



2013 INDUCTEES



BOB HAWKINS #19 CINCINNATI COLT 45'S

Your knowledge, ability and love for the game of baseball is evident to all. But to those lucky enough to know you as a friend and teammate, realize that's only part of what makes you Hall Of Fame worthy.

Your dedication, honesty, empathy and concern for all, exemplifies the best in human character and sportsmanship.

It is with great love and appreciation that the Cincinnati Colt 45's family congratulates you on your induction into the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame!



The Incredible Hawk!



Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame Class of 2013



A CERTIFIED 501©3 ORGANIZATION

November 1, 2013

Greetings from the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame

On behalf of the Roy Hobbs Foundation Board of Directors and the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame Trustees, I would like to welcome you to the 2013 Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame and thank you for taking the time to be a part of this celebration of Baseball Excellence within our Community.

Congratulations are in order for each of the 17 honorees today as we recognize and celebrate their contributions to this game of Baseball, to their teammates and to the greater amateur Baseball community, which has benefitted so much from the visible and invisible efforts and gifts of these individuals.

This is the inaugural year of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame and first such induction ceremony. The startup process has been guided by the RH HoF Trustees, chaired by Denny Brown and Joel Weinstein, and began with the development of a Mission Statement, which has been the guidepost throughout the nomination and election process. Heartfelt appreciation goes to that group – Joe Caligaris, Kevin Marden, Carl Rakich and Vito Ruscio – and to the many volunteers who spent the time to gather background data on the nominees for getting us to this day.

The Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame Mission Statement: *The Roy Hobbs Baseball Hall of Fame is established to recognize and honor individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the game of Baseball through their involvement with Roy Hobbs Baseball, the Roy Hobbs World Series and their local leagues and teams. Individuals shall have made contributions as players, coaches, managers, sponsors, umpires and administrators. Those contributions have been made both on and off the field of play; however, a prime consideration for recognition is the individual's contributions to the game, their teammates and their Baseball colleagues.*

We thank you for your commitment, passion and love of Baseball. We appreciate your presence here today to express your appreciation as we celebrate the accomplishments of our 17 honorees.

Best wishes,



Tom Giffen
Chairman, The Roy Hobbs Foundation
President, Roy Hobbs Baseball
Member, Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame Trustees



Henry A. St. Clair Michael R. A.

Harry D. Young

Gary W. Wright

Frankie Rodriguez Lane Green

Jack

De Heer

Hawk

T. J. Shulburt

Goldfinger

Tim

Bartholomew

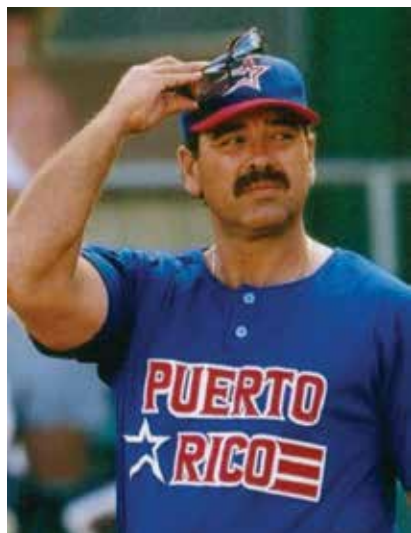
Joe Maiden

Tim McGowan

Ronald E. Crues

Alfred Ayler

Alfred Ayala



Alfred Ayala

Alfred Ayala's profession is a family physician, which means he's a doctor who can take care of all sorts of ailments. No doubt, filling out prescription forms for patients is part of his life.

Away from the office, he takes care of other things – scheduling baseball games, organizing trips to Fort Myers for the Roy Hobbs World Series, filling out lineup cards and herding pitchers from his catcher's position.

You name it in Puerto Rico, if it comes to baseball Alfred Ayala has probably done or been part of it. He's organized teams and coordinates the logistics of travel, according to Carlos Morales, who nominated Alfred for the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

"Dedicated to promote the game of baseball at every level," Morales wrote in his nomination letter.

That dedication to baseball in general and Roy Hobbs Baseball in particular are the reasons Alfred Ayala is going into the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame as a member of its inaugural class.

Baseball has been part of Alfred's life since boyhood on an island with a rich baseball tradition. It was at a neighborhood field next to his home where he got hooked on the game. The lure of baseball was powerful to the boy.

"That ballpark attracted me so much that one day I got lost from my house, my family started looking for me and they found me at the park with my father's glove trying to convince old people to let me play," Alfred said. "I was 5 years of age but thank God my father told my family to let me be at the park whenever I wanted to."

Now, Alfred's trips to play baseball means annual jet trips to Fort Myers and not walks to a park.

– Glenn Miller

What did he say?

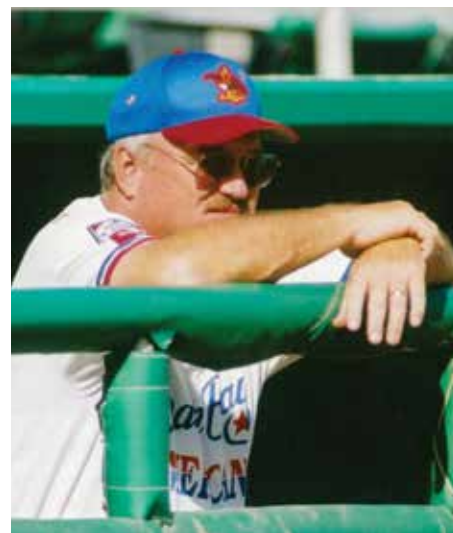
How'd you get hooked on baseball? *"The sound of the bat hitting a baseball, the smell of the grass, the colors of the uniforms, the great stories about great players my father told me about."*

What do you say to people who think you play softball?

"That I am too young for playing softball, maybe someday, when I have played all the Roy Hobbs different age categories."

