

News Release

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For Immediate Release

The Wider World of Jim McKay: Celebrating His Life and His Work

November 10 event honors the television journalist for excellence in equestrian journalism

Bel Air, Md., October 5, 2017 -- The late Jim McKay, beloved by millions as the host of ABC's "Wide World of Sports," is the recipient of the 2017 Robert and Anne Heighe Award for Excellence in Equestrian Journalism. The award will be presented posthumously the evening of Friday, November 10, at Harford Community College.

The award is presented by the Hays-Heighe House, a public history site located at Harford Community College. The Hays-Heighe House was the centerpiece of Robert and Anne Heighe's 225-acre Prospect Hill Farm (headquarters of their Thoroughbred breeding and racing operations) from 1921-53.

"The Wider World of Jim McKay: Celebrating His Life and His Work" begins with the viewing of an exhibit on the broadcast journalist's life starting at 5 p.m. A reception and award presentation take place in the Chesapeake Dining Rooms starting at 7:15 p.m.

The award will be accepted by McKay's family, including his daughter, Mary Guba, and grandson, James Fontelieu. Bill Boniface from Bonita Farm, a trainer and friend of McKay, will also share remarks.

Tickets to the November 10 award reception (featuring heavy hors d'oeuvres, dessert, wine, beer and coffee) cost \$50 per person and may be ordered by visiting harford.edu/jimmckay. Ticket sales close November 3.

Sponsors of the event include Gold Sponsor MediaWise, Inc.; Silver Sponsors Jim McKay Maryland Million Day, Maryland Horse Breeders Association and Maryland Jockey Club; and Bronze Sponsors Fasig-Tipton and Loyola University Maryland. Friend Sponsors include Carol Allen, Denise Carnaggio, Maryland Horse Industry Board, Jan Roth, William Roth and Sharon Stowers.

McKay is being honored with the Heighe Award for his years of coverage of horse racing and in particular the American "Triple Crown" series of horse races.

His coverage of racing began in Baltimore in November 1947 with live reporting from Pimlico Race Course, the first live television broadcast in Baltimore. It was here that his love affair with racing began.

He would also cover racing in England, and from 1977-2000 he broadcast the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont for ABC.

Previous recipients of the Robert and Anne Heighe Award for Excellence in Equestrian Journalism include Joe Kelly, William Boniface, Humphrey S. Finney and Pierre "Peb" Bellocq.

An exhibit showcasing his McKay's life, titled "The Wider World of Jim McKay," will be on display in the Hays-Heighe House from November 10-January 12. Exhibit hours are Tuesdays from 1 to 3 p.m.; Thursdays from 3 to 5 p.m.; Fridays from 10 a.m. to noon and first Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon. Admission is free, except at the opening on November 10.

"The Wider World of Jim McKay" exhibit will chronicle McKay's life from his Philadelphia childhood through his early journalism career and into his national and international work. His reporting on equestrian sports will be one of the highlights in addition to his international reporting. Guest curator of the exhibit, Maryanna Skowronski, is working closely with McKay's family and friends, who are providing photos, memorabilia and stories of his personal life and of his career.

James McManus, better known to the public by his broadcast name, Jim McKay, was a transplanted Philadelphian who came to Maryland at the beginning of his high school career. He attended Baltimore's Loyola High School and Loyola College before serving in the United States Navy during WWII. After leaving the service he returned to Baltimore where he began his journalism career.

His local beginnings prepared him for his move to New York where he worked in a variety of local and nationally broadcast programs before making his move to ABC's "Wide World of Sports" as the host of that iconic program.

McKay also served as the anchor host for the international broadcasts of 12 Olympic Games. His dignified coverage of the 1972 Munich Games and the massacre of the Israeli athletes would become a focal point of every biography and article written about him throughout his life.

He is also the founder of the Maryland Million, a one-day stakes program offering purses totaling \$1 million and featuring the nominated progeny of nominated stallions standing in the state.

Harford Community College is located at 401 Thomas Run Road in Bel Air. For more information, visit www.harford.edu/jimmckay or call 443-412-2144.

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