



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 3, 2017

### Hall of Fame Board Announces 2017 Inductees *Public Invited to June 3 Ceremony*

**Wheeling, WV** – On Wednesday, May 3, members of the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame Board announced the nine inductees who will be honored during the 2017 ceremony. The event is set for Saturday, June 3, at WesBanco Arena. Cocktail hour begins at 5:30 p.m., with dinner to follow at 6:30 p.m.

Hall of Fame Board Chairman Robert DeFrancis revealed this year's class of nine inductees:

**1. Margaret Ann "Peg" Brennan: Education and Religion (1943– )**

This scholar grew up in South Wheeling and graduated from Wheeling Central Catholic High School. She earned a bachelor's degree from Wheeling College (now Wheeling Jesuit University) and a master's degree in history from West Virginia University. Margaret taught history at her high school alma mater for 11 years, but it is outside of school where she has made her most significant impact. Through research, writing, lectures, and activism in the fields of historic preservation and education, she inspires the citizens of today to value and learn from their yesterdays. Margaret takes history out of the classroom and takes it to the streets of Wheeling – and beyond.

**2. J. Ross Felton: Business, Industry and Professions (1926– )**

In management at WWVA, Ross Felton set the tone for Wheeling's country music history at the Capitol Theatre and Jamboree in the Hills. His vision for the Festival of Lights transformed Oglebay Park during the holiday season. And his leadership laid the groundwork for the Wheeling Convention and Visitors Bureau. His efforts brought the Thunderbird ice hockey team to town, followed by the Wheeling Nailers. He was one of four incorporators of the Wheeling National Heritage Area Corporation, serving on its board for more than 18 years. Few people have had more influence in charting the course of modern-day Wheeling, quietly creating a future path grounded in tourism, high-quality entertainment, and historic preservation.



### 3. **Dr. John Frissell: Business, Industry and Professions (1810–1893)**

After training in New England, he settled in Wheeling and became one of the leading surgeons in the tri-state area. He was a founder of Wheeling Hospital, the oldest hospital in the state, and was a charter member of the West Virginia Medical Association, serving as its first president. During the Civil War, Dr. Frissell was named Medical Superintendent of soldiers and prisoners in Wheeling. He accomplished many surgical firsts in West Virginia including procedures to treat club foot, hare lip, strabismus (crossed eyes), and gall bladder stones, and various plastic surgeries for eye enucleations. In 1853, he became the first surgeon in the state to use chloroform for surgical purposes.

### 4. **Betty “Snookie” Woods Nutting: Public Service (1936– )**

Snookie Nutting is daughter of Robert M. and Betty Shirk Woods, wife of G. Ogden Nutting, mother of William Ogden Nutting and Robert McLain Nutting, and grandmother of six. A founder of Friends of Wheeling, she helped save 22 buildings including several in Monroe Street East, Chapline Street Row, and Victorian North Wheeling and helped restore Wheeling’s Suspension Bridge. She served as a West Virginia advisor for the National Trust for Historic Preservation; WV Archives and History Commission member; first president of Preservation Alliance of WV; Vandalia Preservation Foundation board member; and president of Victorian Landmarks Foundation. She has been recognized as a Friend of Heritage; Distinguished West Virginian; Lifetime Achievement, Preservation Alliance; and by the WV Division of Culture and History.

### 5. **Mollie O’Brien: Music and Fine Arts (1952– )**

Her name is well known in Wheeling and around the world. Grammy Award winner and singer Mollie O’Brien is a West Virginia celebrity. Hailed as a folk, Americana, bluegrass, and R&B singer, she is skilled in the art of interpretation. With her beautiful, lyric voice, she is an artist unafraid to take risks vocally and in the material she chooses. She’s performed at major music festivals and venues in the United States, Europe, and South America and was part of the Celtic Connections festival and toured with the first Transatlantic Sessions UK tour. West Virginia Public Broadcasting’s “Mountain Stage” host Larry Groce has said that she is “perhaps the best singer we've ever had.”

### 6. **Charles P. Saad: Sports and Athletics (1925 – 2014)**

He reached the heights of his chosen profession, athletic training, during a 30-year career in major and minor league baseball, professional basketball, and college athletics. This lifelong Wheeling resident and Central Catholic High graduate was the Head Trainer



for the Chicago White Sox, Oakland A's, and California Angels from 1967-81. He worked from 1965-70 as a trainer for the NBA Los Angeles Lakers. He earlier served as minor league baseball trainer in Indianapolis, Indiana; Memphis, Tennessee; and Columbia, South Carolina, and all-sports trainer at West Virginia University, the University of South Carolina, and U.S. Military Academy at West Point. When he returned to his hometown in the off-season, he worked 33 years at the Wheeling YMCA.

**7. Harry S. Sands (1867–1952); Helen Turner Sands (1865–1952): Philanthropy**

Husband and wife, he was an electrical engineer, banker, businessman, and they were Episcopalians and recreational farmers. Harry S. Sands and Helen Turner Sands, by their Last Wills and Testaments, established a trust to be used for public charitable and benevolent purposes in West Virginia. Throughout the years, more than \$7 million has been given to charitable organizations in the Wheeling area. A separate provision of Mr. Sands' Will required that their farm, Sandscrest, be devoted to educational, scientific, religious, charitable, or other public benevolent use. Their farm is now owned by the Sandscrest Foundation, Inc. and is used as a religious and spiritual retreat of the Episcopal Diocese for the state.

**8. Frederick P. Stamp, Jr.: Public Service (1934– )**

Presiding in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia, this distinguished jurist was appointed by President Bush in July 1990, serving as Chief Judge from 1994-2001. Previously in private practice in Wheeling, he also served in the West Virginia Legislature, on the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws, as chair of the West Virginia Board of Regents, and as president of the West Virginia Bar Association, among other legal associations. Active in civic and community organizations, he developed the Judicial Scholars Program for local high school youth. He and his wife, Joan, have two children, and established the Stamp Public Law Fellowship at the University of Richmond School of Law.

**9. Robert Villamagna: Music and Fine Arts (1948– )**

He is an award-winning visual artist who maintains a studio in Wheeling. The West Virginia Division of Culture and History chose him as the 2016 Artist of the Year. His iconic art has won berths in permanent museum collections, garnered prestigious awards, and been juried into major art exhibitions. This former U.S. Army illustrator and steelworker is an Assistant Professor at West Liberty University where he oversees the Nutting Gallery exhibits. As a member of the Wheeling Arts Commission, he coordinated the creation of murals and public art installations and beautification projects throughout



the city, thus helping to strengthen Wheeling's image as a center for the arts in West Virginia and the region.

With this year's inductees, the Hall of Fame will feature 132 members.

DeFrancis noted the Hall of Fame ceremony dinner is open to the public and begins at 6:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$35.00 by contacting the WesBanco Arena box office (304.233.4470) or through members of the Hall of Fame Board.

**About the Wheeling Hall of Fame:** The Wheeling Hall of Fame started in 1980. WesBanco Arena (formerly Wheeling Civic Center) houses the Hall of Fame, honoring former and present residents who attained considerable distinction in a specific field and thus brought honor to their home city. Honorees belong to one of six major categories: Music and Fine Arts; Business, Industry, and Professions; Education and Religion; Sports and Athletics; Public Service; and Philanthropy.

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