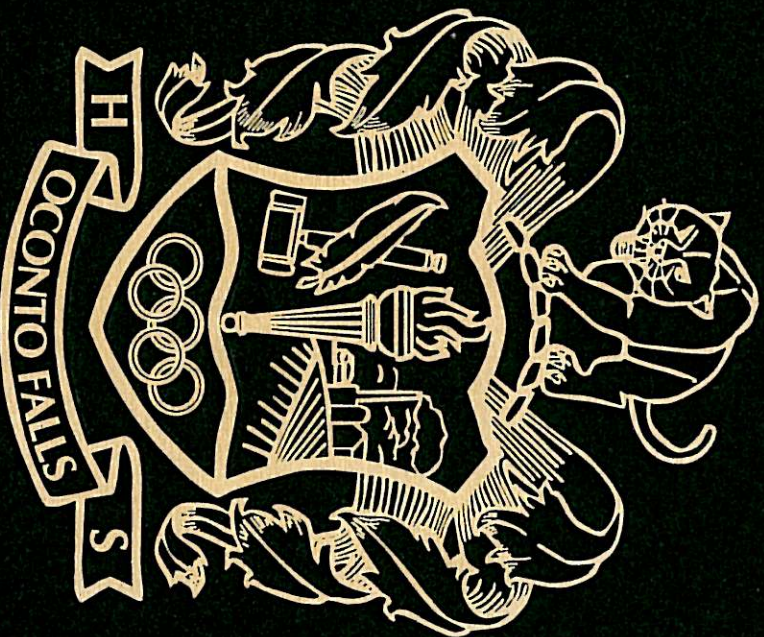


O F H S



WALL OF FAME

Inducted October 4, 2008



EUGENE E. BEHLING

Eugene E. Behling grew up in Cedarburg, WI where he graduated from the eighth grade giving the address as valedictorian. His family moved to Oconto Falls in 1935.

At O.F.H.S. Gene established himself as a scholar and athlete, particularly as a tennis player. Active in dramatics, forensics and debate, he garnered many local, county and state awards.

Maintaining a straight "A" average all 4 years, he graduated with the Class of 1939 as valedictorian and again delivered the address at graduation. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison 1939-1942 where he was inducted into an honorary fraternity recognizing scholarship and extra activities. Gene was active in the university choir and drama departments. In June of 1942, he entered the U.S. Naval Air Corps as a cadet in the Fifth Flying Badger Unit. He finished pre-flight school in the top 10% of his class, which gave him the option to choose Navy or Marine Corps. He received his gold wings and was commissioned as a U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant.

Inducted as an instructor, he trained cadets in sight and instrument flying, dive bomber and torpedo tactics. At this time, he was recruited to work for the State Department, but turned them down. Gene learned to fly F4U Corsairs aboard the aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Guadalcanal and was certified as a carrier pilot. In November 1945, Gene concluded his military service and was promoted to Captain U.S.M.C.R. He returned to Madison, and earned his B.A. and law degree in 1948. He then was offered and accepted a position with Lehner & Lehner, Attorneys at Law where he became a trusted and respected attorney. In February 1951 he was appointed as the Oconto Falls City Attorney and served in this role until 1991 when he retired. He proudly noted that he never missed a meeting.

In 1959 people in Oconto Falls began to talk about building a golf course. Gene researched setting up non-profit organizations. He found that Wisconsin-Michigan Power Co. decided "The Badger Flats" to be the city for recreation use. The city decided the land to be the River Island Golf Club with the same provisions. Gene was a founder and president for the first 9 years and number one shareholder. River Island Golf Club stands today as a testament to Gene's determination. An avid downhill skier since age 6, Gene utilized "the flats" in winter as well, until retiring from skiing at age 80.

The family of Eugene E. Behling are very proud of him.