

Merry Acres and Stewbos
salutes

LEA HENRY

Southwest Georgia's
shooting star



Talented Driven Disciplined
Leader. Mentor Motivator Teacher

Olympian
Coach

SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S

LEA HENRY



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Lea Henry may be the most-accomplished women's basketball player in South Georgia history. Indeed, Henry also may be greatest college basketball coach the Albany area has ever produced



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Born Nov. 22, 1961, the Damascus native and current Lee County resident captained the 1984 United States women's basketball team as its starting point guard and helped lead the team to an Olympic gold medal. She also helped lead the University of Tennessee women's basketball team, under famed coach Pat Head Summit, to three Final Four appearances and two national championship games.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Now the women's basketball coach at Darton State College in Albany, Henry entered the 2014-15 season with 376 victories as a collegiate head coach. On Feb. 10, with her family in attendance, Darton notched Henry's 400 career victory.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

While family comes first and basketball comes second for Henry, the two were intertwined from Day 1, long before she would reach world-class status in the sport. Her father, W.T. Henry, was a high school basketball coach who started bringing his daughter to the gym at age 2.

A collage of grayscale photographs. On the left, a woman with dark hair is smiling. In the center, a group of people is gathered outdoors. On the right, a young girl is smiling, wearing a medal around her neck. The text is overlaid on the top left and center of the collage.

SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Henry says: "My dad would spend hours rebounding for me, take me to the gym and stay as long as I wanted to work on my game. I developed not only a strong love of the game but a desire to be a good player early on, and would spend countless hours working on my game alone as well. Most young girls sleep with teddy bears. I had a basketball next to me most nights falling asleep working on my form as I lay in bed."



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

When she began playing organized ball as a seventh-grader, Henry already was squarely focused on the sport. She studied her craft, she maintained a disciplined exercise regimen, and ate healthily.

Henry always knew she'd be a coach; but, man, could she play.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

She averaged 23 points per game at Southwest Georgia Academy and was selected to the Kodak All-American team, and finished as the school's all-time leader in scoring, steals and assists. The team made it to the state tournament every year; her retired No. 34 jersey now hangs in the school gym's rafters.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

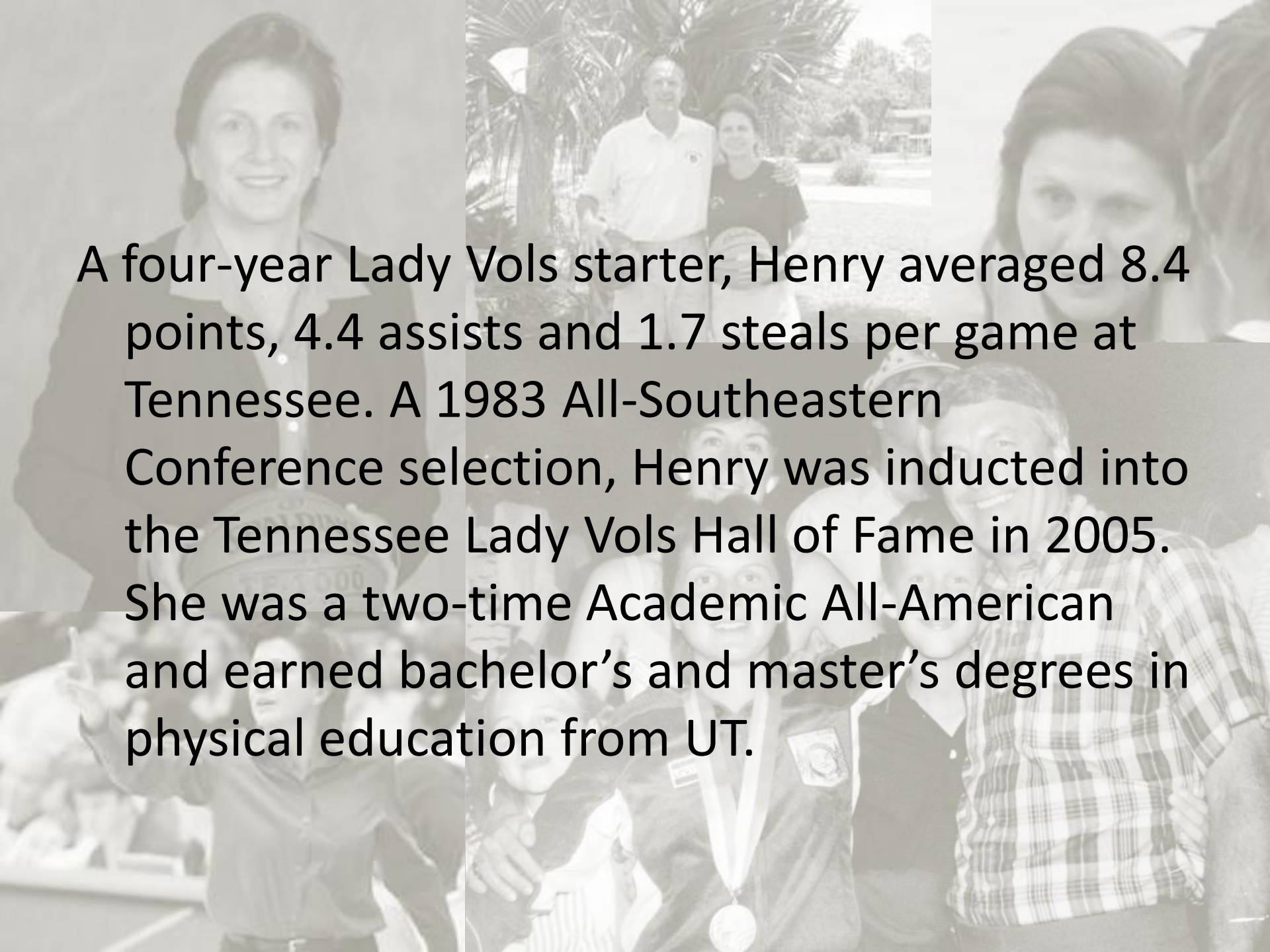
After her junior year, Henry had scholarship offers from Auburn, Florida State and Georgia. But she wanted to play for an elite program; thus then-Tennessee coach Pat Head Summitt received a call from W.T Henry.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

