



VOLUME 2

ISSUE 2



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# A MESSAGE FROM JIM

## SEASONS CHANGE.

Hard to believe that fall is upon us. Time passed so fast. Yet not so fast that we weren't able to fulfill the promises of spring. A new class was celebrated in a brand-new venue with a brand-new format and I for one could not be happier. Mohegan Pennsylvania delivered big time making themselves our go to venue for the years to come. Our newly elected class and our special award winners filled the room with achievement, memories, and gratitude. It was a great day for sure. I thank all the athletes, award winners, their families, and Mohegan for making the day a true pleasure. A special thanks to my banquet committee members who made sure the day went off without a hitch. In addition to a stellar banquet, between spring and fall, we managed to forge a new partnership, help some special Olympians, move two athletes into the state hall, run a cancer awareness campaign, donate a few baby changing stations at the Y, crown some triathlete champions and win a few awards of our own. Read on to see how we keep changing like the autumn leaves.

-Jim



Seated: Katie Callahan Cisco (Dick Callahan), Katlin O'Hara, Amy Viti, Rebecca Mack McGraw, Tammy Bononni (Joanne McComb), Ninaleigh Stratton Wozniak, Marsha Krysiwski Hanson, Jamie Kauczka Esgro

Standing: Dylan Domzalski (Gene Domzalski), Joseph O'Hara, Scott Davis, Jim Stehle, Mike Papi, Bill Downey, Jim Hill, Clem Benson (Joe Hasay).

# CLASS OF 2023

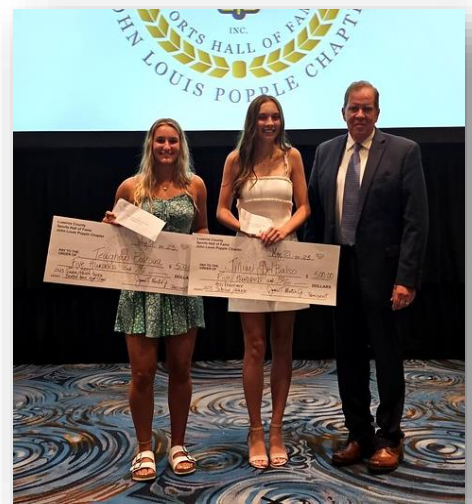
## WELCOME TO THE CLUB

The thirty ninth class of the John Louis Popple Chapter featured round ball players, hard ball players, swimmers, runners, officials, grapplers, coaches, pioneers, and broadcasters. From California to Shickshinny and all points north and south, nine men and seven women were inducted at Mohegan Pennsylvania on August 6, 2023. Our newly elected class is an impressive mix of district champions, professional baseball players, legendary coaches, and long-time officials. From the broadcasting booth of the Golden State Warriors to the dugout of the Springfield Sallies All American Girls Professional baseball league, every single athlete brought a unique and extraordinary personal story and record of achievement. Pictured left are this year's class members. The full biographies of our new inductees can be found by visiting our website [www.luzernecountysportshalloffame.com](http://www.luzernecountysportshalloffame.com).

# SPECIAL AWARDS

## SCHOLARSHIP, SERVICE, MEDIA, COURAGE

The Carol A. Hurley Scholarship Award winners this year were Teaghan Bardua, Benton Area and Jillian DelBalso, Holy Redeemer pictured right with Paul Richards (2020). The Sam Falcone Community Service Award was presented to Sandy Wazeter of Special Olympics pictured below with 2022 winner Dan Mulhern. Media Award winner Ken Cara is pictured with Karel Zubris (2013) and Profiles of Courage Award winner Quinn Crispell is pictured with Tracey Tribendis (2018) and Judy Sholtis (2020). Congratulations to this year's special award winners.



# THE STATE BANQUET

## HUTCHINSON AND GUARILIA INDUCTED

Two of the most accomplished members of our hall of fame were inducted into the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame near Allentown on October 28, 2023. Eight members of our hall made the trip to watch the inductions of Bloomsburg University field hockey and softball Coach Jan Hutchinson (2007) and Duryea native and Boston Celtic Gene Guarilia (1985).

Jan and Gene joined a collective filled with incredible athletic achievement. Should anyone wonder what the caliber of this year's class was, Jan and Gene were joined by: Pro-football player and coach Russ Grimm; Pro-baseball player Art Howe; Pro-basketball player Larry Miller; WNBA player Nicole Levandusky; Hall of Fame wrestler and coach Dave Crowell; Pro-baseball player Frank Bolick; The Knute Rockne of collegiate wrestling Billy Sheridan; legendary wrestling coach Bob Bubb; legendary women's basketball coach, C. Vivian Stringer; the voice of the Philadelphia Phillies and Eagles public address announcer Dan Baker; and Penn State great, Pro-football player, CEO, and TV commentator Matt Millen.

