FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NCA Confers Honorary Membership to George Vukasin, Sr. Posthumously

Individual Membership Conferred on Longtime NCA Board Member and Chairman of the Board

New York, NY (March 27, 2017) – The National Coffee Association (NCA) has conferred an Honorary Membership Award posthumously to George Vukasin, Sr., longtime member of the Board of Directors and 1998-2000 Chairman of the Board.

“George Vukasin was a visionary force in the industry’s shift toward gourmet coffees and a larger-than-life personality,” said Bill Murray, NCA president & CEO. “As president of Peerless Coffee and Tea and NCA Board Member and Chairman, he devoted enthusiastic entrepreneurial spirit and passion to his business, the association and the industry.”

Honorary NCA Membership

NCA Honorary Membership is conferred to only a few individuals who have made significant contributions to the NCA and the U.S. coffee industry. While NCA memberships are otherwise strictly organizational, this special designation is reserved for individuals who have highly distinguished themselves through their service to the NCA and the industry. The award process begins with nominations by employees of NCA member companies, and concludes with a review by the NCA Board of Directors and a supermajority vote.

George Vukasin, Sr. took the helm of Peerless Coffee and Tea in 1957, pioneered craft roasting long before it became popular and gained a reputation as a businessman who treated everyone fairly – employees, customers, suppliers and even competitors. He was a strong advocate of raising the quality of coffee and would spend long hours at the cupping table focusing on developing roasts and blends of “Peerless” quality. In addition to serving as NCA Chairman, Vukasin also served as president of the Pacific Coast Coffee Association and board member of the Coffee Quality Institute, and received Colombia’s highest coffee honor, the Manuel Meija Award for work he did to elevate Colombian farmers out of poverty.
Earlier, he served as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army, specializing in military intelligence, and remained with the Army reserves for 35 years, retiring as Deputy Commanding General of the 6th U.S. Army with the rank of Major General. He earned numerous awards and decorations, including the Army Distinguished Service Decoration for exceptional meritorious service. Also active in his community, he served as Vice Mayor and City Councilman of Oakland (California), President of the Oakland Port Commission, President of the Oakland Chamber of Commerce and Chairman of the Alameda County March of Dimes. He was a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, where he played football for legendary coach “Pappy” Waldorf.

The NCA Honorary Membership designation was presented at the NCA Annual Convention to George Vukasin’s children, George Vukasin, Jr., Kristina Brouhard and Michelle Thomas. Today, George, Jr. serves on the NCA Board of Directors. The inscription on the plaque which they received in their father’s honor read:

In recognition of
Decades of Membership and Volunteer Support to
the National Coffee Association,
Leadership as 1998-2000 Chairman,
Longstanding Participation on the NCA Board of Directors, and
Lifelong Dedication to the Well-being and Integrity of the U.S. Coffee Industry.

About the National Coffee Association
The National Coffee Association of U.S.A., Inc. (NCA), established in 1911, is the leading trade organization for the coffee industry in the United States. The NCA is the only trade association that serves all segments of the U.S. coffee industry, including traditional and specialty companies. A majority of NCA membership, which accounts for over 90% of U.S. coffee commerce, is comprised of small and mid-sized companies and includes growers, roasters, retailers, importer/exporters, wholesaler/suppliers, and allied industry businesses. The NCA offers a wide array of member benefits, focusing on market research, scientific affairs, domestic and international government affairs, issues management and public relations, and education. The NCA's core purpose is to champion the well-being of the U.S. coffee industry within the context of the world coffee community. Visit www.ncausa.org for additional information about the NCA, its many offerings, and the world of coffee.