



Legendary Red Sox Player Trades Baseball Cap for Shriners Fez



From left: Irv Urie, Potentate of Hillah Shriners; Ard Pratt, Potentate of Al Kader Shriners; Gene Bracewell, Imperial Treasurer and Past Imperial Potentate of Shriners International; Bobby Doerr, former second baseman for the Boston Red Sox and founding member of Teammates for Humanity; Ralph Semb, president and CEO of Shriners Hospitals for Children

Bobby Doerr, a former Red Sox player and the oldest living player of the Baseball Hall of Fame, was created a Shriner of Al Kader Shriners in Wilsonville, Ore., at his 91st birthday celebration, which was hosted by Shriners Hospitals for Children — Portland on April 7. The “silent captain of the Red Sox,” as he was called by his teammate Ted Williams, has been a member of the Masonic fraternity for 55 years.

More than 160 people, including Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski, participated in the festivities, which took place at the Multnomah Athletic Club in downtown Portland. Wayne Witzak, corporate director of giving and sponsorships for Shriners Hospitals for Children, kicked off the night by reading letters prepared for Doerr by Former President George H.W. Bush, Red Sox Chief Operating Officer Mike Dee and Baseball Hall of Fame President Jeff Idelson. The former second baseman was then presented with a cake in honor of his birthday.

The event marked the rekindling of a 70-year relationship between Shriners Hospitals for Children and Teammates for Humanity, a philanthropic organization that has raised more than \$500 million for charities. Bobby Doerr, along with Ted Williams, who is widely considered one of the greatest hitters in the history of baseball, and Joe Cronin, a former shortstop and general manager of the Boston Red Sox, established the organization. Dom DiMaggio and Johnny Pesky, who played on the 1947 Boston Red Sox World Series team with Williams and Doerr, are also founding members. Williams served as president of Teammates for Humanity until his death in 2002; Doerr succeeded him and continues to serve in that capacity.

A 35-minute preview of Ted Williams’ official documentary, “Ted Williams: The Greatest Fisherman to Ever Play Baseball,” and Bobby Doerr’s official documentary, “The Silent Captain,” provided guests

an intimate glimpse into the lives of the baseball greats. Williams’ documentary included never-before-seen interviews and footage from his private collection, and Doerr’s documentary features breathtaking footage of Oregon’s Rogue River, where he has a cabin and has been fly fishing for nearly 70 years. Teammates for Humanity gave Shriners Hospitals for Children the rights to both documentaries and will redirect all of the organization’s fundraising efforts to benefit Shriners Hospitals for Children, as well.

Following the sneak peek of the documentaries, Ralph Semb, president and CEO of Shriners Hospitals for Children, invited Doerr to the stage for a surprise ceremony. Gene Bracewell, Imperial Treasurer and Past Imperial Potentate of Shriners International, Ard Pratt, Potentate of Al Kader Shriners, and Irv Urie, Potentate of Hillah Shriners in Medford, Ore., joined Semb to carry out the proper rituals. Semb then placed a specially decorated fez, emblazoned with the words “The Silent Captain,” on Doerr’s head.

The partnership between Teammates for Humanity and Shriners International began with Shrine Day at Fenway Park in Boston in 1939. Williams drove a Shriner’s mini-car around the infield to publicize the occasion. In 1986, Williams’ son, John Henry, received care for a burn injury at Shriners Hospitals for Children — Boston.

www.shrinersinternational.org