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*Honoring and Preserving the Sports History of Chautauqua County*

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## **Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame**

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*Box 1192 - Jamestown, NY 14702*

*September 2023*

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### **CSHOF Board & Officers Elected**

The election of the Board of Directors and Officers of the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame was held at its June 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.



**Randy Anderson**  
President



**Russ Ecklund**  
Secretary



**Lee Johnson**  
Treasurer



**Tammy Rea**  
Vice-President



**Chip Johnson**  
Vice-President



**Gary Peters**  
Vice-President

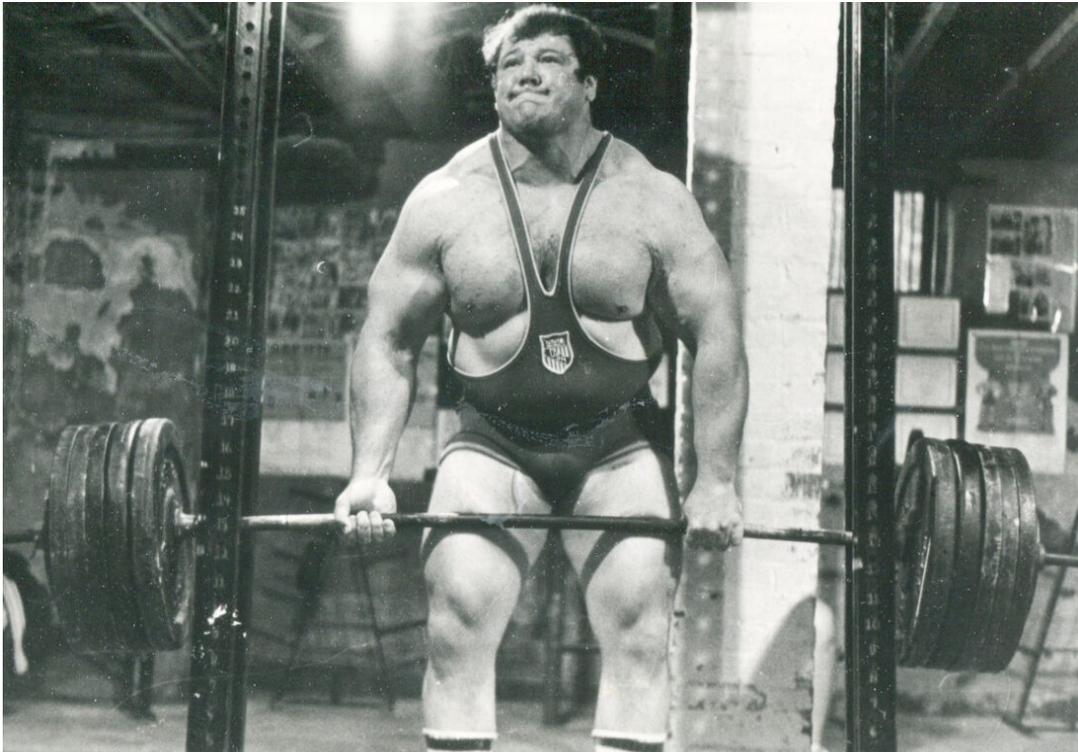
## **2023-2024 CSHOF Board of Directors**

NAME	POSITION	YEARS
Anderson, Mike	director	6
Anderson, Randy	president (& inductee)	19
Barton, Dick	director (& inductee)	18
Bongiovanni, John	director	10
Carlson, Franni	director	6
Cederquist, Cal	director (& inductee)	13
Deppas, Lou	director	15
DiMaio, Joe	director	17
Ecklund, Russ	secretary	33
Gould, Kay	director (& inductee)	3
Heppeler, Tom	director	14
Huckno, Wally	director (& inductee)	21
Johnson, Chip	vice-president	36
Johnson, Lee	treasurer	22
Kindberg, Scott	director (& inductee)	17
Larson, Fred	director	20
Lassen, Lori	director	8
Loll, Gary	director	6
Marshaus, Stan	director (& inductee)	12
Martin, Keith	director	10
Melquist, Ron	director	35
Parmentier, Kathy	director	2
Peters, Sr., Gary	vice-president	8
Polechetti, Dave	director (& inductee)	14
Race, Bill	vice-president (& inductee)	28
Rea, Tammy	vice-president	12
Rollinger, Bill	director (& inductee)	26
Sinatra, Dr. Charles	director	36
Sirianni, Jay	director (& inductee)	9
Tomassini, Ed	director	13
Diethrick, Russ	founder, emeritus director (& inductee)	
Lundberg, Denny	emeritus director	
Tane, Komo	emeritus director (& inductee)	

