

# The Sacramento Men's Senior Baseball League

Presents

## 2021 Hall-of-Fame Induction



### September 25, 2021





## **SMSBL President's Message,**

It's my honor and a privilege to welcome the 2021 SMSBL Hall of Fame inductees. I want to congratulate each of you for your recognition. You were nominated by your peers and selected by the Sacramento Hall of Fame Committee Members. As the years go by and the League continues to grow it's quite an elite class and accomplishment.

The League and HOF Committee would like you and your family to enjoy this evening. I'm sure you all have many proud teammates and friends to celebrate with as well. Please take the time to thank your HOF Committee Chairman Jim Tygrett-DeNuzzi and his HOF Committee. Also thank the support cast who will be working hard to ensure your celebration is a memorable one. It is because of players and individuals like you that our Sacramento MSBL is the most accomplished, admired, and respected League in the country.

Respectfully,

*Alan Van Ness*

**SMSBL President**

---

Congratulations to all New 2021 Sacramento MSBL Hall Of Fame Inductees.

It certainly is a recognition of your significance in the continued perpetuity of excellence displayed by the SMSBL.

You all join such a distinguished group of men who paved the way for men to continue to play baseball decades ahead of them.

Hope you enjoy the evening!

*Steve Sigler*



***Steve Sigler***  
**PRESIDENT MSBL / MABL**

One Huntington Quadrangle, #307  
Melville, NY 11747

**(631) 753-MSBL**



## Jane Burkitt

Jane was born in Sacramento and has lived in the region her whole life. She has been interested in photography and sports since she was a young girl. Jane played Bobby Sox softball (all-stars) , high school softball @ El Camino (all metro) and college softball @ American River. She also played on women and co-ed slow pitch softball teams. In 1986, Jane met her husband to be (Tim) playing on a co-ed softball team. Jane was able to combine her two interests when Tim started playing baseball in 1994. She has taken photos at MSBL tournaments such as the AZ World Series, Best in the West, Florida Fall Classic, San Diego Memorial Day Classic, Las Vegas Open and the Kickoff Classic. One of Jane's photos has been featured on the cover of Hardball Magazine along with numerous photos inside, and on the MSBL National Website. Jane has been the SMSBL league Photographer since 2010.



## John Daly

John was born and raised in South Sacramento. Played winter ball at 6 years old for Bob Stadum on the Bobcats. He then played ball for Willow Rancho little league and then South Sacramento Babe Ruth, making the 13 -15 year old All Stars all 3 years, and was selected to the Babe Ruth Hall Of Fame in Hamilton N.J. John played for Goethe and Sam Brannan Junior high Schools (where he pitched his first one hitter). John played for the Elk Grove High School Baseball Team and was once selected honorable mention to the ALL City Team and won a Baseball Championship (Elk Grove H.S. first-1981).

Instead of following an offer from University of Pacific as a pitcher he decided to pursue a music career and then military life with the United States Marine Corp and after completing this part of his life, got reacquainted with his high school love (Twila Curtis), and had 3 awesome children together. John and Twila have been married 34 yrs. John started playing hard ball again in various leagues at 28 years old and then played with Alan Vanness (his Marine Corps Brother). John began playing SMSBL in 2000. Playing in this league with a couple different teams and then a couple Elk Grove teams with friend Eric Guimont, and then decided to join with Alan and Steve Fisher which created the Rockets, (All over some Coors lights) for 5 years. John decided to play with his old friend Mike Baker and the SMSBL Auburn Braves, and maintains special memories and lasting relationships with his Braves teammates. John now plays for the Sacramento Bombers (yes back with Eric Guimont) and the Free Agents (Sunday Team). Tournament teams John played for and presently are the Auburn Braves, Sacramento Royals, Sacramento Dragons, Sacramento Bombers and different Father-n-son teams. He has won 3 world Series rings, 2 with the Braves in Arizona and 1 with the Royals in Florida and was MVP in 2 All Star Games and awarded the MVP in the Florida World Series Fall Classic.

John would also like to share a personal thought. "I would like to give a special Thanks to God and Jesus Christ, my lovely wife Twila, my kids John Jr., Samantha and Kylee. I would like to thank my parents for their everlasting love and support, and the rest of my family for enjoying all this with me. My baseball family means a ton to me, thank you to All the guys and wives for making something we love, so very special. GOD Bless you All."



## Phil Gunter:

Phil was born and raised in Merced, Ca. where his first exposure to baseball was watching the Saturday baseball broadcast with his dad and listening to Dizzy Dean's colorful narration. He played little league baseball as soon as he was age eligible and lived for the practices and games.

Phil played little league and pony league as well as pickup games with his fellow paperboys in Merced. He played high school ball his freshman year and continued with pony league until he aged out at 17. After that, slo-pitch and fast pitch softball (intramural in college and city rec leagues) was his baseball substitute.