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? *"That I have learned to respect the game of baseball, my teammates, my family that support me and give me the time to practice and play ... being a good baseball player starts with being a good man and friend and that I have tried as hard as anyone to accomplish this."*

Troy Cox



Troy Cox

Troy Cox's Roy Hobbs resume is as impressive, perhaps, as anybody's. His Palm Bay Americans have won 8 Roy Hobbs Series titles and been runner-up 6 times.

But winning takes second place for Troy Cox. He is about playing baseball and making it possible for others to play. And, on that point, his resume dwarfs winning.

In Florida's Brevard County, "Troy Cox IS baseball," according to David Darrah's Roy Hobbs HoF nomination form.

Troy started organizing adult baseball in his home on Florida's east coast in 1980, well before the founding of Roy Hobbs. As a manager and administrator, he's made baseball and, since 1990, Roy Hobbs thrive in his community as well as building championship teams.

If there is something happening in adult amateur baseball in Florida, Troy is #1 on every organizer's list, and Troy, with an expansive email list, makes it his business to spread the word. "It's about creating opportunities for ball players to play and to compete," he said.

Creating those opportunities is why Troy is in the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame. Troy, 58, though, is old school. He hasn't been trumpeting the honor. He said some of the players on his teams don't even know about it.

see Troy Cox on page 13

What did he say?

How'd you get hooked on baseball? *"Fun, fun, fun. And I was real good at having fun."*

What keeps you playing? *"Passion. Camaraderie. History. Tradition. And I'm still having fun."*

What do you say to people who think you play softball? *"Sorry, we PLAY HARBALL. I have not played softball since 1985."*

What's your favorite Roy Hobbs memory? *"My favorites are winning the top division championship in 1998 (30-plus, 4A) and 2010 (38-plus 4A) where we were considered the No. 1 among all teams in all divisions."*

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? *"It is a great honor and I am humbled by it. I have never been very good at accepting awards or handling emotional moments of recognition. For myself, it's always a TEAM Tribute. ... I give them the credit for making me look good."*



Ronnie Craig



Ronnie Craig

Ronnie Craig has been a Roy Hobbs World Series fixture since those long ago days when it was held in Central Florida.

His first World Series was in 1991, two years before the event moved to Fort Myers. Now, more than 2 decades later, the organizer and manager of the Asheville Sox, is a member of the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

He hasn't missed a World Series in all those years. He's led Asheville to championships as he's aged – two titles in the 30s, two more in the 40s and one in the 60s. His playing days are largely over.

"I mostly manage," Ronnie said. But the men who nominated Ronnie Craig for the Hall of Fame recommended him for more than winning baseball games.

Ronnie Craig's devotion and years of service and all those championships highlight his selection as a member of the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

"If not for Ronnie Craig, we would not have any old-timers baseball in western North Carolina," said J.D. Hinson, according to an official nomination document. "He's done so many things to promote baseball and benefit his community including helping to build fields for kids and donating baseball equipment to kids."

Ronnie, 66, suffered a severe back injury several years ago in a work accident and was told he'd never walk again, but he couldn't leave Roy Hobbs.

"His passion for baseball is so great that he continues to run things and makes sure guys get together and play and gets the team down to Florida," Hinson said.

Ronnie, a grading contractor, will be back for another

see Ronnie Craig on page 13

What did he say?

Why play baseball? "Oh, I just love the game, I walked 8 or 9 miles to play ball."

What keeps you playing? "When it's not fun, it's time to quit."

What do you say to people who think you play softball? "I tell them that's for the girls. That's a girls game."

What's your favorite baseball memory? "Oh, I guess the first World Series we ever won."

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? "It's a big honor."

Jack Deheer



Jack Deheer

Once, a long time ago, Jack DeHeer was a sickly child who spent months in a hospital fighting scarlet and rheumatic fever. Jack explained that he was bed-ridden and shuttled around the hospital in wheelchairs.

Baseball? Not then. He used to sit in the hospital and look out windows watching other boys play baseball and football. Doctors told Jack's parents their son had a heart murmur and strenuous activity was out of the question.

"I sat there and kept quiet and thought, 'Yeah, right,'" Jack said.

That was in the early 1960s. Now, 50 years later, Jack DeHeer is still playing baseball, whenever and wherever he can.

Jack's Roy Hobbs' exploits are legendary, as an incredibly tough out and prolific player across several age groups. His tireless love of the game, his on the field skill and off the field exploits promoting the game explain why he has earned a spot in the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

He's a slugger who once hit 3 home runs in a game

see Jack Deheer on page 13

What did he say?

How'd you get hooked on baseball? "The battle between the pitcher and hitter. I was the hitter ... I wanted that moment in time when the game was on the line. When it counted. I wanted that moment."

What keeps you playing? "Now that I am getting older, I must say I seem to get more of a kick watching my teammates succeed."

What do you say to people who think you play softball? "That is a real sore point. SOFTBALL is SOFTBALL. I play baseball. That's not, I repeat, not softball."

What's your favorite baseball memory? All the World Series wins. ... the home run derbies early on. The men's faces of each of my teams and my opponents, the friendships. The guys we lost."

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? "They (peers) have recognized me. It's not about me. It's about them and they recognize my true drive and determination and appreciation of THEM."

Lane Green



Lane Green

The Lane Green nominations for the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame were numerous and effusive from those who know him best.

Mark Herron: "... the heart and soul ... of the Tallahassee Classics."

Ken Silvestri: "great teammate."

Jeff Miller: "true gentleman of the game."

David Chapman: "pillar in our community."

After reading

those comments from the baseball people who know him best, it's clear why Lane Green is going into the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame as a member of its inaugural class.

Lane Green got Roy Hobbs Baseball off the ground in Tallahassee more than 20 years ago and has been instrumental in keeping it thriving.

