

For Immediate Release

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Berks Sports Legends Ruth Hartman and Dick Gernert
Appearing at Seniors Helping Seniors June 16 Picnic

Wyomissing Hills, PA—Berks County sports legends Ruth Hartman and Dick Gernert will be among the special guests appearing at the annual Seniors Helping Seniors picnic scheduled for Saturday, June 16 from noon to 5 p.m. at Designer's Place in the VF Outlet Village in Wyomissing.

Seniors Helping Seniors is the non-profit organization that matches seniors who need services with seniors who provide them. The picnic is free and by invitation, which can be obtained by calling 610-927-2778. "The annual Seniors Helping Seniors picnic is an important opportunity for Seniors Helping Seniors to recognize its receivers and providers, as well as to showcase the organization to numerous government officials, private groups and other non-profit organizations. Picnic attendance continues to grow each year", said Yocom.

Ruth Hartman is one of three female softball players on which the movie "A League of Their Own" was based. Considered the best pitcher in Pennsylvania, she played in three national tournaments during her career. In 1942, and because of the war, baseball parks across the U.S. were concerned about the effect of the draft on the sport. The answer came in the form of a women's softball league, which would move into the major league parks to play for the crowds. Partially funded by Philip K. Wrigley, the chewing-gum magnate who had inherited the Chicago Cubs' Major League Baseball franchise from his father, the All-American Girls Softball League (AAGPBL) was founded in 1943.

The Fort Wayne Daisies coach picked up on Hartman's talent and signed her. The Fort Wayne coach, noticing her quick feet and hands, decided to make a second baseman out of the pitcher, a move that didn't sit well with Hartman. However, she ended up playing for the Daisies for two years, until 1948.

Her career includes highlights such as the championship game in 1947, when Hartman made a double play and the team won the game. In 1992 Hartman was inducted into the Cooperstown Hall of Fame and on Mother's Day 2006, she participated in the opening of the Cooperstown updated

exhibit "Diamond Dreams, Women in Baseball," honoring commemorate the women who played in the AAGPBL.

Gernert helped the Cincinnati Reds win the 1961 National League Pennant. He rose through the amateur baseball playing for Northeast Junior High, Reading High and the Gregg Post American Legion. He was a power hitter out of Temple University where he also lettered in basketball. He then played first base for the Boston Red Sox from 1952 to 1959, for the Chicago Cubs in 1960, for the Detroit Tigers in 1960 and 1961, the Reds in 1961 and the Houston Colt .45's in 1962.

In 1953 Gernert, whose Red Sox teammates included Ted Williams, hit 21 home runs, which tied him with Mickey Mantle for seventh best in the American League.

Gernert continued to work in baseball throughout the 1970s, serving as a scout for the Reds, the Senators and the Rangers and as a first base coach for Texas. In 1978 he was hired as director of player development for the New York Mets, holding that position for three years. He returned to the Texas Rangers as a scout and national cross-checker from 1981-85 and then ended his baseball career with the Mets as an advanced scout from 1986-2000.

Jeff Jablonski Landscaping & Maintenance will transform the third floor of Designer's Place into a lavish garden. Phil Long, radio and BCTV personality will emcee the picnic. Events will include appearances by special guests; a luncheon donated by Outback Steakhouse; music by the Robin Flowers Band and the Wernersville Trinity Lutheran Church Bell Choir; line and couples dancing; bingo; and other surprises. Prizes donated by a variety of local businesses will be given away throughout the day.

Seniors Helping Seniors, incorporated as a non-profit in 1998, provides services such as household assistance, companion care, yard work, handyman services or 24-hour care to clients in Reading and Berks County. The group has helped some 500 receivers and employed over 200 providers. In 2006 Seniors Helping Seniors provided nearly 13,000 hours of service.

For more details on the picnic, call 610-927-2778.