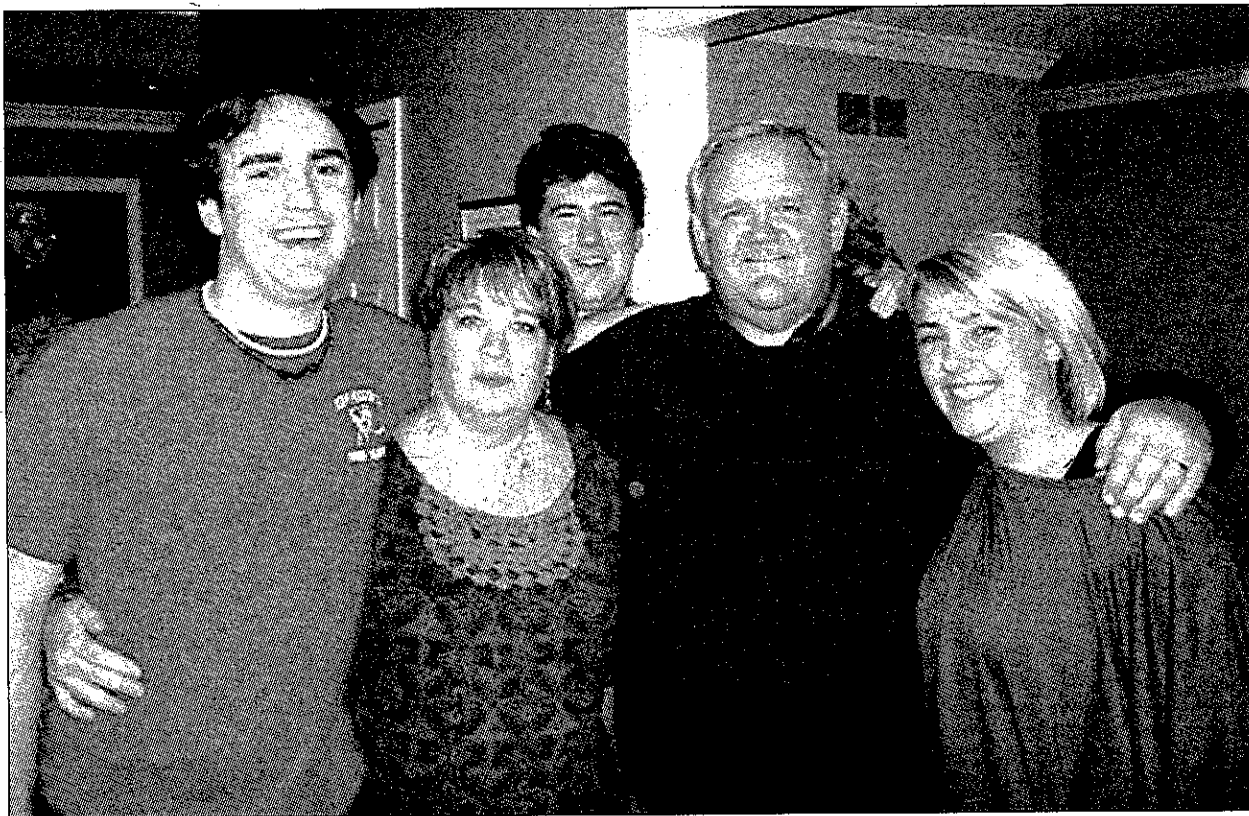
"He was a good guy, wasn't he?" asked John Kay, Belle Tire director of hockey. "I told someone the other day I've been around hockey a long time and I've met a lot of good people and a lot of bad people. And he was one of the best."

What stood in most people's minds about Stansik was his generosity and kindness.

Kay's son, Jesse, suffered a closed head injury and permanent damage in an auto accident a few years ago.

"Jesse told me the other day that every time he would see John," Kay said. "John would kiss him on the forehead."

Stansik helped found Hockey has Heart,



John Stansik and his loving family, from left to right, Pam, Chris, John and Courtney.

which assists area hockey families and hockey people in times of need.

"John was a close friend and founding member of Hockey has Heart," said Hockey

has Heart president Lucy Oakleaf. "His passion for the game and the people who play the sport was evident in everything he did. John's passing is a great loss to our organization. Our

hearts go out to Pam, his family and friends." After spending many years in the grocery

See STANSIK, Page 6



HOCKEY WEEKLY HIGH SCHOOL REPORT

500 gather to honor HS Hockey's best and brightest

By Alexis Bohlinger
Hockey Weekly Staff

More than 500 members of Michigan's High School Hockey community joined Hockey Weekly on Sunday, March 20, at Farmington Hills Manor in Farmington to celebrate the culmination of the 2015-16 season.