Jan's, 6X national coach of the year titles, her 17X national championships, and her overall record of 1806-363-22 are unmatched across all three NCAA divisions in both field hockey and softball. She is the winningest coach across all three NCAA divisions. Her state hall of fame induction brings her total of fame honors to nine – two high schools (Newton and Blair Academy), two counties (Sussex NJ and Luzerne PA), two universities (East Stroudsburg and Bloomsburg), two national associations (National Fastpitch Coaches and National Field Hockey Coaches) and finally the state this year. Talk about a lifetime achievement story.

Gene Guarilia left his mark at both Potomac State and George Washington University so impressively it vaulted him into the NBA. Big Gene was a second-round draft pick of the Boston Celtics and played four seasons, each one a championship season. Playing with teammates like Bob Cousy and Bill Russel, Gene's four years, four rings gave him the distinction of being one of a small and elite group of players to achieve the 4-peat. An impactful player, teammate Bob Cousy said of Gene that he was an instant starter entering any game and easily would have been a starter on any other NBA team. Gene returned home to teach, coach basketball, and play the guitar. His name is painted on the basketball floor at Pittston Area High School and his records etched in four halls of fame, now including the state. Our congratulations to both Jan and Gene.



# STATE NEWS

## VOTING BY EMAIL

The state has made a cost cutting decision to handle the 2024 state vote via email. Postal rates have caused unworkable mailing costs, and the state feels that email is the way to go. It now is vital that we have an accurate email to ensure that you can vote. We boast one of the larger memberships making it imperative we get the votes needed to push our elite athletes into the state level. Your vote is their voice. The ballot will go live January 3 - 17. We have four athletes sitting on that ballot. Dave Popson, George Toma, Stephanie Jalen, and Bo Orlando. The email will come from [pasportshof.org](http://pasportshof.org). directing all to go to [pasportshof.org/vote](http://pasportshof.org/vote). Currently, you can only visit the site to read the bios of those nominated for 2024. Please make sure we have your working email. To be sure, send us a quick email to [lcshof@gmail.com](mailto:lcshof@gmail.com). Our final member list will be sent to the state at year's end. Be sure you check your inbox and spam folders on January 3<sup>rd</sup> to look for the link. Please vote, vote, vote.



# GIVING BACK GETTING BACK

## MARTIN RECOGNIZED

Over the course of the summer and into fall, our president Jim Martin was recognized repeatedly for his contributions to community service. Jim received a Changemaker Award from the Chamber of Commerce at their Light Up the Valley Event. He received a Mayor's Award from Mayor George Brown at our induction banquet, a highly personal award given in recognition of hard work and dedicated selfless effort for the betterment of the city and entire county. And finally, in November, Jim was selected by the Association of Fundraising Professionals as their Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year recognized on National Philanthropy Day. If you know Jim, you know that he is not in it for this kind of stuff. However, it doesn't mean he is not deserving. No one works harder for this group than Jim does. Individual attention seeking is not in his wheelhouse. What is in his wheelhouse is a "service above self" philosophy and an unwavering commitment to create an entire organization of community servants using sports as our platform. He tries his very best to lead by his best example. When the credit comes to him, he quickly shares the credit. His leadership and example have set the tone for all of us to become a team that helps others. If these awards attest to anything it seems that both HE and WE are succeeding and indeed doing good things. Congrats Jim, for making us all look good.



**CHANGE MAKER AWARDS, JIM,  
WIFE DONNA AND SON, JIM**



**MAYOR'S AWARD JIM AND  
MAYOR GEORGE BROWN**



**ASSOCIATION OF FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONALS VOLUNTEER OF  
THE YEAR NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY.**



