

MISSOURI A.S.A. HALL OF FAME 1987-1999

The Missouri A.S.A. Hall of Fame was instigated in 1986, with initial induction ceremonies held in Springfield in March of 1987. Nomination forms are available from each local district commissioner or from the Missouri ASA web site. The nomination deadline is September 15 for induction ceremonies during the Annual Convention the following year.

The Missouri ASA Hall of Fame is divided into two categories: *Playing Ability* and *Meritorious Service*. Minimum requirements for *Playing Ability* include at least 10 years as an active player with proven ability at the state and national level. For *Meritorious Service*, a minimum of twenty years association with the Missouri A.S.A. is required with demonstrated service through involvement within the framework of the Missouri A.S.A. at the district, state, or higher levels.

1999 (March 6, Zeno's, Rolla)

Meritorious Service

HOWARD GRAFF, Brookfield - With over 45 years of service in the Brookfield area, Graff played, managed and sponsored men's fast pitch teams. His teams have participated in over 20 state tournaments, winning one, four regionals and three nationals. Graff Trailers ('60 '66), GraffElliott '67 '82) and GraffPepsi since 1983 are well-known team names in Missouri. A local softball field in Brookfield was named Howard Graff Field in 1979.

1998 (March 7, Ramada Inn, Springfield)

Playing Ability

BERT FRANCIS Francis was well-known in the early 60's as Missouri's Iron Man. His career started in 1946, and the first 22 years he played barehanded. His 1990 60 & over slow pitch team placed second in the nation. He pitched in 26 state fast pitch tournaments, generally with teams from Jefferson City and Mexico, Missouri, and he participated in many regional and national tournaments.

PATTI COLEMAN, Joplin -Missouri's Patti Coleman was named MVP in many invitational tournaments, and led her women's slow pitch teams to four National Tournaments. She was instrumental in getting the Joplin High School softball program off the ground. She participated in 15 state, five regional and four National Championships, and was chosen as an All-American in 1982.

Meritorious Service

JOEY RICH, Springfield/St. James – Rich has been tournament director for 35 state, six regional, and three National A.S.A. Tournaments, as well as over 100 invitational tournaments. He directly ran the Springfield Park Board softball program from 1980 to 1988 and oversaw the operation until 1998. He served as an At-Large Player Representative on the A.S.A. National Council from 1987-2002. He has been A.S.A. National Office representative to more than 10 National Tournaments and was the first non-commissioner elected to the position of Regional Vice President (1998-2002). He served as Manager of Operations as well as Springfield District Commissioner for the Missouri from 1990-2002. He instigated the newsletter "Missouri Basepaths" in the mid 80's. Rich was named a member of the A.S.A. National Indicator Fraternity in 1991 and inducted into the Missouri A.S.A. Hall of Blue in 1994. He was instrumental in the development of "The Softball Museum" and was inducted into the local Springfield A.S.A. Hall of Fame in 2000. He became Missouri's third State Commissioner in January of 2003 and was elected President of the National ASA organization in 2005.

1997 (March 8, Ramada Inn, Joplin)

Playing Ability

CHARLES BLAKLEY, St. Joseph – This Blakely brother played in 16 state, 12 regional, 9 national tournaments, and played on the ISC All World team in 1984. Renowned for both his hitting and defensive abilities, Charles was also instrumental in helping to rebuild fast pitch softball in the St. Joseph area for many years. He played in numerous 40+ and 50+ national tournaments as well.

LEO BLAKLEY, St. Joseph – Leo Blakely played in 21 state, 15 regional, and 12 national tournaments at the Men's Major Fast Pitch level and has also managed in recent years. He played in numerous 40+ and 50+ national tournaments as well.

1996 (March 9, Ramada Inn, Jefferson City)

Playing Ability

ROY BURLISON, Springfield – Ask almost anyone anywhere in the country to name a famous men's fast pitch pitcher, and Roy Burlison's name will most surely be mentioned. Burlison is an incredible seven time All-American and was named Most Valuable Pitcher in the 1969 and 1971 ASA National Fast Pitch Championships. He also played professional ball with the St. Louis Browns in 1973, and he contributed to seven state championships and six regional championships in the days when even to qualify for a regional tournament was extremely difficult.

