

# Rochester Boxing Hall of Fame

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## PRESS RELEASE

The Rochester Boxing Hall of Fame is proud to announce the "class of 2011" to be honored at its 21<sup>ST</sup> annual banquet being held on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at the Diplomat Banquet Hall, 1 Diplomat Way, Rochester, NY.

The theme of this year's banquet is "The Main Event" and is dedicated to the memory of the late great JERRY SPALMA. As always the head table is loaded with main eventers. Highlighting this year's event are three greats from boxing's recent past- JAMES "QUICK" TILLIS, who will be presented with the 2011 John Mastrella Integrity Award, BOBBY CZYZ who receives the 2011 Rochester Boxing Hall of Fame Special Courage Award and RON LYLE who shares the Special Courage Award. TILLIS, the former #1 heavyweight contender, had an impressive record of 42-22-1 with 31 Knockouts. Among his opponents were the highly regarded Tommy Morrison, Evander Holyfield, Frank Bruno, Earnie Shavers, Pinklon Thomas, Mike Weaver, Greg Page, and Mike Tyson. TILLIS' battle against Tyson was Iron Mike's most difficult up to that time. CZYZ, the former IBF World Light Heavyweight Champion and WBA World Cruiserweight Champion had a record of 44-8 with 28 K.O.'s while tangling with the likes of Holyfield, Donny Laonde, Virgil Hill and Mustafa Hamsho. LYLE, generally regarded as one of the greatest heavyweights never to win a title sported a record of 43-7-1 with 31 opponents failing to go the distance. Among his victims were Buster Mathis, Oscar Bonavena, Jimmy Ellis, Earnie Shavers and Joe Bugner. His fights with Muhammad Ali and George Foreman are both considered modern classics.

Other honorees at this year's event include Geneva's RAY CIANCAGLINI who is receiving the Jerry Flynn Courage Award, Tonawanda's JACK MESI who is receiving the Carmen Basilio Man of the Year Award, Rochester's GINO ARILOTTA who is receiving the Richard Warboys Humanitarian Award, Ithaca's DANNY AKERS who is receiving the Pete Provenzano Award and The Democrat and Chronicle's own STEVE BRADLEY who receives this year's George Beahon Award for journalism excellence.

This year's Frankie Verna Hall of Fame Inductees are 90's pro boxer DWAYNE HALL, the 30's LEROY "TIGER" SMITH, who did battle with World Champion Melio Bettina, and Rochester's fighting SMITH BROTHERS. More announcements are expected shortly on other honorees and special guests. Rochester World Champions CARMEN BASILIO and CHARLES MURRAY as well as popular Western New York heavyweight contender BABY JOE MESI will also be in attendance.

For boxing fans of all stripes The Diplomat is truly the place to be on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Doors open at 6pm, with dinner served at 7pm. Tickets are available for a donation of \$65 each by calling (585) 798-3123, or (585) 964-3077.