# A Super Man

## Remembering Don Reinhoudt, The County's 'Gentle Giant'

By Scott Kindberg, *Post-Journal* Sports Editor, July 6, 2023



When he was a kid, Randy Carlson joined his friends one day at the Gerry Rodeo grounds for a summer recreation program. The special guest was a man by the name of Don Reinhoudt, the former “*World’s Strongest Man.*” As he always did during his demonstrations of strength, the Brocton native and Fredonia High School graduate bent bars over his neck, blew up hot-water bottles until they exploded and drove nails into boards with his hands.

Carlson, who later graduated from Cassadaga Valley Central School in the late 1990s, remembers he and the rest of the children encouraged Reinhoudt by chanting, “*Come on Don! Come on Don!*” And, then, as luck would have it, Reinhoudt selected Carlson from the crowd to try and pull the nail from the board used in the demonstration.



*“As he held the board firmly,” Carlson recalled in a Facebook post on Wednesday, “I struggled and struggled, almost believing I was the real-life ‘Arthur’ pulling the sword from the stone.”*

*“The nail still sits firmly in that board,”* said Carlson, who now lives in South Carolina.

The impact that Reinhoudt, who passed away Monday, has had in our community is even stronger.

*“To this day, I still don’t believe I’ve seen a person light up a room full of children the way Don Reinhoudt did,”* Carlson wrote. *“He was like our area’s Walt Disney.”*

My first memory of Reinhoudt was about 45 years ago. My dad and I happened to be watching TV one day when a CBS program, called *“The World’s Strongest Man,”* came on.

When Reinhoudt appeared on the screen, dad said, *“That guy is from Chautauqua County.”*

My interest piqued, I watched in amazement as Reinhoudt showed off his enormous strength. I later came to learn that his resume also included a 2,500-pound car lift; a 1,000-pound back lift; a 20,000-pound truck pull; a 10,000-pound tram pull; a 350-pound log lift; a 300-pound log lift; a 300-pound barrel lift; and a 175-pound dumbbell press.

Reinhoudt’s accomplishments, including the *“World’s Strongest Man”* title in 1979, earned him induction into numerous halls of fame, including the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame in 1983, and features in every strength magazine of his era.

Yet, the man who was known around the globe for doing uncommon physical feats was just as happy to make his impact at home where he spent 25 years as the executive director of the Chautauqua County Youth Bureau.



*“Don could have been anything he wanted to be because of his cache in the world of powerlifting,”* Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame president Randy Anderson said. *“But what did he choose to do? He chose to stay in Chautauqua County and work with the youth of our county. Talk about a guy who had his priorities in order.”*

When Anderson posted to the CSHOF’s Facebook page on Wednesday morning that Reinhoudt had passed away, the tributes to *“the Gentle Giant”* were heartfelt.

Below are a few of them.

— Laurie Goold of Bemus

*Point: “An amazing man. Look past his physical strength, and find a wonderful, loving, inspirational man! Don you will be missed. It was a blessing knowing you and watching your connection with the kids in our county. Condolences from the Goold family.”*

— Charlie LaDuca of Fredonia, who taught and coached at Pine Valley Central School: *“We spent many hours in the gym together. His visits to Pine Valley were always inspiring. Words cannot describe his gentle spirit and impact on so many. Rest easy, my friend.”*

— Dan Triscari of Redondo Beach, California: *“Was Don Reinhoudt the greatest athlete to come out of Chautauqua County?”*

Anderson responded to Triscari’s question this way: *“When you think about the county’s most accomplished athletes, he’s on a really short list. When you’re the world champion at anything, that’s a real short list.”*

But that’s not the list which Anderson will necessarily think about first.



*“When I was a teacher (at Ring Elementary School in Jamestown),” Anderson said, “(Reinhoudt) would come and do assemblies at the school. He’d do all these crazy feats of strength and he would give such a great speech in his soft, gentle, quiet voice. I remember the kids just wanting to go touch him. (They wondered), ‘Can anybody be this strong AND this nice?’ They*

*just wanted to touch Don Reinhoudt. I guess that’s what Don did. He touched people in return.*

*“He was ‘superhuman’ as a compound word and then a ‘super human.’”*

Added Carlson: *“Our county has no shortage of everyday superheroes and Don is second to none. I am certain they’re chanting “COME ON DON!!” as he puts on a show in heaven.”*