BOBBY BLAKLEY, St. Joseph – One of three famous brothers from the St. Joseph softball spotlight, Bobby Blakley participated in twelve state, ten regional, and eight national championships. He was selected as an All-American in 1986 and 1987, and played on bronze medal teams in U.S. Sports Festival teams in Charlotte, NC (1987) and in St. Louis, Missouri (1994)

PATTY VAVRA, Joplin – Vavra played with Ozark Athletic women's slow pitch team of Joplin and in thirteen years played most infield and outfield positions. Her career included participation in 12 state, five regional and three national tournaments.

Meritorious Service

ALLEN SEIFERT, St. Joseph - Seifert, known best in some circles as a sports writer with the St. Joseph News Press, is well known in softball circles for his 30 plus years of service as a coach and for many years as a member of the St. Joseph Softball Board. An estimated 1200 girls have played for Seifert, and he has sponsored and coached a myriad of teams. Many of his players went on to play college ball.

1995 (March 11, Zeno's, Rolla)

Meritorious Service

DAVID POLSKY, St. Joseph – One of the nominators for Mr. Polsky said it well, "Dave Polsky has run out of roles to play when it comes to softball." He was a great player, and one of the more feared clutch hitters ever to come out of St. Joseph. He has recruited many a young player, and has managed and sponsored dozens of teams over the years. He has competed in eight national tournaments and led his team to a third place finish in the Men's 40 & Over Fast Pitch National in 1988. He served as President of the YMCA City Softball League for 10 years and has promoted softball throughout his community. Mr. Polsky passed away in 1995.

Playing Ability

KIRK WILSON, Hannibal -Wilson's 20+ year career included playing for the O'Donnells team from Hannibal and at the 40 & Over Masters level of play. His teams won three state and one regional championship, and in 1991 Wilson was chosen as Most Valuable Player and All-American at the Men's Masters National Championship held in Springfield, Missouri. He was named second team All-American in 1992 and his career pitching record is 362-129 with a 1.42 ERA. His record in national tournament competition is 14-6 and he has thrown 42 no-hitters, four perfect games, and struck out over 3,600 batters. He started his career as a catcher and leading hitter. When he faced retirement due to a knee injury at age 27, his only answer was to move to the pitching position.

LINDA RAPP – A women's fast pitch centerfielder for over thirty years, much of her notoriety came with the North Missouri C.T.'s. Rapp was a key hitter in the lineup, and helped the C.T.'s win five state championships in six years.

VERNON "BONES" HARVEY, Sedalia - Harvey's softball career extended for over fifty years. His career included nearly 40 state tournaments, three regional tournaments and two national tournaments, including the 2003 Men's B Fast in Salem, Virginia when he was in his 70's!. As a pitcher for a number of teams from the Sedalia area, he was named MVP in numerous invitational tournaments. He was active in Sedalia Girls Softball, serving on the Board of Directors for seven years and as President for four years. He submitted a proposal to add girls' softball which was approved by the Sedalia School Board.

1994 (March 12, Holiday Inn, Hannibal)

Meritorious Service

BILL BYRD, Jefferson City – Byrd began working for the Jefferson City Parks and Recreation Department in 1960 and served as Deputy District Commissioner under Howard Scott. He directed his first Missouri A.S.A. State Championship in 1963. In 1975 he was promoted to Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, and then appointed Director in 1981, the same year he was appointed District Commissioner. All told, Byrd's softball career includes directing well over 100 state, district and local tournaments and has spanned almost thirty-five years. Bill Byrd died in December of 1998.

Playing Ability

CHERI KEMPF, St. Joseph – A player since the age of nine, Kempf's accomplishment list is unending. As a fast pitch player in the Girls 13-15 division in 1977, her team won the National Championship in Freeport, Texas, and Sheri was named MVP. She was a three-time NAIA All-American and is a member of that organization's Hall of Fame. She was invited to the Pan American tryouts in 1983. She coached at Austin Peay University for five years. In 1991 she was asked to play with the Raybestos Brakettes, the ultimate National Champions that year, and winners of gold medals in the Olympic Sports Festival in July of that year and Kempf's record was 19-0 for the season. In the summer of 1992, she was named to the U.S. National Women's team that played in Izumo City, Japan and Beijing, China.