Away from the ball field he's worked as a wildlife and conservation official and is now involved with Quail Forever, an organization dedicated to, as its website notes, "conservation of quail, pheasants and other wildlife."

He's a son of a World War II veteran who played baseball in his youth before the war. "He instilled that (love of baseball) in me," Lane said.

Lane grew up around the game in Tallahassee, playing at every level, from Little League to Leon High School to Florida State University in the 1960s. His parents, he said, never missed one of his games when he was a boy.

He's been an administrator, manager and player for adult amateur baseball in Tallahassee since the early 1990s.

Now, Lane, 67, is still playing the game. Lane admits he

see Lane Green on page 14

What did he say?

How'd you get hooked on baseball? "It all goes back to my dad. My dad played in high school. He was active when I was playing. He loved the game."

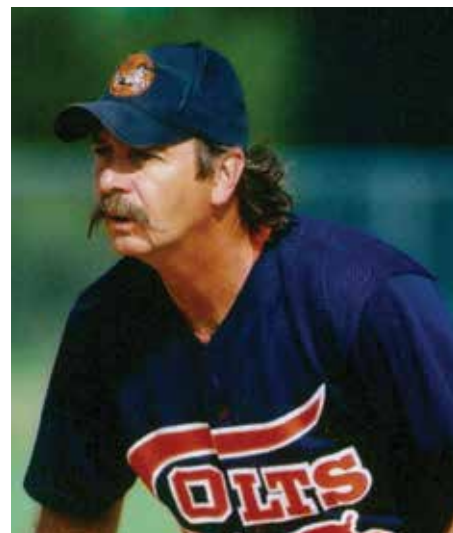
What keeps you playing? "Because I can. I've been very fortunate health-wise. I stay in shape to play baseball."

What do you say to people who think you play softball? "I say I play the real game – hard ball."

What's your favorite Roy Hobbs memory? "I hit it out of City of Palms Park with a wood bat at age 60."

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? "It is such an honor because it comes from my peers."

Bob Hawkins



Bob Hawkins

Bob Hawkins' childhood may sound familiar to older Roy Hobbs players. As a boy in Freemont, Indiana, he and friends rode bicycles with clothespins holding Bazooka bubblegum cards to the spokes so they made a clicking-clacking sound.

He and friends played baseball just about every day in the summer. Bob said he was the first

in his neighborhood to make a Little League team and the first to wear an official uniform. This was in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

"I woke up every morning ready to play ball," Bob said.

That spirit and love of the game is still true for Bob. "I would guess that any adult who plays Roy Hobbs Baseball would tell you we are like Little Leaguers the night before a game and would prefer to sleep in our uniforms," he said. "The thrill of putting on your uniform in anticipation of playing baseball never leaves us."

Bob has helped make his team, the Cincinnati Colts, a special organization.

His extraordinary efforts and enthusiasm with the Colts have made Bob a special person in Roy Hobbs Baseball. Those qualities in abundance have also made Bob what is now – a member of the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

see Bob Hawkins on page 14

What did he say?

How'd you get hooked on baseball? "My father, as I found out later, played semipro ball during the Great Depression. ... And then, of course, what kid didn't want to own and swing a bat with Mickey Mantle burned into the barrel."

What keeps you playing (after the car wreck)? "My teammates at the time picked me up and took me to every game. They never complained about pushing me in a wheelchair over the grass or picking me up and carrying me to the dugout."

What do you say to people who think you play softball? "I cannot just let it go. 'No,' I say, 'we're baseball players.' Which usually sparks a response from folks."

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? "I actually believe it has not sunk in yet. To have been recommended by my teammates is an honor in itself. ... To be part of the inaugural group of inductees goes beyond my wildest expectations. It is an honor I will carry with me the rest of my life."



Bart Leathers



Bart Leathers

Name something – anything – that could be done in Roy Hobbs Baseball and Bart Leathers has probably done it.

Player? Yep. Coach? Yep. Administrator? Yep. Umpire? Yep. And Bart didn't just show up.

"His leadership, overall involvement, passion, resiliency, and inspiration are well-known throughout Middle Tennessee amateur

baseball circles," was part of a nomination for Bart's Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame selection.

Given all he has done in so many ways for baseball in Middle Tennessee, it is evident Bart Leathers earned his selection as a member of the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of fame.

Bart was born and raised in Tennessee, played high school ball there and later earned a degree from Vanderbilt and a law degree from the Nashville School of Law. That's his "real-world" life – attorney.

The nomination went on to extol the way Bart goes about his baseball life.

"We've all become accustomed to the friendly greetings, the sharp, digging, one-liners, and the great camaraderie we've all shared and enjoyed with this terrific and caring friend," the nomination noted.

In 2011, though, Bart was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Chemo followed and by the end of the 2012 baseball season, he was cancer-free.

see Bart Leathers on page 14

What did he say?

How'd you get hooked on baseball? *"My first baseball memory was at age 5. My dad took me to a game."*

What keeps you playing? *"The people keep me coming back."*

What do you say to people who think you play softball? *"I tell them not to cuss in front of me."*

What's your favorite baseball memory? *"Just the friends I've made in baseball is incredible."*

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? *"I don't know how to put it into words. Humbling. ... I'm proud of what I've done. For anybody to notice is astonishing."*

Joe Maiden



Joe Maiden

Joe Maiden is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, served 5 years in the Marine Corps and then was an American Airlines pilot for 32 years.

Before all that and after all that there has been baseball, lots of baseball. Joe grew up in northern Virginia and some of his fondest memories are of a boyhood playing baseball in a golden era.

"Kids could leave home on a summer morning, spend the entire day at the schoolyard playing any form of the game we could devise, and hopefully make it home in time for dinner," Joe said. "There was no concern of safety from degenerates, drug pushers, etc., just wholesome fun with our friends."

