

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Internationally Recognized Track and Field Expert Frank Litsky to Be Honored with George Hirsch Journalism Award

New York, October 31, 2013 - Frank Litsky, a longtime contributor to the world of sports of journalism and a retired president of the New York Track Writers Association, has been named the recipient of the 2013 George Hirsch Journalism Award presented by New York Road Runners, it was announced today by NYRR president and CEO Mary Wittenberg.

Tiffany & Co., an official sponsor of the ING New York City Marathon, will help celebrate this prestigious event by designing the award to be presented to Litsky.

“Frank is one of a kind. He captured the best of our sport in words that captivated so many over six decades [at the *New York Times*]. As much as Frank shared through pen and paper with so many, the luckiest of us are those who know Frank and that simply huge heart of his,” said Wittenberg. “Frank honors NYRR and this award with his acceptance. We are grateful for all his contributions to our sport, and especially to NYRR and the Marathon.”

“Frank has been a forward-thinking journalist, a knowledgeable observer of our sport, and has demonstrated a passion that shows in all of his work,” said Hirsch. “We are honored to present him with this award, and we thank him for his outstanding efforts to promote our sport over the years.”

The award is named in honor of George Hirsch, the founding publisher and president of *The Runner* magazine from 1978 to 1986 and the worldwide publisher of *Runner's World* from 1987 to 2003. Today, Hirsch is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of New York Road Runners. The George Hirsch Journalism Award recognizes excellence in the reporting, writing, and broadcasting of the sport of the marathon and long-distance running. The Award is given to a journalist or broadcaster who has regularly demonstrated excellence in the coverage of long-distance running and the marathon through magazine, newspaper, radio, TV, and website journalism is eligible to be honored.

Previous honorees were Kenny Moore (2012), Amby Burfoot (2011), and Dick Patrick (2010).

Litsky, 87, began writing a weekly chess news column and covered high school swimming meets at the age of 13 for the three newspapers in Waterbury, CT, where he grew up. He was the editor of Crosby High School's national prize-winning student newspaper, *The Argus*. From 1946 to 1958, he wrote for the *United Press*. During that time he spent two years in the Army, including eight months as assistant public information officer of the United States Army I Corps in Korea. His career at the *New York Times* began in 1958, when he was brought on as a sports copy editor who specialized in Olympic sports.

Over the years, Litsky wrote eight sports books and received many awards. He was the vice president and secretary of the Sports Broadcasters Association during the 1950's and '60's. In the two decades following, Litsky was an analyst on telecasts of indoor track meets for Home Box Office, Madison Square Garden Network, USA Network, and PBS. In 1987, he was a track and field analyst when ESPN re-created the 1984 Olympics. Litsky became the first newspaper journalist inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame's media wing in 1997.

"I feel overwhelmed, proud, thrilled, grateful, and humble," said Litsky about receiving the George Hirsch Journalism Award. "I have been in this business a long time and I have known many people in every facet. I have known none better than those at New York Road Runners. As an editor and reporter, I have been involved with the organization almost from its start. I knew Fred Lebow from his first day on the job. I watched as George, Alan, and Mary steered the organization to world prominence. I reveled in the glory days of Bill Rodgers, Alberto Salazar, and Grete Waitz. I suffered with the impossible situation brought on by Hurricane Sandy. I am thrilled by the toughness in recovering from that can't-win situation; so thank you all for this award, and for allowing me to be part of your history and your glory."

After more than 50 years with the *New York Times*, 40 years as president of the New York Track Writers Association, and more than 61 years in the industry, Litsky is enjoying his well-deserved retirement with his domestic partner, Zina G. Greene, in Washington, DC; West Stockbridge, MA, and Edgewater, NJ.

About the ING New York City Marathon

The ING New York City Marathon is the most popular and inclusive marathon in the world, attracting a wide-range of professional athletes and recreational runners. The race began in 1970 with just 127 runners racing four laps of Central Park. Now, more than 45,000 runners from throughout the world run through New York City's five boroughs, starting on Staten Island at the foot of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge and ending in Central Park. The race features the world's top professional runners and many running for charity or for their own personal goals. An estimated two million live spectators cheer on the runners while the global TV broadcast reaches 330 million more. The race is a key part of the *World Marathon Majors*—an alliance with the Tokyo, Boston, Virgin Money London, BMW Berlin, and Bank of America Chicago marathons—which offers a \$1 million annual prize purse split equally between the top male and the top female marathoner in the world. The race is the premier event for New York Road Runners, the world's foremost community running organization with the mission of helping and inspiring people through running.