

May 13, 2008

Sarasota County will recognize local 'Hall of Famers'

The irrepressible ESPN commentator, Dick Vitale, along with women's basketball pioneer Cathy Rush, will be recognized by the Sarasota County Commission Wednesday, May 14, for their election to the Basketball Hall of Fame.

The resolutions will be presented to Vitale and Rush at the beginning of the 9 a.m. meeting at the Sarasota County Administration Center, 1660 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota.

Vitale, a resident of Lakewood Ranch, has been the lead announcer for ESPN for more than 20 years. He coached high school, college and NBA teams before switching to broadcasting in 1979. He has turned a number of phrases into common usage and has been a relentless enthusiast for college basketball.

This is the fourth time Vitale had been nominated; he was one of six selected for the class of 2008.

Rush, a resident of Sarasota and six-time finalist for the Hall of Fame, was enshrined into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in 2000. She was a pioneer in women's basketball and an advocate for women's sports. Rush led Immaculata University to three consecutive Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) national championships. She also made six consecutive appearances in the AIAW Final Four.

To be elected, a finalist needs 18 of 24 votes from the Honors Committee for the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. The class of 2008 will be enshrined in September in Springfield, Mass.

Other members of this year's class include Adrian Dantley, Patrick Ewing, Hakeem Olajuwon and Pat Riley.