In the mid 1990's while working in Sacramento, he noticed that on weekends there were guys his age actually playing real baseball on real baseball fields. He tried out and began his middle age baseball career. His SMSBL career started with Dave Sutherland's Free Agent team in the summer night league. He then played with Jim Tygrett's Ranger and Cardinal teams. He also played with John Mason's Solon teams winning championships in 2006 and 2011. When SMSBL started a Sunday league, Tim Burkitt let Phil play with him on the Free Agents once again. As the years moved on and the body ran down, Jim Tygrett started the Golden 60's league and Phil was able to find his home with the Yankees.

Phil would have to say that the greatest moment of this baseball journey was playing with and winning the 65+ world series with the Sacramento Solons in Florida in 2017. Thanks to Lanny, Irv, Tina and all his Solon teammates for that awesome experience!

Phil has lived in Lincoln for the past 35 years with his wife Terri. They have 2 daughters and 2 granddaughters who keep them busy.

"I would like to thank the HOF committee and all of my SMSBL family for selecting me to be in the SMSBL Hall of Fame. I am humbled and honored to be in such good company."



## **Greg Lichtenberger:**

Greg began playing baseball at eight years old at Willow Rancho LL where he mainly played center field in all four divisions. Greg started his pitching career when he advanced to Willow Rancho Majors and Seniors. Greg continued playing baseball in Junior High School (7th, 8th, and 9th grades) at John H. Still Junior High. Greg also won the school's Presidential Sports Award during his 9th grade year. Greg attended Luther Burbank High School but did not play baseball due to an elbow injury prior to the start of the baseball season.

Greg did not play baseball again until he was 38 years old when a friend talked him into joining the Free Agents coached by Dave Sutherland. He played with the Free Agents for a few years before joining the Cardinals, coached by the late SMSBL Hall of Famer Jim Hill. Greg started playing in the SMSBL in 2000 where he played with the Free Agents, Mariners, and Cardinals before joining the Rivercats. The Rivercats later became the Royals and both teams were coached by Gary Stonebrook.

Greg enjoyed playing with many great ball players over the years and has won several local tournaments with the Rivercats/Royals and two World Series Championships with the Royals. Greg's favorite position was Pitcher, but he occasionally enjoyed running down fly balls in center field which he did better than most. Greg possessed outstanding defensive skills in the outfield. He was also known for hitting prowess and ability to hit for power to all fields. Greg retired from recreational baseball in 2016.



## **Rankin Lyman**

Rankin owes his baseball career to the invention of the automobile! He grew up on his father's farm in Michigan in a rural community that loved baseball. Rankin attended a one room country elementary school grades 1-6. They had a baseball team and actually played other schools nearby. In fourth grade while getting trounced by another school that had 7th and 8th graders Rankin asked if he could try pitching after catching the first few innings. After shutting them out for the rest of the game Rankin both pitched and caught for the next 65 years including high school, college, and MSBL!

Later Rankin became the only catcher in the community tough enough or dumb enough to catch the local phenom pitcher, John Thomas, who threw hard but wild before he signed with the Dodgers. He would pitch the first four or five innings before tiring and walking people. Rankin would remove his catching gear, proceed to the mound, and mop up. Until events enlightened them the opposition calculated the converted catcher would probably be wild and allow them back in the game. Their coach would instruct them to take a strike trying to work a base on balls. After Rankin got an 0-2 count on the first 3-4 batters they soon abandoned that strategy. That high school team won their conference allowing half a run per game and scoring an average of 14. As a junior his team lost the state championship game 2-1 with Rankin pitching all nine innings allowing no earned runs after catching all nine innings of the semi final that morning in 98 degree Michigan heat and humidity.

(After graduating 6 starting seniors, including John Thomas, they were expected to fall apart. Rankin pitched every inning all year, getting blasted and losing the first game following up with 7 shutouts and winning the conference again. His now 87 year old coach still talks about how surprised he was about that team.)

After graduating high school he attended Central Michigan University, pitching on junior varsity with a 3-0 record in starts but pitching mostly In relief. The varsity coach calculated Rankin did not throw hard enough to pitch on varsity. Back to catching. Finally he let Rankin start one game, a complete game 7-2 win with no walks and only 3 strikeouts. The infielders loved it. The third baseman said it seemed like they were always up to bat because Rankin worked so fast achieving so many 2 and 3 pitch hits or outs. He never started another game pitching until 16 years later. He did win one college game in relief. He came in with 2 outs in the top of the 9th in a tie game with a man on second base. He picked him off before throwing a pitch. Central scored the winning run in the bottom of the ninth inning making Rankin the winning pitcher without throwing a pitch!

He was injured in a home plate collision that summer ending his college baseball career. 16 years later he started playing in local adult leagues. Since 1981 he has managed and played in several leagues in Sacramento and San Jose and in about 100 senior ball tourneys in Arizona, Florida, Nevada, and California. As a result of these activities he is equal parts grateful and surprised to be elected to the SMSBL Hall of Fame.

