

Alumni come together to raise funds for the Harold Chaffee Field



Harold Chaffee

Best Wesleyan moment:

Constructing our Weary Center—the finest facility in the area. It is gratifying to see the students using it.

Wesleyan in Twenty Years:

That we continue to recruit students without promising them anything other than a great education and a great athletic experience.



Harold Chaffee designs one of his famous plays during a time-out.

If you ask most alumni from Nebraska Wesleyan what their favorite memories of the University are, most of them reply with stories about professors, staff members, or coaches. If you ask an alumnus who played on the football team between 1967 and 1986 what his favorite memories of Nebraska Wesleyan are, in all likelihood those stories will include Coach Harold Chaffee.

Dr. Donald Gibbens, '81, remembers Coach Chaffee as "a very worthy man." Having played football under Coach Chaffee's direction in the late 1970s, Gibbens experienced guidance and support from Chaffee

that, in his view, was exceptional: "the majority of the people who played for [Coach Chaffee] have a lot of respect for him," Gibbens says; "he had a tremendous fund of football knowledge and was genuinely concerned about players' academic success at Wesleyan and did what he could to encourage that."

It is in response to his memory of Coach Chaffee and all that he has done for former football players at Nebraska Wesleyan that Dr. Gibbens spearheaded a campaign to create Harold Chaffee Field in honor of the former coach. "He has done so much for Wesleyan, so it's nice that Wesleyan will be doing



Harold Chaffee advises incoming students.



Ray Westover, Harold Chaffee, Boyd Sanke, Dale Pelz

something important for him."

More than 100 alumni and friends agree with Gibbens. In a remarkably short time, these generous donors have joined together to make this project a reality. "Many of these alumni have turned out to be wonderful members of their communities—and a lot of that is because Coach Chaffee recruited these students and made sure they experienced an outstanding college education," Gibbens notes.

In particular, Coach Chaffee was instrumental in forging connections between academics and athletics at Nebraska Wesleyan—an ethic that continues to guide the University's student-athletes today. As Harold Chaffee himself explains, "One important part of Division III athletics is that we put an emphasis on academics and we try to make the sport fun because the kids

don't get any special money for playing; instead, they get the camaraderie that comes with participating in college sports." Connecting academics to athletics always has been a passion for Coach Chaffee, who was one of the first members of his family to graduate from college. "When I look back on kids I coached over the years, I'm amazed at how many have become doctors, lawyers, and business people—but we put an emphasis on academics first, and it made all the difference," Chaffee says.

The Harold Chaffee Field was officially dedicated during Wesleyan Week-end 2004. "I couldn't believe it," Chaffee said of this gesture orchestrated by his former students. "But then I got to thinking that in more than thirty years of coaching, I pretty much redesigned all aspects of the football field. For example, in 1975, a colleague and I dug a

ditch so that we could get water on the practice field ourselves. So, I feel very connected to these facilities and I am honored to be recognized in this way." Chaffee also emphasizes the importance of improving Wesleyan's campus every year—"because to see the beauty of the campus now is a wonderful thing. We have tremendous alumni who support this process; improving our facilities and grounds encourages more supporters to give back to the University."

The dedication of Chaffee Field provided a culminating celebration to the efforts of Dr. Don Gibbens and his fellow alumni and supporters of Coach Harold Chaffee. "To me, Coach Chaffee is Wesleyan," Gibbens concludes, "and now his name will be associated with Wesleyan's athletic future as well as its past."

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE CHAFFEE FIELD FUND AS OF FALL 2004: TIM AYLWARD • HOLLIS ANDERSON, '69 • CARL ARMSTRONG, '92 • BILL ASHBURN, '74 • BRENT BACON, '86 • CHARLES BACON • CHRIS BAUM, '91 • KYLE BELLAMY, '92 • KENNETH BERG, '76 • GREG BERGT, '71 • BILL BIANCO, '87 • COLLEEN BLESSING • RANDY BLUHM, '91 • LON, JANICE, TREVOR & KYLE BOHLING • BRAD BOHN, '91 • TED BULLING, JR., '80 • BRET BURNHAM, '80 • DENNIS BUTLER, '74 • TROY CARMICHAEL, '96 • RICHARD • HAROLD & FRANCES CHAFFEE • MARK CHAFFEE • MICHAEL CHAFFEE • CHARLES CHEVALIER, '75 • STEVE AND PATTY CLEMENTS • JOHN CONLEY, '75 JOHN CROSE, '75 • GENE, '69, AND LINDA, X'70, CRUMP • KEVIN DOLLISON, '90 • STEVE AND SHIRLEY EQUALL • TOM '77 & JANET '77 ETMUND • STEVE AND JANICE ERWIN • DOUGLAS, '89, AND ANGELA, '97, EVANS • DORIS FISCHER • DAN FRENCH, '77 • DOUG GANZ • DAVID GENTRY, '82 • DONALD GIBBENS, '81 • MARTY GREEK, '91 • JOHN HANSEN, '88 • ROBERT AND GLADYS HELM • JIM HORROCKS, '73 • BENJAMIN HULS, '94 • JAMES L. JOHNSON, '85 JAMES KERNAN, '88 • GREG KLUCK, '84 • MARVIN KOHOUT, '75 • ALAN & KATHLEEN '73 KUEHL • ALAN KUZMA, '73 • JAY LENSTROM, '81 • JAMES LESLIE • STEPHEN LIOTTA, JR., '69 • JAMES MACLEAN, '74 • RICHARD MARK, '75 • FRANKLIN, '77, AND DAWN, '93, MCENTARFFER MICK MCCONKEY, '83 • STEVE MCKELVEY, '71 • BRIAN, '77, AND JANE, '76, MCREYNOLDS • GARY MILIUS, '77 • TERRY MONK, '68 • LANCE MOWREY, '92, AND MARY BETH KENNEDY • HENRY NIERODZIK, '79 • MYRON AND MARILYN OEHLERKING • RON, '88, AND GRETCHEN OLTMAN • FRED & MARGARET PETERSEN • RANDY RHODES, '86 • BRIAN RUNGE, '87 • BRIAN SALMON, '91 ROGER SAND, '71 • CHRIS, '87, AND STEPHANIE, '87, SENG • JEFF SHELDON, '97 • SCOTT SHIPMAN, '91 • CHRISTOPHER SMITHBERG, '95 • MICHAEL, '92, AND DARIA, '93, SPRINGER • DAVE AND STEPHANIE STACY • ALFRED AND LINDA STARK • JOHN STITZEL, '88 • JOHN SVEHLA, '80 • ALONZO TAPP, '72 • CHRISTOPHER THOMAS, '95 • DENNIS & RAMONA WAGNER • KIRBY WELLS, '68 • JOHN WERNER, '84 • KEVIN WERNER, '86 • MARK WERNER, '84 • WILLIE WILSON, '85 • BRAD '82 & LESLIE '82 WRIGHTKEVIN YELKIN, '81 • HELEN ZAJICEK •