JERRY McDANIEL, St. Joseph – McDaniel began his career in 1969 and was one of the best third basemen ever to come out of St. Joseph. He played in numerous state tournaments and in two national championships.

ROGER SHEPARD, St. Joseph – Shepard played in the St. Joseph area from 1949 to 1970. His teams advanced to state tournament play every year from 1951 to 1970, and he helped his teams win two state championships. He played in a total of 19 states, 7 regionals, and one national tournament.

1993 (March 13, Sheraton Inn, Springfield) "Celebrating ASA's 60th Birthday!"

Meritorious Service

BILL "RED" GATES, Joplin – Gates has coached, managed, played, umpired and worked at the district level for a combined 30+ years. His teams advanced to 20 state tournaments, five regionals, and three nationals, including a fifth place finish in 1980 in the Women's Major Slow Nationals in York, Pennsylvania. He served as Deputy District Commissioner for sixteen years and has been Southwest District Commissioner since 1984. Under his leadership, team registrations more than doubled in the southwest district.

DAN KINNEY, Springfield – The Missouri A.S.A. State Commissioner from 1984-2002, Dan Kinney has been active in sports since childhood. He served as Deputy District Commissioner for Springfield from 1971-77 and as District Commissioner from 1977-83. Under his leadership, the Hall of Fame itself was instigated as were such innovations as the Missouri A.S.A. Spring Convention and "Missouri Basepaths." Kinney has overseen 14 national tournaments in Springfield as well as hundreds of local, state, and regional events.

Playing Ability

REBECCA "BECKY" DUFFIN – One of the foremost women's fast pitch players ever to pitch the game, Duffin's list of accomplishments is a mile long. She pitched all 33 innings of a Mid-America Regional tournament game in 1987 in what is unofficially considered the longest game in A.S.A. history. She operated a pitching school in St. Louis, played her college career at S.M.S.U. in Springfield, and coached high school softball for several years. She played A.S.A. with teams from Jefferson City and St. Louis.

THOMAS J. DOYLE – After a four year career with the St. Louis Cardinals in the 1930s, Doyle became one of the finest pitchers ever to come out of Springfield. His teams won five state championships and in 1946 Doyle pitched a Springfield team to the nationals for the first time ever. In 1948 his team finished third in the nation.

1992 (March 21, Holiday Inn Downtown, St. Joseph)

Meritorious Service

PETE PALMA, St. Joseph - Palma's long association with the A.S.A. began in 1952 as a player, but his umpiring career started in 1960. He served as Co-UIC for Missouri from 1970 to 1981; Western District (St. Joseph) UIC 1985-89; Deputy State UIC for Missouri 1984-87; and as treasurer and umpire scheduler for the

St. Joseph Umpire Association since its inception in 1980. He was umpire coordinator for the 1981 and 1984 Men's Major Fast Pitch Nationals and was tournament director for the Men's Masters FP Nationals in 1988.

KEN CHRISTGEN, SR. - The first inductee in the Hall of Fame as a sponsor, Mr. Christgen has sponsored teams in St. Joseph since 1965 and in some years sponsored as many as five teams. He built Walnut Park and his teams won no less than six state championships and played in seven national tournaments and one Sports Festival.

Playing Ability

BONUS FROST, Springfield, Certainly one the best to come out of Springfield, Frost's career spanned 24 years. He was named a Men's Major Fast Pitch All-American in 1966 and 1979 and played in thirteen nationals. In 1959 he set a national tournament record by getting on base seven times in seven at bats (4 hits, 3 walks). He was selected as first alternate to the 1979 U.S. Pan American team. He has sponsored numerous youth, women's and men's teams, and managed a men's fast pitch team for eight years.

