



R.A. Jeffries
Distributing Co.



CHARTER CLASS

Installation Banquet

Robeson County

Sports

Hall of Fame



April 18, 2009



Agenda for Hall of Fame Induction Day

Format for the day is as follows:

- 9 a.m. – Golf Tournament at Cliffwood Golf Course- 3811 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.; Lumberton, N.C. (910) 738-9400
- 5:30 p.m. - Hall of Famer Inductees arrive at venue

R.A. Jeffries Distributing Co. Installation Banquet

- 6 p.m. - Hall of Fame Banquet begins
 - Brief intro of each Inductee (then be seated at table)
- 6:15 - Invocation
- 6:20 - Meal
 - Remarks from UNCP basketball coach Ben Miller
- 6:50 - Purpose/recognize committee
- 6:55 - Recognize 2009 Hall of Fame class individually –
 - Award presented to each Hall of Fame Inductee by William Freeman
- Conclusion
 - Remarks from Nicky McKeithan, Class of 2009
 - Closing Remarks-Abdul Ghaffar, Chairperson

DVD

JOE BRISSON

Baseball Player & Youth Coach



Joe Brisson played minor league baseball for the Denver Yankees. With the St. Paul Saints in 1948, he batted .354 and had a pitching record of 14-1. He coached recreation sports in St. Pauls for more than 40 years. Brisson twice earned the Governor's Certificates of Appreciation for volunteering and his legend was made permanent with the naming of St. Pauls' Little League field in his honor in 1981. Brisson distinguished himself wherever he went including on with the Army during the Battle of the Bulge in World War II and later with the National Guard.

TOM COPE

Youth Coach & Sportswriter



Tom Cope Jr. was "Mr. Baseball" in Red Springs. He organized youth baseball programs as the town's unofficial athletic director in 1956. Later, he would be appointed to the town's Recreation Commission. Before that, Cope coached the Red Springs Robbins, a semi-professional **team** for Robbins Mills. In 1980, The Tom Cope Athletic Park was named in his honor. He was a 1933 graduate of Duke University, where he learned to love baseball. He worked many years for the Red Springs Citizen.

ROD GRIFFIN

Basketball Player & Coach



In 1977, Rod Griffin was named Atlantic Coast Conference Player of the Year. Averaging 20.2 points and 8.6 rebounds with a .628 shooting percentage, he was also named 2nd team all-American. His jersey is one of only 10 retired by Wake Forest University. In the 1978 NBA draft, Griffin was the 18th overall pick by the Denver Nuggets. As a professional player, Griffin played in Italy from 1978-93 mostly for Basket Forli. He was named head coach for the team.

GENE LOCKLEAR

Baseball Player & Artist



Gene Locklear was signed as a free agent by the Cincinnati Reds in 1969 and played five seasons in the major leagues, from 1973 - 77. He also played with New York Yankees and San Diego Padres. An outfielder and left-handed batter, his career batting average was .274. In his best year, Locklear batted .378 with the Padres in 1975. He closed the book on his professional career in Japan with the Nippon Ham Fighters in 1978. He earned an art degree from the Minneapolis Art School and became a successful professional artist. Locklear's subjects are drawn from the wide world of sports and his Native heritage. His works hang in buildings from the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas to homes and offices throughout Robeson County.

DWIGHT LOWRY

Baseball Player & Coach



Dwight Lowry was an outstanding student-athlete at Pembroke High School, where he was salutatorian and all-conference in football, basketball and baseball. At the University of North Carolina, where he was all-ACC, Lowry was drafted in the 11th round of the 1980 draft by the Detroit Tigers. He broke into the big leagues in 1984 with the Tigers and earned a World Series ring. He played from 1984 - 88, finishing his career with the Minnesota Twins. His career as a manager began in 1991. He earned the Development Man of the Year Award, and in 1998, he was inducted into the South Atlantic League Hall of Fame.

REGINA MILLER

Basketball Player & Coach



Regina Miller put Parkton High School on the basketball map when she led her team to the state championship in 1980. As a freshman at Louisburg Junior College, Miller led her team to a national championship in 1981 and was all-American. At powerhouse Old Dominion, she went to the final four. After stops at Western Kentucky, Arizona, and ODU, Miller was named head coach at Western Illinois in 1992 and head coach at the University of Nevada Las Vegas in 1998. She took both teams to one NCAA tournament appearance. She was also an assistant coach for the U.S. National Team at the 1997 World Championships.

LEE McRAE

Track



A Maxton native, Lee McRae literally burst on the national track and field scene while at West Robeson High School. He was recruited to play football and run track at the University of Pittsburgh. Arguably, McRae was the fastest man in the world for two years. In one race, he defeated both Carl Lewis and Ben Johnson. He won the gold medal in the men's 100 meters at the 1987 Pan American Games, and McRae won three consecutive NCAA indoor national championships (1986-1988) in the 55 meters and the 1986 NCAA Outdoor National Championship in the 100 meters.

NICKY McKEITHAN

Football Player & Golfer



Nicky McKeithan's name is synonymous with sports in Lumberton. After lettering in three sports for four years at the high school, McKeithan was recruited to play football for Duke University. In his senior season in 1955, McKeithan scored a touchdown and had an interception in Duke's 34-6 Orange Bowl win against Nebraska. While in college, he took up golf and later won 10 Robeson County golf championships, the last one at age 50. For 22 years, McKeithan was the radio voice of Lumberton Pirate Football.

EVA PATTERSON-HEATH

Basketball Player & Coach



Eva Patterson-Heath played basketball at Red Springs High School and North Carolina A&T University. She returned to her school to teach and coach in 1985. After going 15-9 in her first campaign, the legend was just beginning. In the 2008-09 season, Patterson-Heath won her 500th game as a coach. She has taken two teams to the state championship game and four of her players played in the East-West game. After organizing a recreation basketball league in Red Springs, she has continued to volunteer and mold the character of young women for 20 years.

NED SAMPSON

Basketball Player & Coach



John W. (Ned) Sampson played football, basketball and baseball for Pembroke High School and Pembroke State College, graduating in 1953. Sampson stood out on the hardwood. He averaged 24 points per game as a senior and his 40 points point game against Campbell College was a record for many years at the college. He coached basketball for 34 years first at Magnolia High School and Pembroke High School. "Mr. Ned" is a charter member of UNCP's Athletic Hall of Fame and a member of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame.

DONNELL THOMPSON

Football Player



After an outstanding football career at Lumberton Senior High School, Donnell Thompson moved up the road to the University of North Carolina. As a defensive lineman, Thompson was named an all-Atlantic Coast Conference performer. He was also the 18th overall selection of the Baltimore Colts of the National Football League. He played 11 seasons and 147 games with the Colts, recording 40 sacks. Thompson proved successful in business as well. He owned five McDonald's restaurants and several Marriott and Choice hotels. Today, he is a building contractor.

BOB VAN HOY

Basketball & Baseball Coach



Bob Van Hoy coached basketball and baseball for boys and girls for many years at Red Springs High School. In 1956 his baseball team won the state championship and they were runners-up in 1957. He was successful with boys and girls basketball, winning a total of 12 county championships. Van Hoy was selected the first coach of the East-West Baseball Tournament. He was an outstanding college baseball and basketball player for Catawba.

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