The 14th annual luncheon, sponsored by Red Wing's captain Henrik Zetterberg, honors high school hockey players that have shown academic and athletic achievements throughout the season. The luncheon also honored coaches and assistant coaches of the year, as well as teams that volunteered their time to helping others.

The three-hour event ended with the opening of the envelopes by former Detroit Red Wing Darren McCarty to reveal the winners of Mr. and Miss Hockey 2016. They were Allison Stapleton of University Liggett and Logan Jenuwine of Romeo. Stapleton and Jenuwine were also both recipients of the Henrik Zetterberg High School Hockey Scholarships of \$1,500 each.

Other scholarship winners were Jill Jacobs of Ladywood and Joe Verkerke of Orchard Lake St. Mary's, recipients of the \$1,500 Jim Devellano awards.

Noah Weigle of Grandville High School was also awarded the Ryan Fischer Legacy



Hockey Weekly photo by Rena Laverty

More than 500 High School Hockey supporters gathered in Farmington for the 14th annual Hockey Weekly All-State Luncheon, presented by Henrik Zetterberg. At the podium is former Red Wing and guest speaker Darren McCarty.

Scholarship for his outstanding performance on and off the ice. He was named Second Team All-State this season. Weigle is also an accomplished musical student, captain of the golf team and maintains a 4.13 GPA. The presentation was made by Scott and Roni Fischer, parents of Ryan who died March 7, 2014, the day his Grandville team was playing in the MHSAA semifinals.

When the four-time Stanley Cup winning McCarty took the stage, he first addressed the importance of academics and maintaining a healthy balance between school and athletics.

"The harder you work now, the easier it will be later in life," he said.

McCarty has personal experience with

High School Hockey. His son, Griffin, played for U-D Jesuit as a freshman and sophomore before moving on to play Junior hockey in Canada.

He joked, "Kudos to you U-D guys on your academics, because I couldn't even do my son's ninth grade homework."

McCarty also gave an energetic speech, addressing the evolution of High School Hockey in Michigan.

"When I came to Detroit in the early 90's there was a stigma surrounding High School Hockey, that it was a dead end after graduation. But let me tell you, this is by far the best High School hockey has ever been in Michigan," he continued, "When you think of

High School Hockey now, you think of Michigan, you think of out east, you think of Minnesota. Now there are opportunities."

He also spoke about the importance of hockey and how it impacts all aspects of life.

"The game is the game but everything else around it is what you're going to need as you get older in life - learning about relationships, responsibility, loyalty, dedication, being there for the team," he continued, "It's great to accomplish things, but if you don't get to share them with anyone, what good are they? That is why team sports are so very important."

See ALL-STATE, Page 8

The man who made best friends with everyone



Kim Muir (left) of "Can't Skate, Can't Play" power skating school first met John Stansik in 1997 when she was working with his son Chris' hockey team. Like others who met John for the first time, she was hooked on the man who made best friends with everyone.

Arctic Arenas

Some other history of the Arctic Pond, In 1997, John would break ground.

The Pond has a staff of about nine employees, Corey, Andrew, Paul, and other trustees.

In 1998, Ladywood would skate.

It was John's first contract, As a matter of fact.

Under Ron Predmesky or coach Ron, Where Courtney and others would skate on.

Hockey has Heart was established in 2003, Of course John, the man, with his generosity.

From the Ice Dogs to Victory Honda in 2004, Many thanks to your family, Jeff Cappo and more.

Along with the four other investors: Mike Lobsinger, John Caponigro, John Wilson, and Tom Schreiber

Most of us had the same experience with the greatest hockey man in the world, NOW, may we bow our heads and bless John Stansik with the Lord.

John's Prayer

God, we were blessed, honored, yet broken, That you have taken this beautiful token.

Where you went to the bullpen, And pulled him out to fend,

The rest of his eternal life and spirit, To give love and share love to all his dearest.

We know he is in great hands with you Lord, our father. May we never disappoint you and treat you, like John did with others.

Bless the Stansiks and extended family and friends, May your love, forgiveness, and presence,

Bless the food we are about to partake, In honor of John Andrew Stansik's wake. In his name, now and forever, and ever. AMEN

**** John Andrew Stansik ****

You were our friend, a brother, a husband, and father, You will be missed by ALL, but we'll LOVE you forever.