TOM O'BRIEN, St. Joseph - O'Brien played fast pitch softball for over 20 years, and the top of his list of accomplishments is his All-American selection in 1980. He was an outstanding outfielder and hitter for St. Joseph's Polsky Motors and later for Walnut Products. He played in the 1982 National Sports Festival and batted .412. His career batting average is over .300 and he participated in four national tournaments.

1991 (March 2, Ramada Inn, Jefferson City)

Meritorious Service

JIM LITTLE - Springfield's best-known manager, Little started his career in 1965 with Bud's Mobile Homes. During his nearly thirty years in managing, his teams advanced to the Men's Major Fast Pitch Nationals nine times, and finished in the top five on five different occasions. His record includes five state titles and six regional titles, including a 30-6 record at the regional level. Possibly his highest honor has been to serve as one of two coaches for the U.S. Pan American team in 1983 and 1987. Little was manager for the Springfield Bass Country Inn All Star team that traveled to Isesaki, Japan in 1994 as a part of the Sister City Program.

Playing Ability

MARION "MOUSE" MATTHES, Jefferson City - Matthes' animated playing career extended from 1947 to 1975 in Jefferson City, and he appeared in 24 state tournaments, nine regionals, five nationals. His overall record as a pitcher included 34 no hitters and five perfect games. He was known for his humorous antics.

LARUE SAVAGE, Springfield - Considered one of Springfield's finest players, his 12 year career garnered five AAA league batting titles and participation in ten state tournaments including six as state champions, three regionals, and three Nationals. He batted over .300 in all three national tournaments, and he was named twice as an All-American second baseman.

1990 (March 3, Holiday Inn Holidome, Columbia)

Meritorious Service

MARTIN "MUTT" NAGLE, St. Joseph – This St. Joseph area umpire worked softball over thirty years including many Men's Major Fast Pitch State Tournaments. He served as head groundskeeper for Walnut Park for more than twenty years. Walnut Park hosted numerous state and regional softball tournaments. Nagle, a field crew of one in many instances, would drag fans and players onto the field to assist in getting the field ready for games. Walnut Park is long gone, but it was known as one of the finest softball fields in the country in its day.

LOUIS P. "TONY" ANTIMI, Columbia – Antimi worked for the Columbia Parks and Recreation Department from 1954 to 1975, retired, and then began working part-time again because he "had to get back on the fields." He worked diligently to improve the programming and facilities for youth softball and baseball, and was honored in 1975 when a new four field softball/baseball complex in Columbia was named after him.

Playing Ability

WILLIAM "BILL" MANARY, Springfield - Manary, of Springfield, played on six state championship teams, four regional champions, and played in four national tournaments. He played every position on the field except

pitcher. He was selected as an All-American second baseman in 1956 and was inducted into the Springfield A.S.A. Hall of Fame in 1966.

ALICE P. WARD – Ward played with Anderson Typewriter and more notably with the Goetz Girls of northeast Missouri. Teams she played with won seven state tournaments, two regionals, and played in three national championships.

1989 (March 4, Best Western, Jefferson City)

Meritorious Service

BOB NICHOLS – Nichols served as State Umpire-in-Chief for several years and his overall career spanned more than 40 years. He served with strong leadership in any role he took on.

BOYD KOCH - Besides playing and managing, Koch's umpiring started in 1942. He served as the St. Joseph Co-Umpire-in-Chief for 12 years, and was Missouri State UIC for 11 years. Koch died in 2015.

Playing Ability

DOROTHY CLUTTER – As a pitcher, shortstop and top home run hitter for the North Missouri C.T.'s, Clutter distinguished herself in more than one role. In one six-year stretch (1970-75), she amassed a 110-49 pitching record, while batting .310. She often played shortstop in the first game of a doubleheader, then pitched the second game. Her leadership was inspiring. Dorothy Clutter died in 1976.

NANETTA CARTER – Carter began playing softball in 1947 and after playing with several different teams, settled in for a long-term relationship with the North Missouri C.T.'s. Still active in coaching, her teams finished in the top four of the Women's Major Fast Pitch state tournament in 19 out of 25 seasons, including 7 championships and 7 runner-up finishes. She has coached in 22 states, Canada, Mexico and estimates well over a half-million miles traveled in her career.

