

ILLINOIS DOCTOR HITS HOME RUN...RECIEVES NATIONAL BASEBALL AWARD

Baseball Reliquary Honors Monticello, Illinois'

Dr. David Fletcher with Hilda Award

The Baseball Reliquary recently announced Dr. David Fletcher of downstate Monticello, Illinois, as the recipient of the 2005 Hilda Award, an annual award that acknowledges a person's unique passion and dedication to the game of baseball. The Hilda Award will be presented to Fletcher during the Shrine of the Eternals 2005 Induction Ceremony on Sunday, July 24, 2005, in Pasadena, California.

Fletcher, a noted national expert in the occupational health field, is a devoted Chicago baseball fan who was married in 1998 at what was once home plate of old Comiskey Park with former Chicago White Sox player Bill Melton as a witness. In 2003, Dr. Fletcher founded Clearbuck.com, an organization dedicated to clearing the name of former White Sox third baseman and banned Black Sox member George "Buck" Weaver. Fletcher is currently developing plans for the Chicago Baseball Museum that would honor Chicago's many contributions to the national pastime.

"It is an honor to be acknowledged with this very special award," said Fletcher. "I look forward to upholding the traditions, and will continue to bring attention to the history of baseball in the Chicago area."

The Hilda Award is named in memory of the late Hilda Chester, perhaps the most famous fan in baseball history. Often referred to as "Howling Hilda" or the "First Lady of Flatbush," Chester was an institution at Brooklyn's Ebbets Field, where she cheered on her beloved Dodgers for three decades. The Hilda Award consists of Hilda Chester's signature noisemaker, a brass cowbell, encased and mounted in a Plexiglas box bearing an engraved inscription.

In announcing the award, Terry Cannon, the Baseball Reliquary's Executive Director, said, "Despite suffering through strikes and lockouts and the various economic indignities that major league baseball has inflicted on them, the fans are always there to cheer for and to live, love, and die for their hometown teams. The motion pictures have their Oscar, television has its Emmy, and now baseball has its Hilda. And hopefully, over the course of time, this award will help remedy the woeful under-representation of the paying customer in the game's official history."

The presentation of the 2005 Hilda Award will be followed by the 2005 Induction Day Ceremony. The 2005 class of inductees include Rod Dedeaux, Jackie Robinson, and Lester Rodney. The Keynote Address will be delivered by John Schulian, author of the recently published *Twilight of the Long-ball Gods*. Schulian is a correspondent for *Sports Illustrated* and former sportswriter for the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

The Baseball Reliquary is a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to fostering an appreciation of American art and culture through the context of baseball history and to exploring the national pastime's unparalleled creative possibilities. The Baseball Reliquary is supported in part by a grant from the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.