



# Howard County Government News Release

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## “Community Sports Hall of Fame” Announces 2009 Induction Class

ELLICOTT CITY, MD – Howard County’s “Community Sports Hall of Fame,” sponsored by the Department of Recreation & Parks, is proud to announce its 2009 inductees. The Community Sports Hall of Fame honors outstanding individuals who have gained prominence and/or have made a substantial contribution to community recreation sports in Howard County. The induction ceremony will take place at the 7<sup>th</sup> annual “Celebration of Sports” on Tuesday, October 20, 2009, at the Turf Valley Resort and Conference Center.

This year’s inductees were selected by a 12-member Hall of Fame Committee and include:

**Stan Ber** was sports editor for *Columbia Life* and, in late 1971, became the sports editor of the *Columbia Flier* and later its sister publication, the *Howard County Times*. In his role as sports editor, Stan served as a facilitator for the first Columbia Memorial Day Soccer Tournament and two tennis tournaments for junior players. He was instrumental in the creation of the Columbia Rotary Club’s Bob Davidson Scholar Athlete Award, presented annually by the Columbia Rotary Club. He used his weekly column to follow the progress of athletes and coaches, to speak out about the wants and needs of the sports community, to advocate for good sportsmanship and to emphasize the importance of getting good grades.

**Karen Brelsford** became a freelance photographer for the *Columbia Flier* in 1973 after a chance encounter on a sports field with fellow inductee Stan Ber. She was soon assigned to write the stories, take the photos, type the copy, write the headlines and proofread the pages. She helped produce the 20 pages of sports that once filled the *Flier* and the *Times*, publishing thousands of kids’ names in the papers each week. It was Karen who made sure that girls’ teams received equal coverage. She also refused to run one-sided rec league write-ups, reasoning that someone on the losing side also had a good game and

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deserved to be mentioned. After years as the assistant sports editor, in 1999 Karen became the sports editor and served in that position until 2002 when she left the paper to become a certified financial planner.

**John Dye** has been an active game official and administrator for Howard County Officials since 1972. Recognized by area softball players as a premier umpire, in 1992 John was honored with a membership in the “National Indicator Fraternity” – a national certification recognition of the Amateur Softball Association for outstanding umpires. At the state level, he is a board member of the Maryland State Amateur Softball Association and has served as the State of Maryland Umpire for both the National Softball Association (2005) and the United States Sports Association (2006). Since 1997, he has served as President of the Columbia Volksmarch Club.

**Phil Lang** has served on the Howard County Striders Board of Directors for the last 18 years, including two years as President and five years as race director for the Striders Metric Marathon. Since the 80’s, he has been organizing the Striders team entries for competitions and in 2001 created the Striders Cross-Country Training program. Under his leadership, the Striders’ youth program has grown to over 200 young athletes. He has served as the Maryland State representative to the Road Runners Club of America since 2005.

**Jim McCleary** is the face of the Kangaroo Kids Jump Roping Program. Involved since the 70’s, Jim was responsible for adding choreography to the routines leading to the first Kangaroo Kids Precision Jump Roping Team. As team coach, he leads three to six practices a week and provides numerous after-school jump roping programs. He is co-founder of the USA Jump Rope Federation, serving on their Board of Directors for nine years. He successfully lobbied to have jump roping become an official part of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) and has served as the AAU Jump Rope Committee Chairman since 1997, earning their Volunteer of the Year award in 2000. He also served as the USA Jump Roping Head Coach in 2004.

**Patricia Muth** has been teaching Howard County how to glide, jump and spin on ice for four decades. Upon moving to Columbia in the 70’s, Pat quickly involved herself in the activities of the local ice rink as a volunteer. Her volunteer efforts included co-founding the Columbia Figure Skating Club and offering both recreational and competitive figure skating. Today, she continues teaching and coaching for the Columbia Figure Skating Club and the Chesapeake Skating School.

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**Ray Page** started his coaching career with the COBRA Football Program in 1972 as an assistant coach in their intramural 7-9 age bracket and a head coach of an 11-13 year old team. His coaching career continued another 25 years with that 11-13 year old team. During the past four decades, Ray has served as Vice President of Football for COBRA. In 2002, he helped co-found the Trojan Football team and the Central Maryland Football and Cheer League; he went on to serve as President of the Howard County Trojan Football and Cheer program. Ray was also very active assisting with local wrestling tournaments.

The 2009 “Celebration of Sports,” which also includes the “GoodSport” awards, will feature keynote speaker Joe Ehrman, former NFL Defensive Lineman for the Baltimore Colts. Tickets for the event may be purchased at Recreation & Parks headquarters, 7120 Oakland Mills Road, Columbia, online at [www.howardcountymd.gov/RAP](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/RAP) or by phone at 410-313-7275.

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