

## National Wrestling Hall of Fame - PA Chapter to Honor Nine

PA Chapter president Ann (Peery) Ritter is proud to announce the 21st Class for induction into the PA Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame for spring of 2014. The date of the banquet is April 27, 2014; 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. So again this year, the selection process was difficult, since only a few of the 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 2014."

The Inductees are:

### Lifetime Service to Wrestling Awards



**Jim Butler** – Prior to his untimely passing in July of 2012, anyone who attended a significant wrestling event, regardless of when and where it was occurring has probably seen Jim Butler sitting near mat's edge with his camera recording the action for the Keystone Wrestling Round-Up or one of the other newspapers he supplied with wrestling action photos. Jim was also one of the pioneers in taking wrestlers all over the state to summer tournaments. His interest and generosity helped many wrestlers achieve their goals. He created the first Individual State Rankings in the early 1980's.



**David Crowell** – Dave wrestled at Lock Haven State College, where captained the team and was a 2X PSAC medalist. He went on to become a prolific coach at storied high school programs at Easton, Nazareth, and Wilson, amassing 411 wins through 27 years. Probably more impressive is that he won over 100 meets, coached at least one state champion, won at least one state team championship, and was voted the State Coach of the Year at least once in each of the three different schools he coached. Since 2009, he has been the Coaching Development Consultant for the NWCA, and is known for "Dave Crowell's Winning Wrestling System" of seminars, consultations and clinics.



**Russ Houk** – Russ was a 3-sport athlete at Lock Haven State graduating in 1952. Short successful stints guiding South Williamsport and Muncy High Schools led to a 14 year career at Bloomsburg State College. In his second year, his team went 9-1, also winning the PSCAC Championship. He went on to coach teams to 5 PSCAC titles, 3 NAIA championships, and a career record of 142-34-4. Russ developed one of the first and most successful wrestling camps in the US in 1962. That camp became the US Olympic and Pan American Games Training Camp. Russ was the Olympic Team manager and hosted such greats as Dan Gable, Chris Taylor, Rich Sanders, John & Ben Peterson, Stan Dziedzic, Wade Schalles, Gray Simons, Don Behm and Wayne Wells. He was a member of the US Olympic

Wrestling Committee from 1964-1976, serving as manager for the freestyle team at the 1972 & 1976 Olympic Games. Russ passed away in June of 1988.



**James A. Jones** – Jim graduated from East Stroudsburg State College in 1961. After graduation, he started the wrestling program at Marple Newtown and coached for 8 years. In 1969, he then moved to Haverford, where also started the wrestling program. Jim remained at the District 1 school for 43 years, earning three League championships and coaching one state champion, before retiring in 2012. In 1998, he was elected to the Pennsylvania Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame.



**Joseph Kiefer** – Joe wrestled for Wilkes College, and was a NCAA Division III Runner-Up in 1966 at 137 lbs. He coached every level from youth to head coach in Pennsbury and Fairless Hills in his 43 year tenure (1968-2011), with the last 25 years as head coach, with his teams posting 411 wins, 10 League Titles, 3 District Dual Titles, one District One title and one Regional Title. He has coached 65 sectional champs, 26 district champs, 17 regional champs, 13 state medalists, including 2 State champions. Joe is a member SE PA Wrestling Hall of Fame and a member Wilkes University Athletic Hall of Fame.



**Howard "Hob" Kroesen** – Hob graduated from Elizabethtown College in 1971, and immediately began a career as a wrestling official that lasted 25 years till he retired in 1996. He officiated in 2 State Championship Tournaments. Hob officiated in countless sectional, district and regional tournaments, MAC championships, many of which served as the head referee. Hob was a mainstay at the Manheim Holiday Tournament for 14 years. He was named the outstanding official three times in the Lebanon-Lancaster Wrestling League. Along with this busy life as a referee, Hob still found time to coach a youth program for wrestlers aged 6 to 12 for 15 years.



**Norm Palovcsik** – In 1981, Norm was joined by the late Jim Butler (fellow 2014 inductee) and the late Russ Olenick to revive the Pennsylvania Wrestling Round-Up, a publication still in existence 31 years later. After Butler and Olenick retired, Norm continued the publication as sole proprietor. Since 1983, he has served as executive board member of the PWCA with responsibilities for the PWCA Hall of Fame. Norm is a past President of NWCA, and is a member of the AAU Wrestling Executive Board for media relations. Norm wrestled for the Penn State Nittany Lions from 1969-73 following a fine high school career at Clearfield, where he posted a record of 62-3. He was a 3X District 9 Champ, and a Regional and State Champion in his senior year of 1968. Norm enjoyed coaching success for 12 years in high school and collegiate levels, but truly has earned renown in his efforts to serve, publicize and promote the sport of wrestling.



**Charles Tursky** – Chuck is the head wrestling coach at Kiski Area High School and has been there for 25 seasons. Prior to that, he coached 7 years at Burrell. Chuck has been an inspirational leader to his team, and has been on the winning side of the mat 475 times as opposed to suffering 139 losses in his career. His Kiski Cavaliers rolled to a streak of 68 consecutive dual meet wins in the late 90's. He has been named sectional coach of the year in 10 seasons, and has been named the WPIAL in 1997 and PIAA State Coach of the Year in 2003. Chuck was also elected to the PWCA Hall of Fame in 2003. Possibly the most remarkable statistic for Chuck is that 80 of his former wrestlers have gone on to become coaches themselves; quite a legacy to great coach.

### **Medal of Courage Award**



**Curtis Markle** – Curtis is a 1998 graduate of Bald Eagle Area High School in District 6, where he was a 3-sport athlete. He wrestled for legendary coach and Hall of Fame member, Dick Rhoades. Curt's career record at BEA was 95-24; quite impressive considering he did not begin wrestling until he was in the sixth grade. He was a 2X State Qualifier for the Eagles, winning District and Regional championships at 112 lbs. in his senior year. After graduating from BEA, Curtis wrestled for Blair Academy in New Jersey and the US Military Academy. In 2004, Curtis broke his back and was paralyzed below the chest. The accident did not deter his pursuit of athletic interests, where he excels in adaptive water and snow skiing, biking and varied Wheelchair Olympics sports. Curtis is currently a student at Penn State University, majoring in Environmental Systems Engineering.