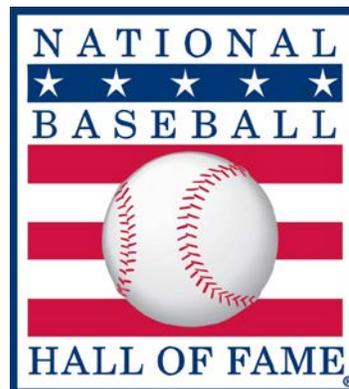


July 30, 2017



**2017 NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME
INDUCTION OF JOHN SCHUERHOLZ**

JANE FORBES CLARK: As chairman of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, it's my honor, John, to welcome you into the Hall of Fame family, and Commissioner, if you would read the inscription on John's plaque.

ROB MANFRED: Thank you, Jane.

John Boland Schuerholz, Jr., gifted team builder whose steady hand and eye for talent consistently produced winning results, learned his craft in the player personnel department of the mid-1960s Orioles before joining the Expansion Royals, developed talented Kansas City nucleus into AL powerhouse, advancing to the postseason seven times in a 10-year stretch, named general manager in 1981 and led franchise to first world championship in 1985. Took over as Braves' general manager and constructed rosters that would qualify for 14 straight postseasons, winning five NL pennants and the 1995 Fall Classic. First GM to win World Series titles in both leagues, continued as club president and vice-chairman following his days as primary team architect.

JOHN SCHUERHOLZ: Thank you, Rob.

JANE FORBES CLARK: Ladies and gentlemen, John Schuerholz.

JOHN SCHUERHOLZ: Thank you all so very much. Thank you, Jane. Thank you, Jeff. Some of you may know that I have in the past few years served on committees and chaired a few committees for Major League Baseball that are pretty impactful, one of which is pace of game committee. I want you all to know that today's pace of game committee sits behind me right here. Every one of these gentlemen is our pace of game.

I'm delighted to be here at this moment, so extraordinarily humbled, deeply honored, and thrilled beyond measure at this highest of all baseball honors, and too, as the proud son of Maryne and John Schuerholz, my wonderful, loving parents, and to honor them and my extended

Schuerholz family of highly talented amateur athletes from Baltimore, Maryland, led by my grandfather Pop Schuerholz, my uncles Willy and Gilbert, my dad, and Uncle Wilson and Uncle Donald.

Being born into that Schuerholz family was the first of several events that I believe to have been divine providence or fate, if you will, that has impacted my life in remarkable fashion, and growing up in that family of sportsmen and athletes introduced me early on in my life to the joys and to the challenges of competitive sports, especially baseball.

I love baseball. I've loved it all my life. I remember my dad rolling me a ball when I was as young as I can remember. Then as I got older under handing me plastic balls with plastic bats and he instilled in me the love of our game and especially those line drives when I hit them. That love continued to grow with stick ball played against the walls of factories in Baltimore, home plate drawn with chalk on the walls. With our best broomstick bats we could find, we played until we lost or broke all of the balls or until it got dark.

From stick ball to wiffle ball in the back yards, where I quickly learned to throw it and hit sinkers, risers and knucklers, then on to Little League, American Legion, high school ball at Baltimore City College High School, college ball at Towson State Teachers College then and now Towson University.

Perhaps the most impactful life event in my life occurred in 1945, when at age five I contracted German measles, which caused me to have a dangerously high fever that left me totally deaf in my right ear at age five. Because of this, however, I had to learn to be a more attentive and intentional listener, which I believe has served me quite well throughout my life. Divine providence, fate, you bet.

As my life continued to unfold, I enjoyed playing high school and college baseball with high

hopes and aspirations of one day following in my dad's footsteps and playing professional baseball as he did. My dad left Southern High School, Al Kaline's alma mater, and played three years in the Philadelphia Athletics Organization before suffering a broken leg turning a double play that ended his professional baseball career.

Fast forward to the summer of 1961, my junior year at Towson University. I was invited by the legendary amateur scout in Baltimore, Walter Youse, to attend a two-day tryout camp. I thought I had quite a good first day, but apparently not because the start of the second day Walter mentions me over and without saying a word quickly hands me a camp roster and quickly hands me a stopwatch and says to me, "Schuerholz, I want you to get accurate home-to-first running times on every one of these position players left in this camp.

Bam. Without saying much more, the message of my life was delivered. I'd better concentrate someplace other than trying to be a professional baseball player. Divine providence, fate, I truly believe so.

