

Harness Racing Hall of Fame inductees celebrated

by Dan Leary, USTA Director of Marketing and Communications

Goshen, NY --- Owner-breeder William Weaver and driver [David Miller](#), along with communicators John Pawlak and Carol Cramer, were the human guests of honor as 2014 inductees into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame at ceremonies on the Museum lawn in Goshen, N.Y., on Sunday (July 6).

The annual induction dinner followed a full day of activities that included racing at the neighboring Historic Track, including the annual Hall of Fame race, the grand opening of the Roosevelt Raceway exhibit and a cocktail reception in the William R. Haughton Memorial Hall.



William Weaver and [David Miller](#) were inducted into the Living Hall of Fame on Sunday.

The Meadows and Little Brown Jug track announcer Roger Huston, who served as emcee, called fellow Hall of Famer Bill O'Donnell to introduce the night's first inductee. The former driver thanked Weaver for allowing him to drive Valley Victory and applauded him for his dedication to his horses.

"Some of the old horses he raced, he still boards those horses and lets them live out their lives," said O'Donnell. "He should be commended for that."

Weaver, who has enjoyed success with his Valley High Stable, said he didn't expect this honor.

"I'm humbled, happy and surprised to be here today," said Weaver. "The last two years of my life, there have been some setbacks. I figured this was just someone throwing the screws in."

He thanked the Dancer and Duer families for training his horses over the years and acknowledged the big horse who got him to the Hall of Fame.

"One of the main reasons that I'm here tonight is because I was the breeder of Valley Victory," added Weaver.

Huston's superlative introduction of the next inductee highlighted a couple of his nicknames.

"At the Meadowlands they call him Buckeye, but in Ohio he's known as Purple Jesus," said Huston before cueing the crowd to a resounding response of "Miller time" when he asked, "What time is it?"

Miller can be a man of few words, but he was emotional as he talked about how important this honor is to him and the people who supported him along the way.

"I think Roger said everything that I was going to say," said Miller to open his acceptance speech. "I love horses and I love what I do. It's more than I ever dreamed of."

He thanked his family for their support.

"I definitely didn't get here by myself," added Miller. "I have the best family. I have to thank my wife Misty who does everything but drive the races."

The first communicator to be recognized spurred even greater emotion from everyone in attendance.

John Pawlak, the USTA's director of marketing known for his writing, broadcasting, announcing and editing of the *Trotting and Pacing Guide*, made his first industry, public appearance in a wheelchair since undergoing four surgeries for a brain tumor discovered last October.

Well known for his humor, Pawlak used that talent to help his industry colleagues feel more at ease about his tribulations.



John Pawlak receives his Communicators Hall of Fame plaque from Roger Huston.

"It was about the size of John Manzi's head," said Pawlak, referring to Monticello's public relations man in describing his tumor. "The doctors told me it also had a moustache and toupee."

To conclude, Pawlak thanked many of the colleagues that he has assisted in his various roles at the USTA.

"It is humbling and I have to thank all of the writers from USHWA for this honor," said Pawlak.



USTA/Mark Hall photos

Carol Cramer is congratulated by Roger Huston and Jane Murray.

Former USTA employee Carol Cramer, known for her work as a long-time Grand Circuit steward and secretary as well as her involvement in the publishing of integral industry publications, especially the annual stakes guide, joined Pawlak in the Communicators Hall of Fame.

"I love this industry with a passion," said Cramer. "It was the joy of my life when I got to go work for the USTA and when I met Jim Harrison. We did the first *Care and Training* book."

She thanked the numerous race secretaries who attended to be a part of her induction.

Also inducted into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame on Sunday were broodmare Hattie, 2007 Horse of the Year [Donato Hanover](#) and 1991 Horse of the Year Precious Bunny.

The horses Green Speed and Windsong's Legacy were inducted as Immortals of the Hall of Fame.

