

National Wrestling Hall of Fame - PA Chapter to Honor Nine in 2015



PA Chapter president Ann (Peery) Ritter is proud to announce the 22st Class for induction into the PA Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame for spring of 2015. The date of the banquet is May 3, 2015; the site is the Hilton Harrisburg. Details for the banquet (cost of tickets, etc.) will be posted in the near future on the PA Wrestling website <http://www.pawrsl.com/pa/tebullnew.htm>.

In her remarks, Ritter stated, "Again this year our state committee selected another great class of Honorees to be inducted into the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. Every year I am amazed at the caliber of the people who are nominated. Every year the selection process is difficult, since only a few people can be honored each year, and so many have dedicated a lifetime to service our great sport. This just shows the depth of quality of amateur wrestling, especially in Pennsylvania. Congratulations to the following members of the Class of 2015." The Inductees are:

Lifetime Service to Wrestling Awards

Bill Cramp – Bill was a high school and collegiate wrestling official for 26 years. He was inducted into the EIWA Officials Hall of Fame in 1993, and co-founded of the NCAA Wrestling Officials Association (with Pat McCormick and Pascal Perri). Bill designed the logo for the Referee's patch. Bill refereed in 11 consecutive NCAA Championships (1970-1980), numerous ACC, Southern Conference, EWL and PSAC tournaments. He served as Vice-President of the EIWOA for 3 years, President of the EWL Officials when the league was formed. He also served as the regional rules interpreter for both the NCAA and PIAA. Bill was a 2-year letterman at Penn State, and a member of the 1953 National Championship Team.

Walt Fisk – Walt wrestled at Lycoming College, serving as team captain and graduating in 1981. His coaching career began as a youth coach at Sayre in 1981, then he became Wyalusing's Jr Hi Coach in 1983. In 1986, he became the Rams Head Coach where he remained until 2005, compiling a record of 297-52-1. His teams won numerous League, Sectional, District Team & Dual, and Regional & Dual Championships. His Rams won 3 State Team Championships and twice were the Runner-Up. Individually, Walt coached 7 State Champions and 33 medalists. He is a member of numerous Halls of Fame, and 3 times was the PIAA State Coach of the Year. In 2000 he was the NHSWA Coach of the Year. Through the years, Walt provided incredible leadership in many off-season wrestling teams, Coaches associations, and other wrestling organizations at state, regional and national levels. Then on top of all this, in 2011 he returned as Wyalusing's JV Coach, until 2014.

Dr. Patrick L. Gianopoulos (posthumously) – Known to all as "Doc Pat," he graduated from Penn State in 1942. The community of Philipsburg was blessed when he settled there and went on to practice medicine his entire career. Until he retired in 2004. With a deep love of wrestling, he became Philipsburg-Osceola's team physician. In 1956, he was asked to be the District 6 Tournament Physician and the Northwest Regional Tournament Physician, continuing both events for 47 years (until 2001)! He was the PIAA State Tournament Physician from 1960-2001. Doc Pat was elected into the PWCA Hall of Fame (1983), District 6 Hall of Fame (1989), and was the District 6 Man-of-the-Year (1975). Unknown, he also 'anonymously' donated the OW trophy at Regionals for many years. Doc Pat passed from the Earth on November 5, 2006, but not from the hearts and minds of all the wrestlers, coaches and fans who knew and respected him.

Charles Hershey – Charlie was a highly respected high school and collegiate referee for 25 years (1960-1985). He worked numerous Sectional, District and Regional Tournaments for 22 years, capped by officiating in the PIAA State Championships in 1985. He wrestled 3 years at Columbia High School, graduating in 1957. He then coached elementary wrestling for several years, and has been the Chairperson of Columbia Wrestling for 50 years! Charlie was a charter member of the National Wrestling Association, when it was organized in 1994 – and soon was renamed to the PA Chapter of the NWHOF. He helped set the structure that has lasted 22 years.