The world has changed, and Joe, now 74, still plays baseball and is a go-to team organizer in several age groups in his adopted home of San Diego. And, he's the organizer for the Western Silver Foxes traveling to events in Arizona and Roy Hobbs.

His relentless efforts on and off the field to make baseball thrive in Southern California exemplifies Joe's election to the Hall of Fame.

After college Joe played softball but in 1994 became

see Joe Maiden on page 14

What did he say?

How'd you get hooked on baseball? *"What got me hooked is simply love of the game. My grandmother often said 'Joey was born with a ball in his hand.'"*

What keeps you playing? *"This love is part of what keeps me going but other factors are significant. The opportunities to play in different venues, including foreign countries, is a seductive lure."*

What do you say to people who think you play softball? *"I simply say, 'No, I play the real game' and smile at their amazement as they ask if I mean on a full-size field, with overhand pitching, bunting, base stealing, etc."*

What's your favorite baseball memory? *"Life is about people and the time with friends is what I remember the most. After the last out is made, this is what remains."*

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? *"I am honored and humbled. I do not seek recognition. I do what I do because it brings me personal satisfaction."*

Kevin McBurney



Kevin McBurney

Kevin McBurney was several weeks shy of turning 57 when he died on June 4 of this year. His impact on baseball and his Rhode Island community can be gauged by what folks said when nominating him for the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame and also on a his memorial page.

Kevin was a powerhouse organizer of Roy Hobbs Baseball in

his home state and a supportive teammate and manager.

Joe Pavao wrote this on the Manning-Heffern Funeral Home tribute page: "What a great spirit he had. I played baseball with him and as a teammate he was the greatest."

Paul Lonardo wrote this: "Wherever you are, I hope there's baseball, and if there isn't, I know you will start your own league. I hope you find peace playing in a field of your dreams."

The praise from the men who nominated Kevin was crucial in his election to the Hall of Fame ... for his inspirational leadership, passion for the game, organizational skills and playing ability.

Kevin, an attorney, was a Roy Hobbs pioneer in Rhode Island, working to start leagues there many years ago. He was also an outstanding player, one who played in an elite collegiate program at the University of Miami. Yet, the nominators said he never bragged about his own accomplishments and was always willing to help less talented players.

Dick Kissik in his nominating comments wrote, "As a coach he would build the confidence of the average players and would work with them to improve their baseball skills."

Dave Abate wrote that he played with Kevin for 13 years and that he had been a star high school player who was there for all of his teammates.

"Besides being a very good player he was also a good person," Abate wrote. "He would always help players improve their baseball playing abilities and for those who couldn't afford all the costs of playing baseball in their league or to go to the World Series he was there to help them."

Kevin was involved in adult baseball in Rhode Island for more than 25 years, starting when many teams were involved with MSBL.

Now, at a too-young age, Kevin McBurney is gone from the world of baseball and Roy Hobbs in Rhode Island, but his legacy and memory live on in the hearts of his teammates and friends ... and in the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

— Glenn Miller

Tim McGoldrick



Tim McGoldrick

Tim McGoldrick has done just about everything that can be done in baseball and Roy Hobbs.

Player, manager, league, coordinator, umpire-in-chief. He's been a fixture at the Roy Hobbs World Series since 1992, the final year it was held in Orlando.

It wouldn't be a Roy Hobbs World Series without Tim.

Based on all he's done in so many ways it wouldn't or

couldn't be a Roy

Hobbs Hall of Fame without Tim McGoldrick. That's why he's in the inaugural class of the Hall of Fame.

Baseball has been a part of Tim's life for more than half a century, back to his childhood in Parma, Ohio. Like many Roy Hobbs players, he used to collect baseball cards just for the love of the game and not as an investment.

"My brother and I played a dice baseball game we came up with, keeping stats, and learning the players names," Tim said. "At one time, I could probably recite most of the players statistics from 1958 thru 1965."

But young Tim was more than just a couch potato collector of cards. He was also a very good youth and high school pitcher. He started Little League in 1959 and later threw 3 no-hitters for Padua Franciscan High School in Parma.

Tim continued with the game as an adult, becoming one of the most prolific pitchers in Ohio unlimited baseball, gaining a statewide reputation as a go-to pitcher. More than 20 years ago, he got involved with Roy Hobbs and

see Tim McGoldrick on page 14

What did he say?

Why play baseball? "I realized I had a pretty good arm, better than anyone else my age. We played at least 9-10 months a year in the backyard, the street, and at playgrounds. This was before color TV, and the electronics everyone has these days."

How'd you get hooked on baseball? "Playing baseball was what I did, that I excelled at. It was my passion. Like most kids who had dreams, mine was to be a Major Leaguer."

What do you say to people who think you play softball? "I have no desire to participate. It's not a sport in my mind in slow pitch, and fastpitch doesn't excite me so I don't go there."

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? "A humbling honor. It hasn't hit me yet, other than the smile I can't seem to shake."



Fran Podraza



Fran Podraza

Fran Podraza is Mr. Roy Hobbs in Fort Myers. That doesn't mean, of course, he should be confused with Robert Redford, who played Hobbs in "The Natural."

But when it comes to Roy Hobbs Baseball in the home of the World Series, nobody other than perhaps the late Bob Wagner, has done as much.

It's fitting, then, that both Bob and

Fran are in the inaugural class of the Hall of Fame.

If not for Fran there might not be Roy Hobbs Baseball in Fort Myers and without Fran the World Series might not be in Fort Myers. Based on all he's done with the local league and teams in Fort Myers and facilitating the World Series' move to Fort Myers, Fran was an easy choice for the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

Fran recalls in 1989 that Bob came by softball fields at Rutenberg Park and said he was looking for fellows to play baseball. Fran said he was the only softball player who signed up with this new organization.

Fast forward 4 years and Bob and Fran were key figures in moving the World Series from its original home in central Florida to a new home in Southwest Florida, where it remains to this day.