## **CURRENT SMSBL HOF NOMINATED LIST:**

Jesse Zachary, George Esposito\*, Steve Cornelius, Mark Fowler, Larry Donaghey\*,  
Derrick Rebensdorf, Eric Taylor, Vic Wooten, Ron Turner, Chris Ford, Larry Gies,  
Jim Milligan, Troy Nogosek, Mike Lehtola, Rick Mejía, Mike Spitek, Frank Smith-Bartucco.

\*deceased



## **Ross McGehee**

Born and raised in Carmichael, Calif., Ross began his organized baseball career at eight and followed the typical route with Little League, Pony, Colt, Big League and American Legion. As a product of La Sierra High School, he earned thirteen Varsity Letters while excelling in Football, Wrestling, Track and Field, Baseball, and the Marine Corps Fitness Team. He began playing high school baseball as a Junior, and as an outfielder and pitcher made the TOC tournament and led the team in hitting. As a Senior, he tied for the Metro lead in Home Runs and was All League and All-Metro 1st Team in 1977. Just out of high school, Ross passed up an offer to play for the Philadelphia Phillies to roam the outfield and run Track as a sprinter for the University of Arizona. During the summer seasons, he played for the Humboldt Crabs and the team won the California State Semi Pro championship. As a Freshman at Arizona, Ross led the team in stolen bases with 31 steals while never being thrown out, and for fun broke the world record for sit-ups in 2 minutes with 127. Because of various injuries and a waning interest in baseball, Ross transferred to UC Davis in 1980 and sprinted for the Track team for two years until graduation. In 1991, while working in the building industry, a customer suggested that Ross play on his City League baseball team. With a rejuvenated desire to play baseball again, he was playing in the SMSBL and Woodland Davis leagues on many great teams, culminating in winning five World Series titles and many friendships.



## **Scott Reeves**

Scott has been in the Sacramento MSBL since around 1990. His first team was the Rocklin Royals and he is the last original player from the team still playing the game. He has also played for the 30+ Giants, 40+ Giants, Rangers, Mets, Cardinals, Pirates, Buzzards, and the Auburn Braves for the last 15+ years. He has played tournaments in Phoenix, Las Vegas, and Palm Springs with the Royals and Braves winning 3 rings and 1 MVP.

He coached baseball and softball at Tri City LL, Rocklin LL, Rocklin Pony, and Rocklin Softball for 28 years.

Baseball has always been his favorite sport. He loves playing in the SMSBL appreciates having this venue to play. Scott consistency puts the ball in play and can play multiple positions.

The St. Louis Cardinals are his favorite pro baseball team.

He plans on playing till he can't.



## **SMSBL Hall of Fame Committee:**

Jim Tygrett-DeNuzzi Chairman, Val Lewis, Jim Lortz, Jerry Karnow, Lanny Ropke,  
John Rice, Ken Chavez, Steve Welch, Gary Stonebrook, Alan VanNess





## Past President's Comments

### Val Lewis-(1984-1990)

Congratulations to all 2021 SMSBL Hall-of-fame inductees! You have been voted into a wonderful fraternity of great guys and baseball players. We are honored to welcome you to be a part of a great tradition.

Val Lewis

### Jerry Karnow-(1991-2002)

“Congratulations to our new 2021 Sacramento MSBL Hall of Fame inductees. You can be very proud joining this highly esteemed class of Hall of Famers. Also, many thanks to all who have supported these deserving men. Again, welcome to all of our new members inducted into this years Hall of Fame.”

### Jim Lortz - Past President (2004 - 2008)

It was an honor and a privilege for me to have been your President for four years. Now as a member of the SMSBL Hall of Fame, I would suggest that each and everyone of you strive for that honor. As for those being inducted, you are as special to this Club as the honors bestowed to you on this special occasion. To the new Hall of Fame inductees, welcome to the Club! It is now our responsibility to maintain and improve The Hall of Fame membership through your input, sponsorship and support. Congratulations!

### Lanny Ropke- (2008-2009)

It has been my pleasure to be part of the HOF committee since it's inception. Each year we bring deserving, well qualified, long term league members to recognition. Tonight, having been recommended by league players and their peers, having met long established qualifications, and survived the scrutiny of the committee, I welcome and congratulate our newest inductees. We on the committee hope you and your family and friends enjoy this special night.

### Jim Tygrett-DeNuzzi-(2009-2013, 2014-2015)

Congratulations to this year's 2021 Hall of Fame Class. I'd like to point out that this year's inductee's are a complete group consisting of excellent ball players, veterans, and league contributors that represent the SMSBL well. It's an honor to welcome you, celebrate with you, and share your well deserved induction with you and your family.

## In Memory: Inducted Last at Bat



Ted Bofinger	2007	2017
Dale Hall	2007	2012
Ken Papini	2011	2008
Dennis Viegas	2011	2011
Bobby Alonso	2014	2013
Mark Crump	2015	2015
Tim Day	2016	2018
Pete Snyder	2019	2018
Steve Goggans	2020	2020
Jim Hill	2007	2021