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Media Contact Information (not for publication):

Kristen Loflin
Media Coordinator
229-886-9360
kloflin@cherryblossom.org

Website: www.cherryblossom.org

Credit Union Cherry Blossom Festivities Honor Hall of Fame Inductees and Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service Award Recipient

Bill Brooks, Ed Murray and Phil Stewart Inducted into Hall of Fame; Charlie Harr announced as recipient of the 2024 Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service Award

April 6, 2024, Washington, DC: Organizers of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom (CUCB) announced the much-anticipated winner of this year's Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service Award as well as the newest inductees into the CUCB Hall of Fame at the pre-race dinner for elite athletes, race committee members, Credit Union Miracle Day partners and special guests.

The inaugural class of CUCB Hall of Fame was introduced as part of last year's 50th Anniversary celebrations. Members of the second class of 2024 are **Bill Brooks**, a long time Credit Union Miracle Day Board Member, **Ed Murray**, race co-director from 1974-1982, and Event Director **Phil Stewart**. Brooks is responsible for bringing Credit Union Miracle Day on as the title sponsor of the event back in 2001, a partnership that is still thriving 23 years later. To this day, he serves as an advocate for the race in the



Inducted into this year's Hall of Fame class were (from left) longtime Credit Union Miracle Day Board member Bill Brooks, Former Cherry Blossom Co-Race Director (1974-1982) Ed Murray, and current Race Director (1988 - Present) Phil Stewart.

Credit Union industry and is currently in the midst of a three-year streak as the driver of the lead vehicle for the men's race. Playing a role from the beginning, Murray has worn several hats over the last 50 years: co-race director, registration and race results coordinator, and Chief Judge, and he currently as a finish line judge. His dedication from the start was vital to the event's early success and a big reason why it continues to blossom. Stewart has been at the helm since 1988, as either the co-director or solo. His patience, guidance and leadership of over 100 committee members has provided the soil in which the Credit Union Cherry Blossom continues to grow. The Class of 2024 joins Gar Williams, Jeff Darman and Irv Newman in the CUCB Hall of Fame.

"The Credit Union Cherry Blossom has endured and overcome many challenges throughout the years and would not be the beloved event it is without the hard work and passion of individuals like Bill Brooks and Ed Murray. I am honored to be inducted into the Hall of Fame alongside these Cherry Blossom Champions," expressed Stewart.

The evening's agenda also included the announcement of the Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service Award, which has been awarded since 2015. This year's recipient is CUCB Washington Memorial Grounds Coordinator **Charlie Harr**, who leads the setup and tear down of the start/finish area. Known for his professionalism and "can do" attitude, Harr is always willing to assist others to ensure the event operates successfully.

The Les Kinion Award was established in honor of Les Kinion, a Baltimore firefighter with Engine Company 43. By passion, he was first a runner and then a running club officer and race director. In 1970, Les co-founded the Baltimore Road Runners Club, one of the earliest chapters of the Road Runners Club of America. In 1973 he helped launch the first Maryland Marathon. After retiring in 1986, Les moved to Bishopville, MD, and worked on hundreds of races on the Maryland-Delaware Coast. He became involved with the Cherry Blossom Run in the early 1990s coordinating the event's t-shirt operation and was active until he passed away in July 2014 at the age of 78.



Charlie Harr was recognized for his many years of volunteer work for the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile & 5K when he was honored as the recipient of the 2024 Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service Award. Charlie is the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Washington Memorial Grounds Coordinator.

Past recipients of the Les Kinion Award include Rob Wolfe, Steve Broyles, Irv Newman, George Tarrico, Michelle Carter, Jean Arthur, Glenn Klenk, Nita Lalla Roncone, Marsha Way, and Danny Talmage. Press releases about each year's award recipient can be found [in the archives](#).

Thanks to Credit Union Miracle Day's title sponsorship since 2002, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run has raised over \$11 million for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, including \$450,000 in 2023. The 2024 fundraising total will be announced at a special check presentation before the start of the 10 Mile tomorrow morning.

About Credit Union Cherry Blossom:

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom, organized by Cherry Blossom, Inc., a 501(c)(3) chapter of the Road Runners Club of America, is known as "The Runner's Rite of Spring®" in the Nation's Capital. The staging area for the 10 Mile is on the Washington Monument Grounds and the course passes in sight of all of the major Washington, D.C. Memorials. The 5K begins at Freedom Plaza and proceeds down Pennsylvania Ave. to the U.S. Capitol building, tracing the route of Presidential Inaugurations. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, a consortium of 170 premier children's hospitals across North America. About one-third of the funds raised support Washington, D.C.'s own Children's National ("Children's Hospital"). The event also funds the Road Runners Club of America's "RunPro Camp," a program to teach top recently-graduated U.S. collegiate distance runners about life as a professional runner.

Credit Union Miracle Day, Inc., a consortium of credit unions and credit union suppliers, is the title sponsor of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile, 5K and Kids Run. Presenting sponsors include ASICS, BellSant, REI, Warner Bros. Discovery, and Wegmans; supporting sponsors include PSCU|CO-OP Solutions, TruStage, Outside, Potomac River Running, Gatorade Endurance, Suburban Solutions Moving, United Lifestyle Brands and The Westin Washington DC Downtown hotel

The 10 Mile is sanctioned by [USA Track & Field](#) and the [Road Runners Club of America](#) and is a proud member of the [PRRO Circuit](#), a series of this country's classic road races with circuit stops in Washington, D.C.; Spokane, WA; Utica, NY; and Davenport, IA. The 5K was voted the Best 5K in the country by a 2023 *USA Today* poll.

To learn more, visit <https://www.cherryblossom.org/>.

About Credit Union Miracle Day:

Credit Union Miracle Day is a partnership of over 100 credit unions, CUSOs and partner organizations united to sponsor the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile & 5K promoting awareness of the credit union difference and benefitting Children's Miracle Network Hospitals nationwide.

About America's Credit Unions:

Credit unions are financial cooperatives that provide consumers choices for financial services such as checking accounts, investments and loans of all kinds including mortgages. Funds are federally insured, but unlike banks, there are no stockholders at credit unions. Earnings are returned to member-owners in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates, low or no-fee products and services. The credit union philosophy of placing members' needs first is why more than 115 million Americans do their banking at a credit union.



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