Richard Osbeck – Dick went to William Tennent High School, was a 3-year letterman and Team Captain. He graduated from East Stroudsburg in 1963, and was a member of the wrestling team. Dick was a teacher and Middle School/Jr Hi coach for 38 years at Centennial School District, before retiring in 2002. He compiled a 363-32 record in dual meets, including 15 undefeated seasons. Dick was as a referee from 1990-2002, serving as Chapter President in 1997. He continued to serve the wrestling program as score keeper (1989-present). Dick is a member of the District 1 Steering Committee since 2002, and served on Boards of Directors in local Youth Wrestling programs in 1976-1994. He is a member of the Southeast Pennsylvania Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Ron Park – Ron Park is a true life-long coach! He started in the mid-50's at Clearfield High School, where he assisted Art Weiss and then Jerry Maurey for a total of 8 years. Ron then became the Head Coach, guiding the Bison to excellence for 9 years. In 1968, he moved to the Pittsburgh area to be the Head Coach at Hempfield. In 13 years there, he elevated the Spartans to a WPIAL power. Ron retired in 1986 because of his wife's health. Nearly 15 later, returned as Hempfield's Jr Hi Coach (4 years) then moved to the varsity as an assistant for the next 9 years (till present). If you are counting, Ron has coached wrestling for over 50 years, despite the hiatus in the late 80's & 90's. He is now 82 years old, and an every-day assistant coach at Hempfield! Ron is a member of the PWCA Hall of Fame, PA Sports Hall of Fame, and District 9 Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Martin S. Rusnak – Marty was a 4-year starter at Slippery Rock, graduating in 1964. In 1962, he was undefeated in dual meets. Right out of college, Marty became the Head Coach at Altoona High School, coaching for 36 years and retiring in 2001 with a career record of 317-222-2. His best season was in 1976, when his Mountain Lions were 14-0. Marty coached 44 District, 16 Regional & 2 State Champions. He had 51 State Qualifiers and 13 medalists. He is a past President of the PWCA, was an active member of the District 6 Coaches Association and was awarded the National High School Gold Award from Scholastic Magazine in 1989. Marty is a member of both the District 6 and the PWCA Halls of Fame. While still coaching his Altoona squad, Marty still found time to serve as the Pennsylvania Junior Wrestling All-Area Tournament Director for seven years (1980-1986).

Charles "Biff" Walizer – Biff graduated from Lock Haven State in 1963, with 3 PSAC and 2 NAIA Championships and a career record of 72-10-1. One of his win was over Bobby Douglass in the NAIA Finals. After LHSC, he became the Head Coach in Alexander Bay, NY for 1 year, followed by 6 years at Titusville where his teams compiled a record of 42-19-1, and an undefeated team in 1968. Biff then came home to Bald Eagle Nittany High School, and stayed. From 1970-1995 his teams were 252-136-5, including 3 undefeated seasons. His Panthers won 10 District Championships including the last 6 of his career. Individually, Biff coached 53 District, 20 Regional and 7 State Champions. He was the District Coach of the Year 8 times, and twice was named the PIAA State Coach of the Year. He is a member of the NAIA National Hall of Fame, Clinton County, District 6 and PWCA Halls of Fame. Throughout his career, he was very active in Cadet and Jr. National Freestyle and Greco teams.

Outstanding American Award

The Honorable Glenn "GT" Thompson – GT was a 2-year starter and letter winner for legendary NWHOF Coach Dick Rhoades, graduating from Bald Eagle Area in 1977. GT has degrees from Penn State and Temple Universities. In high school GT was a team leader and a tireless worker, never missing a practice. His personal work ethic and discipline propelled him to a successful adult life and as community member. He is an Eagle Scout and has continued as a Scouting leader for 4 decades. In 2012, he was the recipient of the National Distinguished Eagle Scout Award. President Gerald R. Ford is also a recipient of this award. GT was first elected to serve the 5th District in the United States House of Representatives in 2008, where he still serves very actively and energetically today. He serves on the House Committee on Education & Workforce, the Co-Chairman for the Congressional Natural Gas Caucus, he is the Chair of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy & Forestry, and the Co-Chair of the Congressional Career & Technical Education Caucus.