



CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

IN THE BOOKS

-A Message from the President

Happy fall y'all! Another banquet is in the books. My checklist is complete. New athletes inducted. State vote completed. New community service projects served, and volunteer efforts increased. New business alliances formed. New scholarship winners announced. New t-shirts made. New banquet completed. New committees formed. New members welcomed. New friends made. That was how I spent my summer vacation. Followed it all up with an amazing vacation and am already back at it. 2023 is right around the corner. Before heading into the impending new year, I want to thank all who once again busted their tails and helped pull off what proved to be another successful banquet. I want to congratulate the newest of our inductees, our scholarship winners, and our special award recipients. I want to thank each person who attended our banquet and every single business, family member, and friend of our Class of 2022 for their financial support. Without all of you, there is no us. So, thank you sincerely. To our newest inductees, welcome to the club. We look forward to your future participation in our organization, be it helping on committees or helping in our community service efforts. We look forward to working with you. The trees and the leaves are reminding us that change is upon us and pushing us forward. Time to get started on 2023. -Jim

MEMBERSHIP DUES

-First Order of Business

First, a friendly reminder to renew your membership dues for the upcoming year. Before the holidays, before you get too busy, please renew your membership. Yearly membership is ten dollars. A lifetime membership can be acquired for a one-time fee of a hundred dollars. These dues are passed on to the state hall to maintain our voting privileges at the state level. You can easily renew at www.luzernecountysportshalloffame.com.



WELCOME CLASS OF 2022

-Fourteen of the area's finest enter the hall

When describing this year's class of fourteen gifted athletes, there might be fourteen different ways to do so. By sport we inducted, basketball, cross-country, field hockey, football, track and field, shooting, volleyball, and wrestling. By region, every county covered by our chapter is represented. By gender, there are seven women, and seven men. By mascot, there are a couple of Bison, Colonels, and Eagles. Also, we inducted one Blue Jay, a Nittany Lion, a Red Flash, and one Sergeant. Rounding out the group, we have some royalty, a Monarch, a Duke,



one Scarlet Knight and a Royal from Kansas City. By profession, this group includes, doctors, nurses, physical therapists, educators, coaches, professional ball players, business professionals, and active and retired members of the military and one "God of Sod." There are, district and state champions, college all conference selections, college athletic and academic all Americans, history making coaches, Junior Olympic champions, an Olympic athlete, a World Cup Champion, a first team ABA all-star, AND again, one small but mighty NFL and major league hall of fame groundskeeper. But who is who? To find out more about all these new inductees visit our website and match these athletes to their individual lists of accomplishments. Go to www.luzernecountysportshalloffame.com. Pictured above are the members of our 2022 class. Seated: Amy Mantush-Filanowski, Linda Messner, Rosalyn Polacek, Brea Seabrook, Pamela Hughes, DO, Megan Krebs-Kriso, Shelley Black-Leap. Standing: Joshua Richmond SFC, Edward Kopec, Jr., Charles Suppon, Jr., George Toma, Christopher Shovlin, Gary Verazin, MD, Timothy McGinley. Congratulations to all and we hope that you are as proud to be a part of us as we are of all of you.

THE REST OF THE STORY

-Our Scholars and Special Award Winners

The Class of 2022 grabbed most of the headlines from this year's banquet, however there were a few other award winners who managed to grab a few headlines of their own. The first of these were our Scholarship Award winners. This year, Lake Lehman's Madison Lasinski, Bloomsburg's Gracie Brosious, and Towanda's Hannah Ryck each won a five hundred dollar scholarship to help with their post secondary education expenses. The other three special award winners were Daniel Mulhern, Aubrey Jumper and Robert Baker. Dan was awarded





the Sam Falcone Award, an award presented in recognition of a person’s dedication to community service. Dan was selected unanimously by the committee for his tireless dedication to and work done for Challenger Baseball. Aubrey was awarded this year’s Tracey Tribendis Profile of Courage Award. This award recognizes an athlete that rises above personal limitations to achieve unlimited success and provide inspiration to others.

Aubrey, was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at a young age

became a track and field athlete and has celebrated huge successes on the paralympic circuit locally and nationally. Aubrey’s biggest achievement this fall, finds her entering San Diego State University as the first ever full scholarship adaptive athlete. Last, but not least, our Media Award winner this year was Bob Baker from Wyoming County. A life time newspaper guy, Bob was recognized for his exceptional coverage of the athletes and teams from Wyoming County. Pictured above left: Madison Lasinski, Gracie Brosius, and Hannah Ryck. Pictured right: Dan Mulherne, Aubrey Jumper, Robert Baker.



OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE GOD OF SOD

-George Toma Comes Home

At the age of 94, George Toma, one of the most decorated sports personalities alive, humbly and graciously came “home” to be a member of the class of 2022. Not only, did he attend our banquet, but also took the time to watch and visit with the kids from Challenger Baseball, accept the key to the city from Mayor George Brown and attend a meet and greet at Patte’s Sports Bar to commiserate with some of his local friends and fans. His energy amazed us, his anecdotes amused us, his legacy astounded us, his humility inspired us. Turns out, nice guys do finish first, great things can come in small packages, and for George, there is no place like home.



GIVING BACK

-Paul Richards and Family Donate to the Y



Maybe we aren't as young as we used to be, but we were all young once. Each of us can reach back to a time, a place, or a person that impacted our humble athletic beginnings, sometimes profoundly. For Paul Richards, it was the YMCA. For that very reason, Paul and his family have given a one thousand dollar donation to the YMCA to commemorate how much the organization has meant to him personally and professionally. Paul, a member of our 2020 class is a hall of fame swimmer graduated from E. L. Meyers High School in Wilkes Barre and Bloomsburg University. At Meyers, his swim teams won four consecutive district championships, while he, himself, was a four time individual district champion and all state selection. At Bloomsburg, he was a individual school record holder, a member of a record breaking PSAC relay team, and a participant in the 1974 National Championships. Following graduation from college, Paul swam himself into coaching. In his time at Dickinson, he coached nine championship teams and was named Coach of the Year ten times. Paul retired from coaching, only to be called back in

action this very year as Dickinson swimming found itself unexpectedly without a coach. When asked, Paul responded with a resounding yes. Just as the season was getting started Paul was hit with another unexpected request from the school – an induction into the Dickinson College Athletic Hall of Fame. Paul's athletic resume is impressive for sure, but his devotion to the Y goes beyond competing. According to Paul, the Y not only taught him how to swim but also how to give back, something he learned from his dad a long time ago. Not long after his induction, Paul a huge proponent of learn to swim and water safety programs, impacted our organization immediately. He initially proposed and then, spearheaded our learn to swim partnership with the Y. That program is funding eight learn to swim packages for kids in both Wilkes-Barre and Pittston. Paul's personal donation has been earmarked to purchase a platform for beginner swimmers who are unable to stand in three feet of water. The platform makes for an easier, safer, and happier introduction to the water. For Paul, that happiness rings true to some of his fondest memories. Hopefully, his gift will give someone else the opportunity to experience the same joy and lessons learned by the Richard's family, then and now. Pictured above is Paul Richards presenting his check to Jim Thomas, Executive Director of the Y.

My brother Tal and I grew up at the Y. It was our second home. We went to the Y almost everyday after school and all day on Saturday. We learned to swim there and had many great experiences. We attended Camp Kresge in the summer while my dad, also Paul, volunteered to coach, or help run the Rogers Tournament yearly and guided our annual Jr. Leaders canoe trips down the Susquehanna River. In 1962, my dad was named Layman of the Year. I credit the Y with not only helping us to become swimmers, but more so molding us into the people we are today.



HONORING OUR PARTNERSHIPS

-Updates on Challenger, Hazleton Integration Project, Juvenile Diabetes and the YMCA

Over the past several years, through both our fundraising efforts and the generosity of the Popple family, we have been able to continue in our community service initiatives. Splitting the year into four quarters,



Larry Wills Challenger Jim Martin LCSHOF

this year we were able to donate money to Challenger Baseball, the Hazleton Intgegration Project, the Juvenile Diabetes Organization of NEPA, and finally, the YMCA. These monies have been donated to meet the specific needs of each of these organizations. Through them, we have been able to help special needs baseball kids build their field of dreams. We helped to provide foodbank supplies to Hazleton residents.



Karel Zubris LCSHOF, Bob Curry HIP, Rossanna Gabriel HIP

Our dollars helped purchase diabetic friendly foods for kids who attended diabetes camp, And finally, we were able to provide eight swimming scholarships to help teach kids to swim and learn to be safe around water. We are so happy to find ourselves in a position to be able to help and are proud to do so. It feels good to once again become athletes in action.



MJ Hromchak LCSHOF, Patty McDade JDO, Trish Wegener JDO, Chris McGavin JDO



Paul Richards LCSHOF, Jim Thomas YMCA, Sam Reinhardt YMCA, Ellen Welch LCSHOF

