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Credit Union Cherry Blossom Honors Hall of Fame Class of 2026 and Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service Award Recipient

Becky Lambros, George Banker and Ben Beach Inducted into Hall of Fame; Sarah Beth House announced as recipient of the 2026 Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service Award

April 11, 2026, 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 held Saturday night, April 11 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA.

The newest members of the CUCB Hall of Fame are **Becky Lambros, George Banker** and **Ben Beach**. Lambros, the second woman to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, is the CUCB Deputy Director, a role she has held since 2012.



Inducted into this year's Hall of Fame class were (from left) Teams Coordinator, Community Liaison and Race Historian George Banker; Deputy Race Director Becky Lambros; and Ben Beach, who has finished every running of the Cherry Blossom 10 Mile since the race's inception in 1973.

Lambros became involved with the event as a volunteer in the early 1990s before joining the organizing committee as the Volunteer Coordinator before stepping into her current role. Known as the organization's "people person," Lambros is responsible for growing the organizing committee, managing sponsorships and more. Her energy and passion continues to inspire and motivate everyone involved with the event.

Lambros is accompanied by George Banker, a thirteen-time CUCB finisher. He has also served the race as the Team Coordinator since the advent of the team competition and as the Community Liaison, attending all required Advisory Neighborhood Council Meetings to obtain our municipal permits. Banker is also the event's unofficial historian with file cabinets of documents and race memorabilia.

The last member of this year's Hall of Fame class is Ben Beach, the only individual to have completed every Cherry Blossom 10 Mile since 1973. His 52 finishes have resulted in at least 15 top 10 age group category finishes. He will be running for his 53rd finish on Sunday.

The inaugural class of CUCB Hall of Fame was introduced as part of the 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2023. This year's class will join these former inductees:

- Gar Williams, Class of 2023, cofounder of the Cherry Blossom Run
- Jeff Darman, Class of 2023, former Race Director
- Irv Newman, Class of 2023, former Cherry Blossom President
- Bill Brooks, Class of 2024, a long-time Credit Union Miracle Day Board Member
- Ed Murray, Class of 2024, race co-director from 1974-1982
- Phil Stewart, Class of 2024, Event Director from 1988 to 2026
- Anna Berdahl, Class of 2025, longtime volunteer and Founder of the Kids Run
- Bill Rodgers, Class of 2025, U.S. Olympian and four-time winner of the CUCB

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 **Sarah Beth House**, Social Media Coordinator. Responsible for the event's social media effort, House coordinates a team who continues to use new initiatives to grow CUCB's engagement and social media reach. Under her guidance, the team manages six different platforms, consistently monitoring information and questions as well as promoting the event. House also maintains the Race Ambassador program, a partnership between the CUCB and content creators, giving another positive voice to event promotion. Her dedication and excellence will allow the event to stay relevant with a new audience year-after year.



Sarah Beth House (center), Social Media Coordinator for the Credit Union Cherry Blossom, was recognized for her many years of service to the Credit Union Cherry Blossom weekend of races when she was honored as the recipient of the 2026 Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service Award. Pictured with House are Volunteer Coordinator Nita Roncone (left) and Event Director Phil Stewart (right).

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 shirt operation and was active until he passed away in July 2014 at the age of 78.

Past recipients of the Les Kinion Award include:

- 2015 Irv Newman, President/Deputy Race Director
- 2016 George Tarrico, Logistics Coordinator
- 2017 Michelle Carter, Volunteer Coordinator
- 2018 Jean Arthur, Waterstops Coordinator
- 2019 Glenn Klenk, Signage Coordinator
- 2020 Nita Roncone, Volunteer Coordinator
- 2021 Marsha Way, Volunteer Management Coordinator
- 2022 Danny Talmage, Storage Shed Coordinator

2023 (joint) Steve Broyles, Security Coordinator
2023 (joint) Rob Wolfe, Treasurer/Corrals Coordinator
2024 Charlie Harr, Washington Memorial Grounds Coordinator
2025 Kari Keaton, Co-Director of the Kids Run and Event Emcee

Event Director Phil Stewart had this to say about the new Hall of Fame inductees and this year's Les Kinion Award winner: "Becky Lambros, George Banker and Ben Beach join the growing list of CUCB Hall of Fame inductees by contributing to the event in unique ways, Lambros as a motivator, Banker as a historian and Beach as a legend. All three are most worthy inductees. Les Kinion Award recipient House took over the social media initiative at the dawn of the social media explosion and has done a phenomenal job increasing our reach on all platforms."

Press releases about each year's Hall of Fame inductees can be found [HERE](#), and releases about each of the Les Kinion award recipients can be found [HERE](#).

Thanks to Credit Union Miracle Day's title sponsorship since 2002, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run has raised over \$12 million for the Children's Miracle Network, including \$460,000 in 2025. The 2026 fundraising total will be announced at a special check presentation before the start of the 10 Mile tomorrow morning.

About the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile:

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 event serves as a fundraiser for the Children's Miracle Network, 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").

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, Double Blossom, 5K and Kids Run. Presenting sponsors include ASICS and Wegmans; Supporting sponsors include Cogent Steps, LLC; Visa; Velera; TruStage; Outside; Potomac River Running; Gatorade Endurance; Suburban Solutions Moving; the Embassy of Japan; Runna by Strava; Shokz; Select Event Group; and United Lifestyle Brands.

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 Jacksonville, FL; Washington, DC; Spokane, WA; Peoria, IL; Utica, NY; and Davenport, IA. The 5K was voted the Best 5K in the country by a 2026 *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 benefitting Children's Miracle Network nationwide and promoting the difference credit unions make in their communities.



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