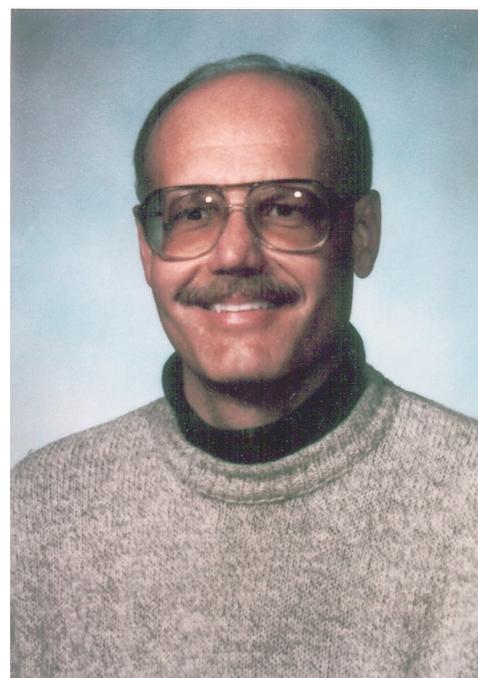


# Thomas F. Herda Memorial Scholarship 1949-1995

*"Tom is planted in my memory as one of the best teachers and most positive influences in my high school years. He was a real gift to us!"*

*JoAnn Hefter Coutts*



The above quotation from a former student of Tom Herda is echoed as a permanent sentiment from all who knew him.

Tom's life began June 16, 1949, in Devils Lake. He was the oldest of three children of long-time Devils Lake residents Floyd and Betty Herda. He attended St. Joseph's Elementary School and graduated from St. Mary's High School in 1967.

Tom was well known throughout the Lake Region for his passionate nature toward athletics. As he grew, he participated in football, basketball, track, baseball, and softball and later took up racquetball and volleyball. His love for sports ultimately led him to pursue a degree with which he could educate the minds and bodies of youngsters.

Tom attended Lake Region State College and transferred to Minot State University, graduating in 1971 with a bachelor degree in education. That same year, Tom married his college sweetheart, Barbara Burckhard, also a native of Devils Lake. Tom and Barb had known each other since third grade, but it wasn't until college that they decided to date one another. In 1976, they were blessed with their first child, Heather. Three years later, Matthew was born.

Tom had a deep and abiding concern for his family. Tom and Heather enjoyed watching Lake Region State College Royals basketball games together. Matthew and his dad enjoyed countless hours of football and college hockey games and hunting. Barbara and Tom simply loved being together. His family was always foremost in his mind.

Tom had indicated to Lady Royals Coach Duane Schwab for several years that he would like his daughter Heather to play basketball for Lake Region State College, and in 1995, Tom's dream became a reality.

He was so excited about the prospect of watching Heather play college basketball for the first time that he called her the morning of her first game, sadly the morning of his death. That was the last time Heather talked to her father. Tom died November 10, 1995, of a heart attack while hunting with his son Matthew. Heather went on to fulfill the dream she shared with her father, becoming a powerful Lady Royals basketball player.

Tom touched many lives as he taught and coached in Devils Lake, Sherwood, Four Winds, Leeds, and finally Lakota. He had the ability to make everyone feel special and to believe in themselves. JoLynn Vassicek Saiger, a former student, recalls, *"His guidance and encouragement meant so much to me ... he worked WITH you, not above you. Because of his influence and encouragement, I have pursued athletics as a teacher and coach. I've thought about him often during my own practices and games,"* JoLynn continued. *"He has, in turn, touched many lives through me and my coaching techniques."*

After learning of Tom's death, many of his former students sent their condolences.

*"Having had Tom as a teacher and coach was an enriching experience which I remember with fondness. Tom was a motivated and enthusiastic educator with the ability to inspire an appreciation of learning in not only highly talented students but also in those who often struggled with classwork."* Tanya Bagne Marcketti

*"He was always so supportive of me in high school, even when I wasn't sure I wanted it. I'm glad he didn't give up early."* Kelly McMorran Larson

The Thomas F. Herda Memorial Scholarship is awarded annually to a Lake Region State College Lady Royal basketball player. ■