



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 22, 2011

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Leveling the Playing Field

Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of Title IX
and Celebrating the History of Women in Sports
at the Charles M. Schulz Museum & Research Center
December 17, 2011 to August 12, 2012

Peanuts—Molly Volley detail of May 13, 1977 strip

I have a vision, Chuck... I can see the day coming when women will have the same opportunities in sports as men! – Peppermint Patty, 1979

(Santa Rosa, CA) June 23, 2012 marks the 40th anniversary of the passage of Title IX, legislation that ensures equal access to both men and women in federally-funded educational programs and activities, including sports. *Leveling the Playing Field*, an upcoming exhibition at the Charles M. Schulz Museum & Research Center, commemorates this milestone in sports history while adding the hilarity of *Peanuts* to the tribute.

Leveling the Playing Field features Charles Schulz's even-handed depiction of girls in sports with 86 original *Peanuts* comic strips, an overview of women's sports history, and examples of women's sports attire from the 1880s to the present. The exhibition will also detail Schulz's connections in the world of women's sports, his friendship with legendary sports icon Billie Jean King, and his early years coaching a local women's softball team.

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After Schulz met Billie Jean King, he highlighted the issue of females in sports with a multi-day storyline in 1979 about Title IX in his comic strip. Schulz brought attention to women athletes by mentioning contemporary female sports stars and having his girl characters participate in a wide variety of sports, from football to figure skating. From Peppermint Patty's athletic dominance to Lucy's ineptitude in the right field to Marcie's total bewilderment with sports of all kinds, the girls in *Peanuts* were always equal participants.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Billie Jean King --Sunday January 15, 2012 at 1 p.m.

Billie Jean King, sports icon and humanitarian and personal friend of the late Charles Schulz, will participate in a moderated conversation and sign autographs starting at 1 p.m. at the Charles M. Schulz Museum & Research Center, Sunday, January 15, 2012.

In 1990 Schulz said, "I think Billie Jean King would certainly have to be in my top three as one of my heroes. She did so much for women's sports. And she's such a bright lady and so involved in everything she's done."



Charles M. Schulz standing with Billie Jean King at the Snoopy Cup tennis tournament at the Redwood Empire Ice Arena in 1984, photo by Cheryl Traendly Photography

As one of the 20th century's most respected and influential people, Billie Jean King has long been a champion for social change and equality. She created new inroads for both genders in and out of sports during her legendary career, and she continues to make her mark today. In her tennis career, King won 39 Grand Slam singles, doubles, and mixed doubles tennis titles, including a record 20 titles at Wimbledon. She has been instrumental in establishing modern-day women's professional tennis with the formation of the Virginia Slims Series, the Women's Tennis Association (1973), the Women's Sports Foundation (1974), and Women's Sports Magazine (1974), and she will forever be remembered for being part of one of the greatest

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moments in sports history when she defeated Bobby Riggs in the “Battle of the Sexes” in 1973. King currently serves on the boards of the Women’s Sports Foundation and the Elton John AIDS Foundation, and in August 2009 President Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor.

SPONSORS

This exhibition is generously sponsored by:

title nine



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A special thank you to The Women’s Sports Foundation and its founder Billie Jean King.

IMAGES

If you would like any of the images from *Leveling the Playing Field* to print in a publication, contact Gina Huntsinger at gina@schulzmuseum.org or (707) 284-1268.



Peanuts—September 27, 1979

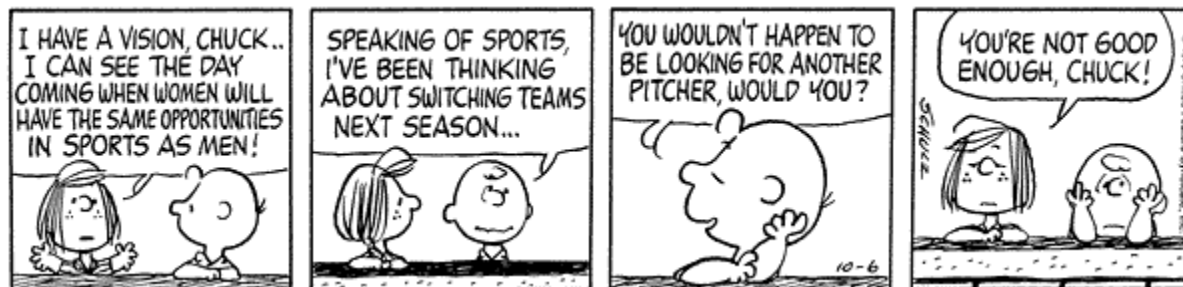


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Peanuts — September 29, 1979. This *Peanuts* strip is part of the series on Title IX that Mr. Schulz drew highlighting the issue of females in sports.



Peanuts — October 6, 1979

ABOUT THE CHARLES M. SCHULZ MUSEUM & RESEARCH CENTER

The Charles M. Schulz Museum opened in August 2002 to fulfill its mission of preserving, displaying, and interpreting the art of Charles M. Schulz. The museum carries out this mission through changing exhibitions and programming that: build an understanding of cartoonists and cartoon art; illustrate the scope of Schulz's multi-faceted career; communicate the stories, inspirations and influences of Charles Schulz; and celebrate the life of Charles Schulz and the Peanuts characters.

LOCATION

The Charles M. Schulz Museum is located 50 minutes north of San Francisco by car on Highway 101. The Museum is located at 2301 Hardies Lane, Santa Rosa, California, 95403.

HOURS

Weekdays Monday thru Friday (except Tuesdays*) 11am – 5pm

Saturday & Sunday 10am – 5pm

Closed Tuesdays*

*Open everyday throughout the summer (Memorial Day through Labor Day)

ADMISSION FEES

Free – Museum Members, Children 3 and under

\$5.00 – Children 4-18, college students with valid I.D. card, and Seniors 62+

\$10.00 – Adults

For more information consult the Museum web site: www.SchulzMuseum.org.

Charles M. Schulz Museum & Research Center

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