With that honest dose of scouting reality, I redoubled my focus on my teaching career and long-range plans of pursuing a master's degree. One day in 1965, years into my teaching career, instead of going to the faculty room, which we did often, I stayed in my room and wrote a letter to the owner of the Baltimore Orioles, my Jerold Hoffberger explaining my lifelong love of the game of baseball and my playing background while expressing an interest in a front office position. My letter was forwarded to Mr. Frank Cashen, the Orioles' newly appointed vice-president of player personnel, who previously was a sportswriter for the Baltimore News American and recognized my Schuerholz family last name. Frank shared that letter with O's new GM Harry Dalton, and he passed it on to director of player development Lou Gorman, who was interviewing candidates to be his assistant. And Frank said to those gentlemen, "I don't know this young man at all, but I know he comes from good stock."

A week later, I got a message to call Lou Gorman, and I did. We talked briefly, and Lou finally said, "John, we've decided to offer you the job as the administrative assistant in player development for the Baltimore Orioles." And what I thought was the result of a beautifully crafted, well-written letter of application was in reality simply Frank Cashen's personal knowledge of the

extended Schuerholz family's outstanding athletic prowess and reputation.

In January of 1966, I accepted that job at the Orioles to experience my first-ever professional baseball Spring Training, actually in Fernandina Beach, Florida then, with my hometown Baltimore Orioles. Imagine that. Only great dreams begin that way.

I spent those formative years learning baseball administration, mentored by these three remarkable men, Frank Cashen, Harry Dalton, Lou Gorman, and how fortunate I was. My dreams and aspirations of becoming a general manager and building winning teams took root in those Oriole years and I'm so thankful for it.

In 1968, just a few years after I had begun working with the Orioles, Lou Gorman comes bursting into my office, and he says, "John, good news, we're going to Kansas City."

And I said, "What's this "we" stuff, Lou? I'm a Baltimore guy. I'm a city guy. My family and friends are here. I went to high school across the street. I'm not going to Kansas City."

But Lou with his usual good cheer and positive manner said, "John, you'll love it, and we'll be a part of building an expansion franchise from the very ground up." And that did appeal to me, and Lou was right, going to Kansas City with him was a great decision. In fact, I met my wife Karen. Enough said. Divine providence, fate? Absolutely so.

Lou and I with our baseball staff in Kansas City, built a very strong organizational foundation for those Expansion Royals, our special relationship and friendship that he and I shared continued for many great years until his unfortunate death in 2011, and I love that man.

One of the most impactful people that I've ever met in my life was Royals' owner Ewing Kauffman. He provided me with support, taught me so much about leadership and was very instrumental in my being named Royals general manager in 1981 at 41 years of age, then the youngest general manager in baseball history. Nowadays a general manager who turns 41 is more likely to find retirement papers on his desk than anything else.

My career in Kansas City provided me with an opportunity to work closely with some very special people like manager Dick Howser and Hall of Fame manager Whitey Herzog here with us today. What a thrill that was. There also I met a

very special 17-year-old, once-in-a-lifetime player who I saw play his very first professional baseball game in beautiful Billings, Montana. He always worked so hard to become great at his game that he loved so much, led his teams to winning seasons year after year, and rose to his well-earned Hall of Fame status, my good friend George Brett.

And Bobby Cox and I talk about George, and when we talk about George, Bobby always said, George could wake up on Christmas morning and hit line drives on every swing, and he's right.

I made another very special friend in Kansas City, Buck O'Neil, who I hired as a Major League scout after he spent some time working for the Cubs and doing many other things. Buck was a legend in the Negro Leagues and was a driving force who led the efforts for a Negro League Baseball Museum located in Kansas City.

One day Buck and I were chatting in the underground tunnel that led from the Royals' clubhouse to the dugout, and suddenly Buck grabs my forearm and says, Wait a minute, listen, boss, Bo Jackson is hitting. I've only heard that sound twice before: Babe Ruth and Josh Gibson. And he said, let's go watch Bo hit, and we're underground, and we went to watch Bo hit. Buck was a wonderful man, a beautiful human being and was a blessing in my life. I still see his smile every day. It is so fitting that his statue now resides here in Cooperstown where the Baseball Hall of Fame recognizes his contributions with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

While with the Royals, I also served on Major League Baseball committees, one of which was with Stan Kasten, then the president of the Atlanta Braves. We shared a ride one day to the airport and he told me of his plan to keep Bobby Cox in the dugout to manage the Braves, and he was also searching for general manager candidates and asked me if I had some names. Easy enough, I thought.

Due to a variety of changing circumstances in Kansas City and with permission, may I note, I expressed my interest in the Atlanta opportunity. Stan, hearing my frequent probing questions said, You're asking an awful lot of questions. Are you interested in this job?

