

Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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Murphy Honors Founder Of Baseball League For Adults With Disabilities

New City, NY (Oct. 21, 2015) – The Rockland County Legislature has presented a Distinguished Service Award to Bob Baird, the founder of Touching Bases, a recreational baseball league for about 240 adults with disabilities.

The award was presented Tuesday by Legislator John Murphy, who nominated Baird, and Legislature Chairman Alden H. Wolfe, Majority Leader Legislator Aron B. Wider and Minority Leader Legislator Christopher J. Carey.

“This kind of community service means so much because it works to include all – all – our residents,” Murphy said. “I’m proud to honor Bob and all the volunteers who help this vibrant league provide such a worthwhile activity.”

Many people know Baird from his years with The Journal News and lohud.com, where he served in many capacities, including editor and columnist.

But Baird is also known for his volunteerism and was among the 1993 founders of the Challenger Little League for youth ages 5 through 21. After several years of watching the league’s original players age-out with no place to continue playing baseball, he became the 2002 founder of Touching Bases for those age 21 and up.

“As proud as I am of 40 years of accomplishments and honors in journalism, I believe creating Touching Bases is the most significant accomplishment of my life, simply because it has touched so many people on so many levels,” Baird said.

Half of the league’s 240 players are over the age of 50, with this season’s oldest player 89.

“Many of our players lived much of their lives in institutions, never before having the opportunity to experience being part of a team and enjoying a game most of us take for granted,” Baird said.

The Vincent Crotty Memorial Foundation has been the league’s primary sponsor since 2012 and its support allowed new uniforms this year for the members of all 15 teams, which

represent Camp Venture, ARC, Jawonio, the Hudson Valley Developmental Disabilities Service Office, Another Step and the Young Adult Institute Coffee House.

Among others who help the league with its important effort, members of the St. Thomas Aquinas Baseball Team volunteer at the games each week, assisting and coaching the Touching Bases players.

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