

## North Dakota Interscholastic Activities Administrators Association

### ★ ★ HALL OF FAME ★ ★

Al Larson



Carrington High School has been home for Al Larson for all but three of his 36 years in education. Al began his highly successful career as an educator at North Central of Rogers in 1961 where he was a teacher and coach. Three years later he began teaching and coaching in Carrington and later became the principal and athletic director. He was in the Carrington High School system for a total of 33 years. Carrington High School enjoyed tremendous success in wrestling and Al Larson was the man in charge of the program from nearly the beginning.

Al is a 1957 graduate of Kathryn High School and received his undergraduate degree from Valley City State University in 1961. He received three master's degrees. One of these degrees was in Physical education from the University of Northern Colorado in 1963. A second master's degree in Botany came from the University of Nebraska, and the third master's degree was in School Administration from Northern State of Aberdeen.

Al has received many honors recognizing his outstanding accomplishments as a wrestling coach, including North Dakota Coach of the Year and District 7 Coach of the Year. He was inducted into the North Dakota Wrestling Hall of Fame in 1982. He was inducted into the VCSU Athletic Hall of Fame in 2000. He was also inducted into the VCSU Athletic Hall of Fame as a member of a championship wrestling team.

Al was a member of the North Dakota Interscholastic Athletic Administrator's Association for many years. He served a term as president of that organization. He was a member of the advisory board to the North Dakota High School Activities

Association. Al also served a term as president of the North Dakota Wrestling Coach's Association. Larson was an attendee at a number of National Interscholastic Athletic Director's Conventions. He was also selected District Athletic Director of the Year.

During his tenure as athletic director, he was instrumental in increasing the number of varsity sports from five for boys to ten sports each for boys and girls. During Larson's tenure, Carrington hung 14 State Championship banners in their gymnasium in golf, boys basketball, track and field, dance and wrestling. Al was primarily responsible for a tremendous increase in student athletic participation as well as improving the quality of the coaches involved in the athletic program. Recently Al and his wife Dianne were recognized by Carrington High School as honorary "C" Club Members.

Al managed a number of regional wrestling tournaments, district basketball tournaments, and regional track meets. Al also conducted a number of wrestling rules clinics for the NDHSAA. Larson organized international wrestling opportunities for youth, including serving as the coach for a team that traveled to Europe and hosting teams from a variety of countries, including Japan and New Zealand.

Al also served the athletic community through his sport's officiating. He served as a wrestling official for 25 years, and officiated football for 15 years. Al and his wife Dianne continue to be active with the Carrington wrestling team through radio, broadcasting matches and tournaments for the listeners in the Carrington area. He has also broadcast football and basketball games. He has spent a total of 44 years involved in wrestling as a participant, coach, referee and radio announcer.

Al was a member of the Carrington Jaycee's, and is a member of the Lions Club and has been president of both organizations. He has also been active in his church. In the year 2000 he served as a co-chairman of a four-day celebration in Carrington which included an all school reunion. He is currently serving as president of the Carrington Country Club and is chairman of the Dollars for Scholars program for Carrington. He also received an honorary lifetime membership in the Carrington Chamber of Commerce.

Al and his wife Dianne have been married for 42 years. They have three daughters. Cindy Running of Wilmington, Ohio; Pat Christen of Grand Forks; and Nancy Pinke of St. James, MN. The Larsons have 10 grandchildren - 9 boys and 1 girl. Al retired four years ago and they continue to reside in Carrington.