W.T. Henry wasn't pushy with the legendary Tennessee coach; rather, he asked for ideas on how he could help his daughter achieve her goals. Summitt sent W.T. Henry an application to the United States Olympic Festival summer camp and encouraged his daughter to try out.

Henry was selected for the camp and, ultimately, Summitt's UT squad, the U.S. Junior National team, and U.S. National team.



A four-year Lady Vols starter, Henry averaged 8.4 points, 4.4 assists and 1.7 steals per game at Tennessee. A 1983 All-Southeastern Conference selection, Henry was inducted into the Tennessee Lady Vols Hall of Fame in 2005. She was a two-time Academic All-American and earned bachelor's and master's degrees in physical education from UT.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

After traveling the world as a national team member during her collegiate summers, Henry helped the United States win its first women's basketball Olympic gold medal in Los Angeles, averaging 4.2 points and 3 assists per game in the six-game competition.

A collage of grayscale photographs. On the left, a woman with dark hair is smiling. In the center, a group of people is gathered, with a young boy in the foreground wearing a dark jacket and a large gold medal around his neck. On the right, another woman is smiling. The background shows an outdoor setting with trees and a building.

SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

She says: "The Olympics was such a special time for our entire family. It was as if we had all accomplished this pinnacle in my career together. And the best part about it was that my mom, dad, Ruth, Uncle Ferrell, Aunt Arleeta, Paige, Bo and Kristin were ALL there. And my Daddy Jeff was standing in his living room with his hand over his heart as the American flag was raised as our team received the gold medal."



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

She then played professionally in Houston in 1984 before deciding to pursue coaching full-time.

Henry spent two seasons as a Tennessee assistant, one year at Stetson University, and four years at the University of Florida. She was Florida's interim coach at the end of the 1989-90 season, posting a 3-3 record, before becoming Mercer University's head coach in 1990 and Georgia State University's head coach in 1994.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Henry rebuilt two schools' Division 1 basketball programs; at Georgia State, her teams won three conference championships and played in three NCAA tournaments. She was the 1997-98 Women's Basketball Coaches Association Division I Coach of the Year, and was the Atlanta Tipoff Club's College Division I Coach of the Year in 1998, 2000 and 2002.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Henry retired after 16 years at Georgia State as the school's all-time leader in women's basketball coaching victories; however, her departure from coaching lasted only a year.

At Darton, Henry's Lady Cavaliers won 73 games in her first three seasons, including a school record 30 games in the 2012-13 campaign, which included district and championships and a national tournament appearance.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

A Georgia Sports Hall of Fame inductee, Henry is considered to be among the most elite minds in women's college basketball. In addition to serving as the United States Junior World Championship Qualifying Team assistant coach, she has served on the USA Basketball Player Selection Committee for the Olympic Games; NCAA Mid-East Regional Selection Committee; NCAA Women's Basketball Rules Committee; Kodak All-America Selection Committee; Georgia Sports Hall of Fame Screening Committee; and WNBA Atlanta Dream Advisory Board.



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Henry is married to another sharpshooter, former University of Maryland basketball standout Greg Manning.

Manning is a Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame inductee who captained the Terrapins and started for four years at guard, and has been named as an Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball Legend. He was drafted by the NBA's Denver Nuggets.

A collage of grayscale photographs. On the left, a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket, smiles. In the center, a group of people, including a young boy, are shown. On the right, a young boy in a plaid shirt is smiling. In the foreground, a young boy in a dark jacket is wearing a large medal around his neck.

SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Since 1984, Henry and Manning have directed a popular youth basketball program, which became L&G Camp of Champs in 2005. Held throughout the United States, the camps are dedicated to producing successful basketball players while positively shaping their lives.

Henry and Manning share a vision to help young people succeed by motivating them to set goals, commit to hard work, value education, and make good choices.

A collage of grayscale photographs. The top left shows a woman smiling. The top right shows a group of people. The bottom left shows a woman pointing. The bottom right shows a young girl with a medal and a boy.

SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

Henry says; *“The game is just such a strong part of me. Coaching is a way to give back to the game and help develop young women into not only good players, but good strong successful citizens. The game of basketball teaches us all so much about how to succeed in life. I look at coaching as an opportunity to make a positive difference in as many young lives as I can possibly touch.”*



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA'S LEA HENRY

After notching her 400th career coaching win, Henry was praised in the Albany Herald by her assistant coach, Courtney Pritchett. *“What she does for this program, it’s way more than just basketball. The lives she impacts - she teaches them to be good people in life. She gives them the foundation to go on to four-year universities, foundations to be good mothers, good wives, good leaders in the community, all that stuff. What she teaches is much more than basketball,”* Pritchett said.