1988 (March 5, Holiday Inn East, Columbia)

Meritorious Service

GORDON JOHNSON, Savannah – Johnson served as District Commissioner of the Northwest District for nearly thirty years, and was the State Junior Olympic Commissioner from 1982 until his death in 1992. He coached, managed, pitched and served as a leader of youth in his local community for over 55 years! His immortal words to close his acceptance speech still ring true today: "When I reach the bar on judgment day, how happy I will be, if just one child steps up to say, 'Gee, he did a lot for me!'"

GENE BASSMAN, Joplin - Mr. Bassman was the Southwest District Commissioner for thirty years, beginning in 1952. In 1962, he actually mortgaged his home in order to build the first ball park in Joplin. He did anything and everything from scorekeeping, field maintenance and umpiring, to ensure a quality softball program for his community. At one point, the Joplin Softball Association Board of Directors voted to give him a salary. He took the money and bought a tractor for the ball park, and the next year bought a popcorn machine. He never accepted any money for his efforts.

HOWARD SCOTT, Jefferson City - Largely responsible for the growth of softball in the mid-Missouri area, Howard Scott served as the Jefferson City Parks and Recreation Director for thirty years, and was the Jefferson City District Commissioner for twenty-eight years.

MANNY HORD, St. Joseph – Hord was considered to be one of the finest umpires in the country. He served as Umpire-in-Chief for the St. Joseph District for over twenty years, and was UIC for the state of Missouri. He was President of the St. Joseph Softball Association for 19 years, and umpired numerous state and regional, and two national softball tournaments. In 1965 he was assigned a 46 day tour of the Far East to promote softball and conduct rules clinics. Prior to his umpiring career, he played and coached. As a manager for the Goetz Girls, he won three state championships.

Playing Ability

TIM REYNOLDS – Reynolds' tall 6' 6" frame was an imposing figure to opposing batters. He became a leading fast pitch pitcher in the country and his statistics include five state and one regional championship; two Olympic Festivals including one silver and one bronze medal; seven national championships including selection to the 1981 Men's Major Fast Pitch All-American team.

PEGGY HUTCHINSON - A leading first baseman on the women's fast pitch scene, Hutchinson's career included 12 productive years with the North Missouri C.T.'s. She began playing softball at age 12, and her career highlight was selection to the 1969 Regional All-Tournament team.

CHARLOTTE STAMPER - Stamper's career as a pitcher from 1963 to 1978 included seven state championships with the North Missouri C.T.'s. At the 1967 state tournament, she pitched all but four innings of the entire tournament due to an injury to the team's other pitcher, and she pitched 37 innings leading her team to the championship.

CHARLES PUSATERI - St. Joseph area inductee, Pusateri is known for his hitting. His career included over 22 years of competition which included six Major Fast Pitch Nationals, a third place finish at the 1974 Nationals, numerous batting titles, and selection as first alternate for the 1981 Pan American team.

1987 (March 7 Sheraton Inn, Springfield, Missouri)

Meritorious Service

FRED HOFFMAN, St. Joseph - Missouri's first state commissioner, who served from 1933 until his death in early 1984. Mr. Hoffman was known nationally for his efforts in Missouri, and served on a variety of committees for the A.S.A. including being chairman for the prestigious Appointments & Ethics Committee, and was the national A.S.A.'s President in 1962-63. His induction into the National A.S.A. Hall of Honor was in 1976.

VIRGINIA DRAKE, St. Joseph - Not only did Virginia Drake serve as the Missouri A.S.A. secretary from 1947 until 1975, she was instrumental in assisting in the overall development of softball throughout Missouri. Her congenial and supportive nature made it easy for others to ask for her help. She passed away in 1978.

JIM EWING, Springfield – Ewing was Recreation Director for Springfield from 1942 to 1953, and then served as Parks Director from 1953-1977. He then served as a sales representative for the Dudley Company until his death in 1988. During his tenure, the local softball program gained national attention as facilities were developed and a lengthy list of local, state, regional and national softball championships were hosted under Mr. Ewing's leadership. He served as Springfield's District Commissioner for more than 20 years.