Fran is a tireless organizer of Amateur Baseball Association of Southwest Florida, and is somewhat of a

see Fran Podraza on page 14

What did he say?

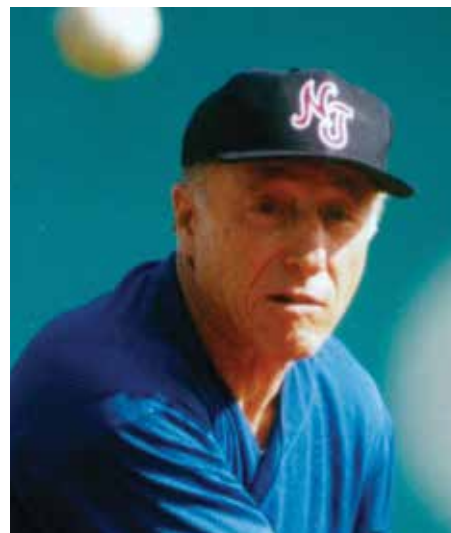
What keeps you playing? *"The people I have met, the great friends I made, seeing them again every year on a baseball field. Getting to know them and their families. Just stepping on a baseball field has a wonderful feeling even after doing it many, many times."*

What do you say to people who think you play softball? *"No, no. Hardball. Just like MLB. Same fields and rules. Once you step on a baseball field, softball becomes a distant memory."*

What's your favorite Roy Hobbs memory? *"The thrill of winning 5 World Series championships with my players. Playing on 3 other championship teams. ... Catching Jim Hickey. ... As far as I know (I'm) the oldest player to hit a home run at Terry Park."*

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? *"It is quite an HONOR, especially when you look at who's been inducted into the first HOF class. They represent what Roy Hobbs is all about."*

Bill 'Doc' Pollak



Bill 'Doc' Pollak

Cy Young's major-league record of 511 wins is beyond comprehension and almost certainly out of reach of any pitcher.

But New Jersey amateur baseball legend Bill 'Doc' Pollak has more than twice as many wins in amateur baseball. At last count, the 78-year-old right-hander has won 1,024 baseball games.

Not bad, to say the least, whether those wins came in the Roy Hobbs World Series or the Essex County (N.J.) Baseball League or for Upsala College. And he's not done playing.

"I'm a freak," Doc said.

Doc's remarkable career and longevity are what amateur sports in general and Roy Hobbs Baseball in particular are all about – to keep playing and staying active. His example and never-say-die playing attitude has earned Doc a place in the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

His profession is dentistry but his passion is baseball.

In 1957, he pitched batting practice for the New York Yankees. Those Yankees were at the peak of their glory with Mickey Mantle, Yogi Berra and Whitey Ford.

Those Yankees were legends. So is Doc Pollak. He started playing baseball in 1947 and here in 2013 he's still playing. When he was called for this profile, Doc apologized and said he was taking batting practice and would call back.

When he won his 1,000th game at age 69, the Star-Ledger newspaper, profiled him under this headline: "Pollak Wins His Elusive 1,000th."

see 'Doc' Pollak on page 14

What did he say?

How'd you get hooked on baseball? *"I got a kick out of it. The camaraderie is a big part of it. ... Baseball has been really good to me ... I got more out of it than I put in."*

What keeps you playing? *"I still enjoy it. ... The thrill of the competition."*

What's your favorite baseball memory? *"Just being able to go into it (World Series) and play baseball. The fields are perfect. The weather is beautiful. It's a great couple of weeks."*

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? *"It's a tremendous honor. I'm really, really thrilled they even considered me."*

Hank St. Clair



Hank St. Clair

His smile leaps off the page. Any photo one finds of Henry St. Clair, he sports a luminous smile, something that was genuine, judging by heartfelt comments posted after his passing.

Mr. St. Clair, known to all as Hank, died in the fall of 2011 of a heart attack at the age of 69, just a few weeks before the Roy Hobbs World Series, where he had been a fixture

as an umpire-in-chief. He was respected for his skill and dedication, which he earned through 12 years of umpiring in the World Series, including 7 as umpire-in-chief. He worked on 13 championship crews.

For all his years of service and all the professionalism and knowledge and effervescent personality, Hank has earned his way into an exclusive club – the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

The Marine Corps veteran was called “a man of integrity” by fellow ump Bob Rocco.

“Mentor, teacher, leader, a fair man who never judged and commanded respect with his baritone voice and positive actions,” fellow umpire Tim McGoldrick said.

One of Hank’s umpiring pet peeves was the wearing of watches by umps because he felt it could give the impression an umpire was worried about getting the game over swiftly instead of focusing on doing a good job.

He was a New Year’s Day baby, born Jan. 1, 1942 in Cleveland, Ohio, and as adult became a respected official in baseball, fastpitch softball and volleyball.

Retired from AT&T, his home was Wisconsin but he and his wife spent time in South Carolina and Florida when he wasn’t on the road umpiring high-end youth baseball, high school, college and amateur baseball and teaching umpire mechanics.

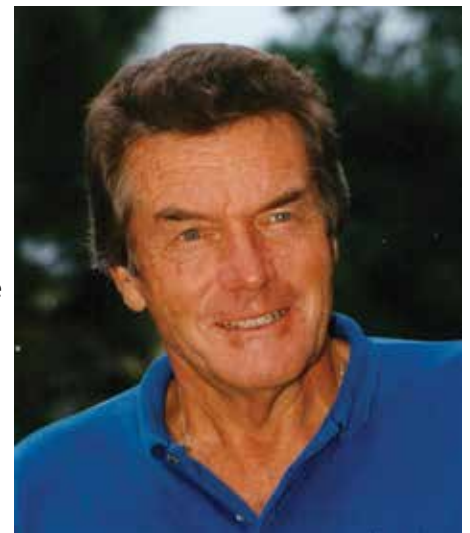
“I came to know this wonderful and cheerful man at the Roy Hobbs World Series where he was an esteemed umpire in chief,” Vivette K. Evans wrote on tributes.com. “I am sure he was a great umpire, but to me was a great person.”

