

2006 Hall of Fame Inductee Don H. Carlsen – Denver

Don Carlsen was born on October 15, 1926 in Chicago, Illinois. He passed away on September 23, 2002. Don led a celebrated life.

After graduating from East High School in 1944, Don went into the Navy for two and a half years. When he was released from the Navy, he played pro baseball for six years. During this time Don also attended Pepperdine College in Los Angeles, California and then went on to graduate with a B.S. from Denver University in 1956. He also taught algebra at Smiley Junior High School in 1956. He was with the Cubs and Pirates in the major leagues and Los Angeles and Hollywood in the AAA Coastal League, Tulsa in the Texas league and New Orleans and Nashville in the Southern League. Surgery to the elbow ended his career.

Don assisted Bill Reed, the Denver Bear's radio announcer as his color man in 1956 and 1957. While attending East High School he umpired for the Old Timers League during the summer and his call to fame came when an umpire for the Denver Bears became ill and he was called to take over. Warren Spahn was the opposing coach and conflict over a call made by Don in left field became an issue. We still laugh at that one! From 1954-1974, he coached Youth Baseball and Legion A for Burt Chevrolet and one year of semi-pro baseball.

Don was a member of the Big Brothers for 5 years and served on the Board.

Ryne Duren (MLB relief pitcher) and Don started the Ryne Duren Celebrity Golf Tournament and they raised thousands of dollars over the years, 1989-2000, for the cause.

In 1973, he was the DAC Athlete of the Year and in 1999, Don was inducted into the Colorado Handball Hall of Fame. He also became one of the recipients to be inducted into the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame in 2001.