

★ GEORGE MALOOF ★

George Maloof moved mountains to show his leadership in sports before he died of a heart attack on Nov. 29, 1980.

A tireless man with a magnetic personality, Maloof 57, was owner of the Houston Rockets of the National Basketball Association at the time of his death and had been chairman of the New Mexico Racing Commission for 13 years.

He's honored tonight posthumously as the 49th member of the Albuquerque Sports Hall of Fame—a true legend as an ultimate sports booster and a strong business leader.

"He loved his family, but following sports at all levels intrigued him," said his widow, Colleen, who now chairs the Maloof Companies.

"Especially boxing, horse racing, football, basketball, golf and tennis. He worked out by swimming and playing tennis."

Maloof came within 48 hours of purchasing the Boston Red Sox of the American League two years before he bought the NBA franchise for \$9 million. He once made a bid to purchase the Chicago Cubs.

Maloof was a positive force behind projects that benefited sports in Albuquerque, especially those involving youngsters. But, he also raised funds for community projects that would benefit adults.

The U.S. Olympic Committee made a special national presentation to Maloof in 1980 for being state chairman and emerging No. 1 in the U.S. quota standings. His committee raised \$105,000 for the Olympic Fund. New Mexico's quota was \$15,000.

Although Lobo athletics played a high profile in his life, Maloof not only raised money to support varsity sports at the University of New Mexico, but he personally provided emergency funds to send New Mexico youngsters to national tournaments. Many times he was the first to purchase top-priced tickets for athletic events.

Maloof was a prime sponsor of the University of New Mexico's Presidential Scholarship Program designed to keep undergraduate high

school scholars in the state. He served on the board of directors for the UNM Foundation, the university's fund-raising arm.

Maloof also helped raise funds that benefited the community; the Albuquerque Symphony, the renovation of historic buildings and various religious organizations.

He's remembered for creating the Maloof Student Athletic Scholarship in 1979, honoring an Albuquerque senior scholar athlete with a \$1,000 college scholarship.

Now known as the George Maloof Memorial Scholarship, the program has been expanded to \$5,000 a year; \$2,500 to a male high school senior and \$2,500 to a female senior, with the provision that they attend a New Mexico college of their choice.

Maloof, who radiated enthusiasm in sports, also played a leading role in the business world.

He left Colorado University at age 21 to run his father's large business because his father, Joe G., had suffered a heart attack.

He expanded the successful Joe G. Maloof Company into a vast empire now known as the Maloof Companies.

When he died the Maloof Companies included, The First National Bank, Houston Rockets, the Coors Beer distributorship for New Mexico, the Maloof Hotels (Los Pueblos Inc. in New Mexico and California), Quality Import Co., a liquor wine and beer distributor, and Contract Carriers Inc., a trucking operation.

The hotels then included Sally Port in Roswell, the Classic in Albuquerque, the St. Francis in Phoenix, the Sheraton in Disneyland, Howard Johnson's in Las Cruces and The Inn in Grants, Gallup and Farmington.

All of the Maloof children are members of the board of directors of the Maloof Companies. They include Joe, Gavin, Adrienne, George Jr., and Phillip.