Mike White of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, wrote this on tributes.com, “Hank was an umpire’s umpire and a gentleman’s gentleman. He was the nicest MAN I have ever met. I will miss him in Ft. Myers but I know his spirit will be there with us.”

Roy Hobbs president Tom Giffen endorsed Hank’s Hall of Fame nomination with these words: “Hank defined the UIC role for RHWS, set the example and led by example.

see Hank St. Clair on page 14

Bob Wagner



Bob Wagner

If not for Bob Wagner, the Roy Hobbs World Series might not be in Fort Myers.

Only the most veteran of Roy Hobbs players and umpires can remember when the World Series was played in central Florida, starting with the inaugural event in 1989.

As Roy Hobbs grew and needed more fields and fields close

together, Bob, a Fort

Myers resident and avid player, started spreading the news about his community.

In the fall of 1992, he convinced Ron Monks, the founding father of Roy Hobbs Baseball, to visit Fort Myers and Lee County, where the Minnesota Twins held Spring Training and the Boston Red Sox were coming.

At the time, City of Palms Park and the Player Development Complex were under construction for the Red Sox, who would begin training in Fort Myers the following spring. With colleague Fran Podraza working his connections in the hospitality industry and county government, Bob then convinced the local NBC affiliate, WBBH-TV, to send a crew out to do a story about the potential of Roy Hobbs moving to town.

For his pioneering work bringing the World Series to his hometown and for building up the local leagues and his passion for the game, Bob earned his way into the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

Bob, who died in 2001 at the age of 69, was more than a mover and shaker in the Fort Myers baseball community. He loved the game. After his death from cancer, the Fort Myers News-Press referred to him on the front page of the sports section as “Mr. Baseball.”

“I think he’d be extremely honored,” said Greg Wagner, his son and Roy Hobbs World Series photographer every year except one since 1989.

Even into his 60s, Bob was pitching in local leagues to men half his age. He was also actively involved in Challenger Baseball, a division of Little League for mentally and physically challenged youngsters.

After Bob’s death, children in the program who asked about the man they knew as “Bob” were told he had gone to heaven.

Baseball was more than Roy Hobbs and Challenger to Bob, who developed the Wagner Wooden Bat Classic, a January event for players who did not want to go to fantasy camps.

see Bob Wagner on page 14



Todd Windhorst



Todd Windhorst

Todd Windhorst was a Roy Hobbs World Series fixture for many years, including as recently as 2012. He won't be here this year, though. Todd died last Dec. 19.

He'll be remembered this year and at every subsequent Roy Hobbs World Series because of all he did to make the Roy Hobbs premier event run every year.

Countless players and managers came into contact with Todd

every year on the phone and in Fort Myers, where he was director of operations and worked hard to keep Roy Hobbs President Tom Giffen out of trouble. That's a massive logistical challenge with dozens of teams and hundreds of players to deal with every week.

But he handled it with aplomb, dealing with Roy Hobbs veterans he had known since the 1990s or new teams trying to find their way from City of Palms Park to Terry Park or trying to figure out what the heck is a five-plex.

Todd played baseball all his life, starting in his hometown of Pittsburgh, where he was a highly honored scholastic catcher. Out of high school he was invited to several tryout camps and eventually declined a pro contact offer to complete school.

He was also a Roy Hobbs Baseball pioneer, helping getting it going in Ohio, and a multi-sport official in Ohio. He played, co-managed the Akron 40s and worked as an administrator to make Roy Hobbs Baseball possible.

In Bill Russo's Hall of Fame nomination letter on Todd's behalf, he wrote about how the director of operations allowed Hobbs' Giffen to focus on other of the countless details that go into the event.

"No one, outside of Tom Giffen, has played as many roles locally or nationally as Todd did during the history of Roy Hobbs Baseball," Russo wrote.

Todd was also a strong voice for Challenger Baseball, a division of Little League for physically and mentally challenged youngsters. Challenger Baseball is a beneficiary of the Roy Hobbs Foundation. One of Todd's favorite 'jobs' was pitching in Challenger games.

In Russo's nomination letter he also wrote about Todd's sense of humor. Once, when Giffen went in to pitch for their team and Todd, fully adorned in his 911 Akron jersey, went to take his infield position, doing so wearing a batting helmet, a not-so-subtle dig at Giffen's pitching velocity, or lack thereof.

"Todd is certainly deserving," Russo wrote, "as he was an integral part of helping establish and grow Roy Hobbs Baseball."

- Glenn Miller

Gary Wright



Gary Wright

Coming to Fort Myers every year for the Roy Hobbs World Series is almost like coming full circle in the baseball life of Gary Wright.

It was up the road from Fort Myers, in a town near Sarasota called Englewood, long before Interstate-75 reached this far south, that he began playing baseball.

That was in 1965, nearly half a century ago, when he was

6 and started playing the game. Baseball has been a big part of Gary's life for all that time, in and out of Tidewater Drillers and Roy Hobbs uniforms.

Gary, a resident of Virginia Beach, Va., was one of the co-founders of the Tidewater Drillers, one of the nation's top youth baseball programs. He played at Old Dominion University. Gary brings older versions of the Tidewater Drillers to Fort Myers every fall for the World Series. Sometimes he brings more than one team to the World Series.

Now, he's going into the inaugural class of the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame, within easy driving distance of where he first played baseball. He's earned this honor through all he's done for baseball in Virginia. Gary's nominators believe he's worthy of induction because he's made Baseball a reality for them and many others.

As noted on Nate Blake's Hall of Fame nomination form: "Without him, the Drillers program would've been done a long time ago."

