

PHOENIXVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT WALL OF FAME COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES 2020 & 2021

INDUCTEES

The Phoenixville Area School District Wall of Fame Committee will be inducting three new members to its Wall of Fame on Monday, May 3, 2021 at 7:00 PM outside of the high school. If the weather is inclement then the ceremony will be moved inside to the high school auditorium.

Due to COVID-19 last year and the shut down of all schools in Pennsylvania on March 13, 2020, the Wall of Fame ceremony was not held. This year the Wall of Fame Committee decided to combine the 2020 and 2021 ceremonies to honor all three inductees.

2020 Inductees: John J. Coll Jr. and Thomas E. Mitchell (Posthumously)

Mr. John J. Coll Jr. was born and raised in Phoenixville PA. A 1971 graduate of St. Pius X High School. He continued his undergraduate education at Mount Saint Mary's University graduating in 1975 with a BA in Political Science. He then graduated from George Mason University with a Juris Doctor Degree in 1980. He continued on to Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law and graduated in 1987 with a Masters of Laws in Taxation.

Mr. Coll is the founding partner of PFG Advisors, a financial advisory firm in Berwyn Pennsylvania. He became a licensed investment advisor in 1989.

Mr. Coll has spent numerous hours as a volunteer with Ann's Heart Code Blue Shelter in Phoenixville, Cure Alzheimer Fund of Philadelphia, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Holy Family Regional Elementary School, Coach at Phoenixville Marian Youth Club for field hockey, Member of the Board of the Phoenixville Athletic Complex Booster Club, Coach and President of the Phoenixville Babe Ruth Baseball League.

Over 40 years of coaching, Mr. Coll has become a proponent of community-based athletics as an inexpensive means by which attributes such as perseverance, dedication, resiliency, a strong work ethic and the ability to deal with adversity can be developed.

Mr. Thomas E. Mitchell was born and raised in Phoenixville PA. A 1969 graduate of Phoenixville Area High School where he also a varsity wrestler. He started working at the Spring City Knitting Company after high school, but his true passion was that of being a car salesman in the Phoenixville area for over 30 years.

"Big Tom" was a dedicated volunteer to many groups in the Phoenixville area. He served on the school board, with Kiwanis, Knights of Columbus, Lion's Club, St. Ann's Church, PACA, Latino Board, Diversity in Action Committee, and the founder of the Phoenixville Youth Wrestling League.

For 41 years "Big Tom" served as Santa Claus, bringing the holiday spirit to the Phoenixville area. He raised funds and organized the Christmas lights on Main Street, the Christmas parade and Santa's House.

For his community service "Big Tom" received the following recognitions from the Phoenixville Area Recreation Department Outstanding Service Award, Phoenixville Athletic Association Service Award, Phoenixville Health Foundation Champion of the Community, Volvo US Heroes Award, Pennsylvania

State Senate Service Award, and the Phoenixville Area Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Citizen of the Year.

“Big Tom” was a true Phoenixville Phantom! He loved Phoenixville and its residents. His commitment to service truly impacted the people of this community.

2021 Inductee: Barry Irvin Sankey (Posthumously)

Mr. Sankey was born in Pottstown PA. He is a 1972 graduate of Spring-Ford Area High School. He then graduated from Temple University Cum Laude in 1976 with a BA degree in journalism and political science. While at Temple he served as a reporter, editor and managing editor for the Temple News Sports Newspaper.

After graduating from Temple Mr. Sankey became a sports writer for the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, Pottstown Mercury, Spring-Ford Reporter, and the Evening Phoenix.

Mr. Sankey was an active volunteer with the Phoenixville Area School District Sports Hall of Fame Committee, President of the Congregation Mercy and Truth Synagogue in Pottstown PA and a member of the Board of Directors of B’Nai Jacob Synagogue in Phoenixville PA. He was also a major supporter of the Phoenixville and Spring City American Legion Baseball teams.

For his many years of covering sporting events, Mr. Sankey was awarded the Who’s Who for Sports Journalism, Keystone Press Award, Managing Editors Award, and the Professional of the Year: America’s Registry of Outstanding Professionals/VIP.

“Barry was a mainstay sports reporter in my hometown for decades. The industry changed but his love for the Phoenixville Area never did. He always had a kind spirit and loved seeing locals succeed.” Kevin Neghandi, ESPN Sports Broadcaster and Phoenixville Area High School Graduate Class of 1993.

Persons wishing to attend the induction ceremony are reminded that masks must be worn at all times. Also all Covid protocols will be adhere to.