Well, a quick telephone negotiations with Stan and Terry McGuirk led to a final meeting in Stan's office, which was a quite memorable negotiating meeting for me. And Stan, wherever you are, I'm sure you remember it, as well.

Afterward I was offered and accepted the job as the executive vice president and general manager of the Atlanta Braves in the fall of 1990. Divine providence, fate that we shared that ride? No doubt in my mind.

Working 24/7 with Stan and Bobby and together with Paul Snyder and Roy Clark and those great scouts and dedicated player development staff members, we began the great transformation. While my very high regard for Bobby Cox as a manager and baseball man had existed for years, as our partnership group, my admiration for him grew in like measure.

I witnessed daily his kind and caring spirit, yet a determined and honorable competitor. His true leadership, honesty and loyalty continues to benefit the Atlanta Braves today in his now role of special advisor to all of us. He so richly deserves his seat here in Cooperstown. And Bobby, I'm so proud to be joining you and Smoltz and Glav and Greg, with whom we shared so many championships, as well as the many other legends of Braves' baseball here in the Hall of Fame. I'm so glad to join you here in this Hall of Fame.

I would like to thank our chairman and CEO Terry McGuirk for his faith and confidence in me, naming me president after my 17 years as Braves' general manager, and to my current position as vice-chairman. Thank you so very much, Terry.

How very honored I am to be inducted, joining baseball executive giants and team-building legends like Branch Rickey and Larry MacPhail and Ed Barrow, George Weiss, and my good friend Pat Gillick, who sits behind me in these seats.

When my cell phone rang at 5:13 p.m. in my room at the Gaylord National Harbor Hotel on December 4, 2016, and Jane Forbes Clark spoke these words: "Hello, John. This is Jane. I'm pleased to inform you, you have been elected into baseball's Hall of Fame. Congratulations."

Wow. And here I am. I offer my most sincere congratulations to today's other inductees, Commissioner Selig, with whom I spent significant time on projects to improve and enhance the game of baseball. Thank you for that opportunity, Commissioner. And we worked closely together for years. And three remarkably talented, now legendary baseball players, Jeff Bagwell, Pudge Rodriguez and Tim Lincecum and the wonderful deserving award recipients, Rachel Robinson, Claire Smith and Bill King, to you and to your

families, I extend my heartfelt congratulations.

To my wonderful family, my wife of 38 years Karen, the real GM of our house, our daughter Gina, who is an excellent teacher in Atlanta, her husband Mason, our adorable granddaughters Camryn and Rylee. Our son Jonathan, I'm proud to say, is currently the Braves' assistant director of player development, which by the way was the very job I started at the Orioles with in 1966, who in 2004 Jonathan was named MVP of the annual Hall of Fame game right here in Cooperstown, New York. He's here with his wife Jennifer and his two sons, my namesake John Boland Schuerholz, III, and his younger brother Ward. You all mean the world to me, and I love you all so very, very much.

I'm happy that my brothers Jerry and Larry are here from Baltimore with their families today and many of my extended family and dear friends and associates from Baltimore and Kansas City and Atlanta and beyond are here. I'd like to send a message to two very special relatives in my life, my aunt Mary Horton, my aunt Jane Wyatt, both in their 90s watching back in Baltimore today. And remember, two very, very special and dear friends and baseball men, Jimmy Fregosi and José Martinez, both gone too soon.

I especially thank my executive assistants who over the years kept me in the groove and moving forward: Chris, June, Melissa, Peggy, Linda, Marty, Sally and JoAnn. I'm so proud of my assistant GMs, Dean and Dick and Chuck and Dayton, all of whom went on to become Major League general managers elsewhere.

I'd like to thank Jane Forbes Clark for her strong leadership and steadfast dedication to the Hall of Fame; to Jeff Idelson, Jeff, you and your remarkable baseball loving staff, every single one of them, make this great institute stronger and richer year by year.

And also to today's game-era committee, thank you so much for considering me worthy and for electing me into baseball's Hall of Fame. To Whitney and Jon especially on the Hall of Fame staff, thank you for your caring compassion, for all of your assistance with our planning and with our needs. You made it all so easy for the Schuerholz family to really enjoy this experience.

And to Brad Jones and Brad Hainje and Ihsung Kim, Braves' employees who really worked hard from the Braves' standpoint to make this happen.

My over 50 years in baseball, I've had the great honor of attending many of these inductions, and I sat out there where you're seated today, watching in awe and admiration as the greats of our game were recognized and honored, and I really, really did like my seat out there on that lawn. But I must confess, I love my new seat up here on this stage a lot more.

Thank you all so very, very much.
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