In his region of Virginia, Gary is a well-known baseball

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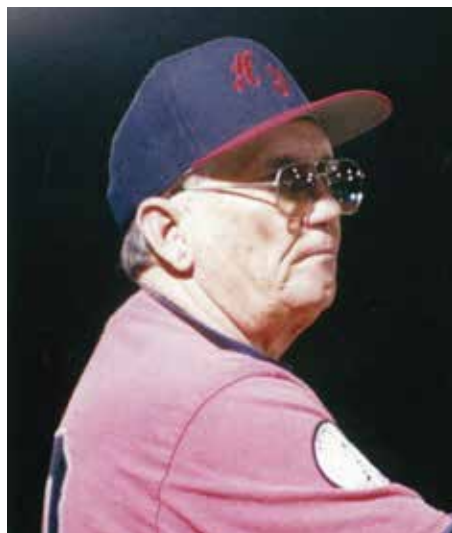
What did he say?

How'd you get hooked on baseball? *"It is real simple ... The hardest thing in sports is to hit a round ball with a round bat. You can fail 7 times out of 10 and be a Hall of Famer. The mental toughness you have to have to excel in baseball is unlike any other sport."*

What do you say to people who think you play softball? *"Really! Shake yourself."*

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? *"To be in the inaugural class is the ultimate honor one can ask from Roy Hobbs. This is for all the members of Driller Nation, and I am honored to represent our team. Plus I can charge more for my HOF autograph - just kidding."*

Harry Young



Harry Young

Harry Young is 82 and doesn't play baseball but is all about the sport he has loved since boyhood.

His Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame credentials are strong. "The full breadth of the man cannot be served in just a few bullet points, as there is much more than meets the eye," John Oehlers wrote.

"His impact has (gone) far beyond the baselines,

helping former players with jobs, buying homes, financing advice, life advice and many other areas. All of this from a man who is now (past) 80 and never played the game after high school."

Harry started a family and created his home-building business, but when it came time for his first son to play sports, Harry signed him up for baseball – 45 years ago – and has been in the Harry Young Builders dugout ever since.

"I was the coach, the sponsor, the driver, and I have never stopped," he said. "I just went up the ladder with my son and moved on into the adult baseball, even when he wasn't playing ... I just love this game."

Harry's contribution to baseball is seen through the eyes of the people he has helped play, people that he has coached, both on the ball field and in life. Said Oehlers: "He so loves the game and the idea of organized baseball that he rarely says no to anyone who is in need."

The love is returned by players such as George McCormick, who wrote, "Being involved with Harry Young

see Harry Young on page 14



Troy Cox

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Although 21st century popular culture is one of relentless tooting of one's horn, Troy isn't like that. Brag? "It seems like self-promotion," Troy said.

Instead, Troy is going about his business of working in the Brevard County Parks and Recreation Department and preparing his Americans team for the 2013 World Series.

– Glenn Miller

Ronnie Craig

continued from page 6

World Series this year.

"His love of the game has never wavered at all," Gary McDonald said in the nomination. "I don't think you could find anyone who would say a bad word about him."

Ronnie is in many ways a throwback to the time when he was a little boy.

"I don't have email," Ronnie said.

But he has a love for baseball and a place in the Roy Hobbs Hall of Fame.

– Glenn Miller

Jack Deheer

continued from page 6

and played on 8 Roy Hobbs World Series title teams. Oh, he's also a decorated former Chicago police officer who owns Tight Security, Inc., a security company.

Jack, a Roy Hobbs player since its inception, has played amateur baseball in Russia, Denmark, Italy, Australia, Cuba and Canada.

He plans to play in four age divisions in this year's World Series. That means Jack, 59, might play as many as 36-to-40 games if all his teams do well and advance to championship rounds.

"I'm ready to play 32 and win at least two of the four weeks," he said.

– Glenn Miller

What did he say?

Why baseball? *"I love the game, the competition, the camaraderie in the dugout."*

What keeps you involved? *"I enjoy the game ... I have made a lot of friends through the years, from other states and countries, through baseball. That's the dugout for you ..."*

What's your favorite baseball memory? *"I have had so many highlights, but I think it was winning that first Roy Hobbs tournament, 1996 I believe. That was special."*

What does it mean to be elected to the Hall of Fame? *"A great honor, something I never expected. I am proud of it ... you're only as good as the players in the dugout ... and the people I've been around have made this possible ..."*



Lane Green

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wasn't a star at FSU but he was good enough to play at that level. It was his success as a ballplayer at a younger age, he said, that hooked him on the game.

"I had success at what I was doing," Lane said. "I was tall and skinny and I had a good arm."

– Glenn Miller

Bob Hawkins

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"His wife, Juliet, and Hawk have created an extended baseball family," Denny Ehrhardt wrote in a nomination letter. "All are welcome. We celebrate birthdays, we cry when there is sickness, we grieve when someone in our family is lost."

Nothing, it seems, can keep Bob off the field. He was in a car wreck in 1995 and has a steel rod in one leg but still plays.

"He's the kind of person you want in your Hall of Fame," Ehrhardt wrote.

– Glenn Miller

Bart Leathers

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He was well enough by the fall of 2012 to join the Tennessee Dirtbags' 48-plus team on its trip to Fort Myers and even played a little.

Bart's value extends beyond hits. "Without Bart Leathers there would be no Middle Tennessee Adult Baseball Association," Mike Ward of the association wrote.

Bart, 63, was MVP of the Dirtbags last year even though he didn't have gaudy statistics. As nominator Donnie Burns noted, "Bart demonstrated to us how to stay focused and locked in on the breaking balls life can throw at us."

– Glenn Miller

Joe Maiden

continued from page 8

involved in adult baseball. "I have not touched a softball since," he said.

He started playing on 50-plus teams and organizing leagues and has organized teams in older divisions and makes the cross-country trek from San Diego to Fort Myers for the World Series.