With all my love,
Kim Muir

This is a portion of tribute poems written by Muir for John Stansik, his friends and loved ones, and Arctic Arenas. To see all of them, visit www.hockeyweekly.com.

John Stansik remembered: 'It's going to be hard to get along without him'

STANSIK, from Page 3

business, Stansik decided to get into hockey. The old Plymouth Bowl bowling alley, which was located on Plymouth Rd., just east of Haggerty Rd., in Plymouth, had closed in 1990, and Stansik led a group that bought the property in the spring of 1998, and converted it into the Arctic Pond Arena. It opened later that year and Stansik signed his first ice contract with the fledgling Ladywood High School Blazers girls hockey team for whom Courtney would play.

Then the first AAA program to enter the Pond was the old Michigan Nationals who would become the Michigan Ice Dogs and eventually in 2004 when Stansik approached car dealer Jeff Cappo and the new sponsorship created the Victory Honda Hockey Club.

The ownership group opened the Arctic Coliseum in Chelsea in 2000, and the Arctic Edge in December, 2001. The group no longer has any connection or financial interest in the Arctic Coliseum.

"It's a huge loss for everybody," said Stansik's assistant and Arctic Edge general manager Craig O'Neill.

"Not just for us here but for the whole hockey community. John knew everybody ... It's going to be hard to get along without him."

O'Neill also said Stansik had a knack for coming up with seemingly off-beat ideas that would prove to be successful.

The latest of which was Juice Box Hockey, which allowed youngsters who haven't played before to play hockey once a week for a few weeks at a time for free - introducing them to a game - and then each player was given a juice box after the on-ice session.

It has been a smashing success at bringing more youngsters into the game at the Arctic Edge.

Stansik also worked closely with Victory Honda manager Bill Smith and Victory Honda Midget Major coach Brian Burke.

"He was a friend and a brother, if you needed that, and he was a father figure if you needed that," Smith said. "You don't meet guys like him very often."

Said Burke: "Most amazing hockey guy you've ever met ... Hard to imagine going to the rink without him there, you know?"

"He just went out of his way to make everybody feel comfortable."

As a youngster, Stansik excelled at baseball, growing up on Detroit's west side.

He was a star pitcher at St. Alphonsus High School and faced Catholic Central and their ace, former Major Leaguer and Detroit Tiger Frank Tanana, in the Catholic League Championship Game at Tiger Stadium in 1969. Catholic Central and Tanana won 1-0.

Stansik was drafted by the Montreal Expos in 1970, but by then, according to his younger brother, James, John's arm was gone before he could even work out for the Expos.

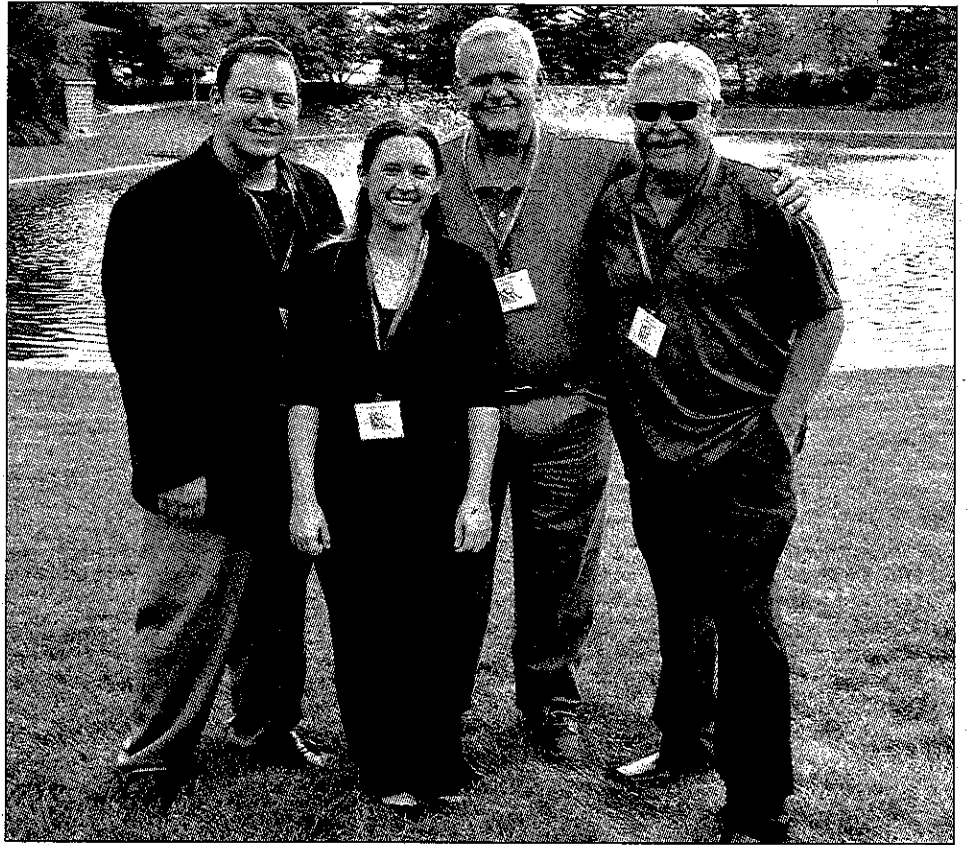
Stansik also played football in high school. He is a member of the Catholic League Hall of Fame.

