



## 2013 Walks of Life Honoree

# Dan Coughlin

Dan Coughlin argues against the perception that he is a living caricature of the gregarious Irish sportswriter. Let's just call him an anachronism.

He covered sports in his hometown of Cleveland for 48 years. In his 18 years at *The Plain Dealer*, he won many writing awards, including being twice named best sportswriter in Ohio.

In the spring of 1982 he accepted an outrageous offer from the Cleveland Press to become its sports columnist. Under the weight of Dan's contract, however, the Press folded ten weeks later. The smiling Irishman found better luck on TV, the last 30 years at Channel 8.

During his career, Dan covered virtually every game in town. He traveled with the Indians and Browns. He covered big time college football, boxing, Indianapolis 500 auto races, softball and sandlots.

He sees symmetry in his career. In 1964 as a rookie reporter at *The Plain Dealer* he covered high school sports. Now semi-retired, he returns to the high school beat each fall to cover football games for Fox 8's "Friday Night Touchdown" show.

He has written two books about the eccentric bartenders, gamblers, athletes and other characters he has encountered. His first book, "Crazy with the Papers to Prove It," was a Number One best seller in Greater Cleveland two years ago. That prompted his second book, "Pass the Nuts."

The son of Arthur J. and Ruth Coughlin, Dan was born near the end of the Great Depression. His father was a railroad worker from a large West Side family who lived for many years on W. 115th St.

Dan, a 1956 graduate of St. Edward High School, attended the University of Notre Dame. He served 20 years on the St. Ed's board of trustees and recently was inducted into the school's Hall of Fame.

Dan and his wife, Maddy, met at a wake at McGorray's Funeral Home. Dan insists that funeral homes are much better meeting places than singles bars. "They're well lit. People are clean, dressed up and usually sober. Everybody tries to make a good first impression." The couple married in 1980 and now lives in Rocky River. They have four grown children -- Joe, John, Mike and Mary -- and two grandchildren.

For his outstanding work in journalism, Dan was inducted into the Cleveland Press Club Hall of Fame in 1996.