Joe now works part-time at an investment management company. "This helps keep my gray matter working and I enjoy assisting clients with their financial planning," he said.

– Glenn Miller

Tim McGoldrick

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extended his playing days. He started an umpire's association in 1999 and assigns umpires to all sorts of levels of play from high school to travel ball to adult leagues.

– Glenn Miller

Fran Podraza

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one-man band when it comes to the league operation, and then, he takes care of his own team, Fort Myers Hooters, and is respected for his character.

"If he says something that's the way it is," Hobbs veteran Dave Power said.

– Glenn Miller

'Doc' Pollak

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"I had a rubber arm," Doc said of his ability to pitch so often for so many years.

He said he once pitched 5 complete games in eight days. He's played in other men's adult baseball organizations but prefers Roy Hobbs.

"Roy Hobbs is the place to be," Doc said.

– Glenn Miller

Hank St. Clair

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What is perhaps most telling to me is the fact that when Hank spoke to umpires, they listened. When Hank spoke, everyone listened. ... Most of the procedures we have in place are because of his leadership, recommendations and experience."

– Glenn Miller

Bob Wagner

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"He believed the game was for everyone," Roy Hobbs president Tom Giffen told The News-Press in 2001.

Bob liked to say, "There's no sweeter sound on this planet than a ball hitting a wooden bat."

– Glenn Miller

Gary Wright

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figure. "He is Mr. Baseball in Hampton Roads," noted Travis Blake.

In the real world, Gary's profession is well driller, a job that has carried over to baseball.

"He has even irrigated (baseball facilities) in the (Tidewater) area on his own time at no or minimal cost to the leagues in the area," Blake said.

– Glenn Miller

Harry Young

continued from page 13

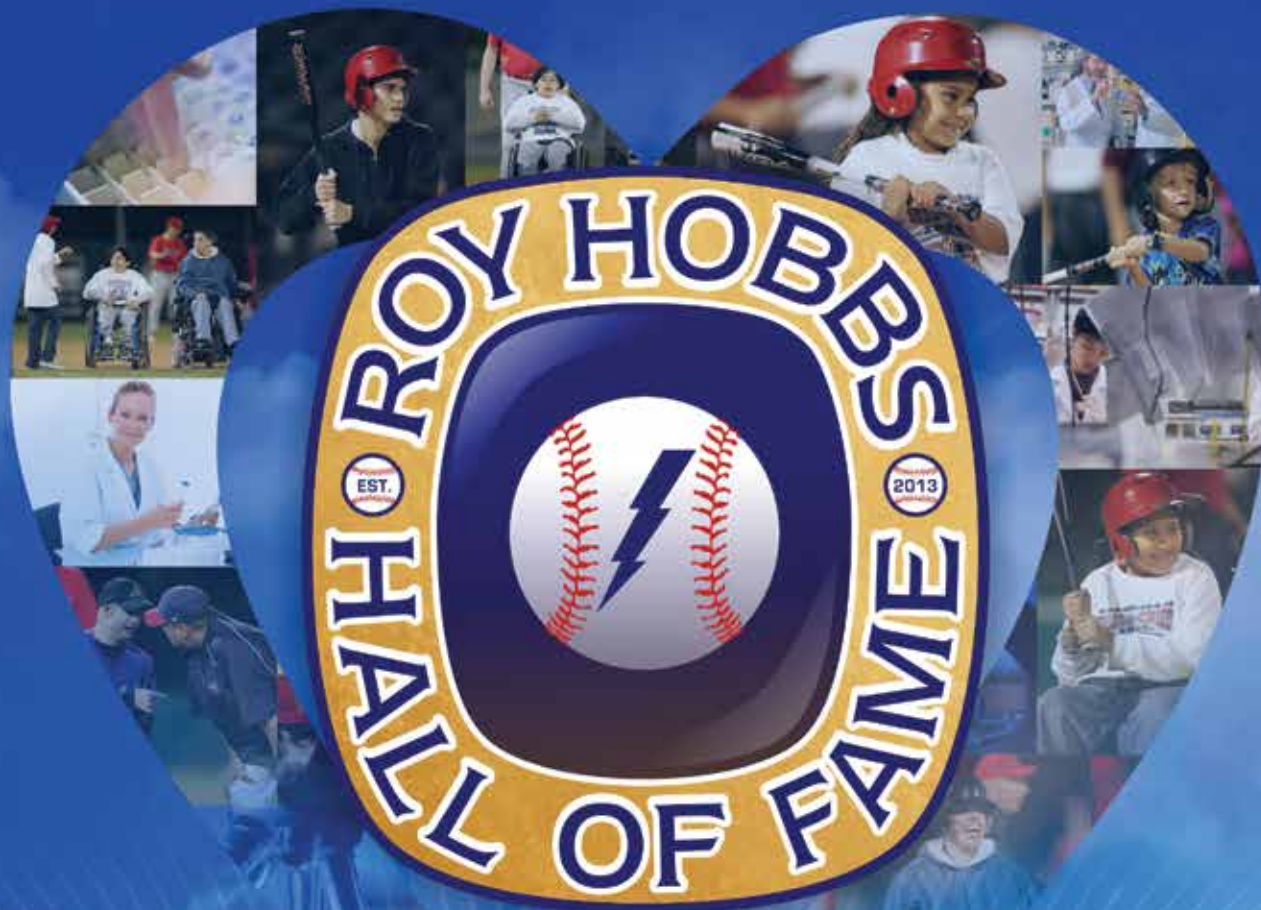
over the last 34 years playing baseball has impacted my life in many ways. ... The bottom line is my life has been made better by being involved in baseball with Harry Young."

Oehlert looks forward to seeing Harry at the World Series. "You don't know how bad all of us would love to win it one more time for Harry," he said.

– Glenn Miller



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