During the MAHA State playoffs at Taylor Sportsplex, one man from the old west side neighborhood walked into the tournament office and relayed a story of 14 houses in left field at the St. Alphonsus baseball field, saying they were too far for anyone to hit with a home run blast, except for then a young Stansik: "He hit five of them."

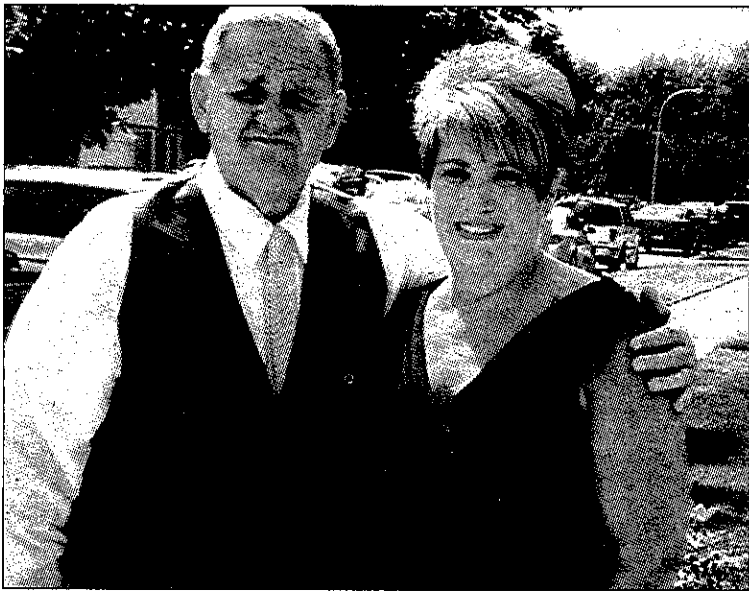
In addition to getting into the grocery business, Stansik went on to coach baseball and football at St. Alphonsus for many years.

"I've never heard any person say a bad word about John," Smith said. "... Across the country, not just Michigan. He touched a lot of people."

Many of his longtime hockey friends knew he loved baseball from the standpoint of



Stansik with fellow Michigan Amateur Hockey Association members at a MAHA summer meeting, with the manager of his Victory Honda AAA Hockey Club Bill Smith to his right and District 4 Chairperson Chris Boloven at far left.



John and Pam Stansik at left in one of their favorite photos together. Below is Stansik in his baseball days. He was a coach at St. Alphonsus High School in Dearborn after being a star ballplayer at the school. He was drafted by the Montreal Expos.

being a Detroit Tigers season ticket holder, but he never mentioned or bragged about his own baseball prowess, obviously, even to people close to him.

Kay said: "Drafted by the Expos? And he never told me about it."

Hockey Weekly publisher John Castine, a fellow HHH Executive Board member, also had not heard of Stansik's baseball skills until after his death.

"I was talking to his youngest son, Kyle, at the funeral home and told him how surprised I was not to have his dad tell me about how good of a baseball prospect he was," said Castine.

"And Kyle said, 'I was about 14 years old before he told me. He wanted us to play baseball, but Chris, Courtney and I all liked hockey. Then he finally tells me why he wanted us to play ball - like he did.'"

And finally, Debbie Jewett, longtime friend and employee for Stansik at the Arctic Arenas, may have said it best.

"Anyone you talked to who had talked to John, even once, would say, 'We were best friends.' John talked to everyone like they were best friends and that feeling never left you."