# COMMUNITY SERVICE

## KEEPIN' IT GROWING

Preparing for a banquet wasn't the only thing that kept us busy over the summer months. We continued to help our established community service partners, like Challenger baseball, Juvenile Diabetes of NEPA, and Special Olympics of Luzerne County. By offering both time and money, we participated in a Buddy Game for Challenger, donated dollars to purchase healthy snacks for campers at Camp Victory's Diabetic Kids Camp, and paid bowling alley fees for Special Olympians to practice. Some of our newest pursuits included the addition of a new partnership with Brave Athletics, backing the t shirt costs for a cancer awareness fundraiser, sponsorship of the rebirth of the Back Mountain Triathlon, and helping our friends at the Y in a new and different way. More specifically, we provided scholarship funds to Brave Athletics to supplement the registration costs to families in need. Brave, our newest partnership is a grass roots upstart commandeered by former Wilkes University field hockey coach Sara Myers. The program is designed specifically to provide a healthy introduction to athletics for the youngest of female athletes. It addresses both the physical and emotional well-being of young girls as they try to enter the world of competitive sports. Their "opportunity for all", and confidence building model is why we decided to back the program. As of right now Brave has grown to three sports field hockey, softball, and lacrosse and is adding basketball soon. Also, MJ Hromchak's "Buy the Shirt" cancer awareness campaign ran throughout October. All proceeds will be donated to Coaches vs. Cancer this winter. Her one-woman sale managed a \$3,000 return which will be awarded at our Wyoming Valley Conference Basketball Championship game's halftime. Additionally, when we learned that the Back Mountain Triathlon would be making its return to the area, we sponsored the trophies for the winners. Jim Martin got up literally at the crack of dawn to watch the competition and present the overall winners with trophies and t-shirts to commemorate their victories. Our last donation of the year was a financial donation made to the YMCA. We have in the past awarded monies to supplement the cost of learn to swim packages for those in need. This year, we met a unique request to help sponsor baby changing stations in the locker room areas to help parents dress their water babies safely. Paul Richards and Doreen Kolojechick made those presentations on our behalf to Jim Thomas and his aquatics staff. As you can see, we continue to do good things.



# AIRPORT MUSEUM

## TELLING THE STORIES

The airport museum featuring the newest class of inductees has been completed. Once again, it totally captures the essence of our area's rich sports history. Located adjacent to the TSA area, the display easily catches the eye with its shining trophies, plaques, uniforms, and medals. The overall story of this year's class is carefully broken down into sixteen separate displays that provide a visual snapshot uniquely constructed for each athlete. Inside the case you can see a complete recreation of Joanne McComb's time spent with the Springfield Sallies of the American Girl's Professional Baseball League. You can see Mike Papi's professional baseball uniform from head to toe. Right next door, dual athlete Scott Davis' baseball and wrestling prowess is captured in both uniform and film. There is a nice double tribute to Wilkes University's player/coach relationship between Jim Stehle and Gene Domzalski. Through the booming black microphone in the center of Dick Callahan's display, you can imagine Dick uttering his famous "shoooooting twoooo" from the broadcast booth of the Golden State Warriors. Two hand painted basketballs capture the career milestones for both Jamie Esagro and Joe Hasay, while the displays of Amy Viti, Marsha Krysiwski Hanson, and Rebecca Mack McGraw are dressed in success with singlets, batons, and All-American trophies. You can almost smell the chlorine of the pool while checking out brother and sister swimming phenoms, Joe and Katlin O'Hara, as Ninaleigh Stratton Wozniak successfully coached them and countless others from poolside. Rounding out the display are two of Hunlock Creek's hometown heroes. Bill Downey's officiating stripes are easily recognized and tell the story of a guy dedicated to calling the game fairly on both the high school and college level, while Jim Hill's baseball caps and shirts easily tell his story a life dedicated to his love of baseball. Each athlete's display is filled with as many recognitions as could physically fit. Therefore, the display shows just a snippet of each athlete's story. A more complete display photographed by Hall of Fame inductee Jack Monick can be seen virtually on our website at [www.luzernecountysportshalloffame.com](http://www.luzernecountysportshalloffame.com). Please visit the museum virtually or physically. This project is fully supported by the Wilkes Barre/Scranton Airport for free and is a joint venture between the Luzerne and Lackawanna County Halls of Fame. Our display is the only one, including the state hall of fame, to provide both a physical and virtual hall of fame experience and we could not be prouder to be able to tell their stories one piece of memorabilia at a time.



# PLAYING SANTA

## TOY FOR TOTS

Once again, we will be purchasing toys for the area's Toys for Tots program. The difference this year is that we will be teaming with Leadership Northeast as this year's drop off site. If anyone else is interested in dropping off an unwrapped toy, you can do so Monday through Friday between 10 am and 3 pm before December 1<sup>st</sup> at the offices of Leadership Northeast on Public Square in Wilkes Barre.

**HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE**

LEADERSHIP NORTHEAST WILL BE ACCEPTING NEW, UNWRAPPED TOYS IN SUPPORT OF TOYS FOR TOTS UNTIL DECEMBER 1ST

**DROP OFF INFORMATION:**  
Leadership Northeast  
4 Public Square, Wilkes-Barre  
M-F, 10:00am - 3:00pm  
Donations accepted until 12/1

TOYS FOR AGES 9-13 ARE THE MOST NEEDED!

Leadership Northeast TOYS FOR TOTS