

## **Mr. Lyle Rossiter – Distinguished Service Award Holton Class of 1955**

A graduate of Holton High School and a member of the Class of 1955, as a student at Holton High School, Mr. Lyle Rossiter was an active member of the school; he participated in baseball, basketball, he was a member of the first organized football team at Holton High School, and he was a member of the Varsity Club. After graduation, Mr. Rossiter would go on to attend Central Michigan University, where he graduated in 1961 with a Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in Social Science, minoring in Physical Education and Economics. While there, Mr. Rossiter was active in intramural sports and was a member of the Phi Sigma Epsilon Fraternity. Mr. Rossiter would go on to teach within the Mecosta Consolidated School System, before being hired by New Troy Public Schools, which later merged with the River Valley School District in Three Oaks. During his time there, Mr. Rossiter was integral in the development of that school's first football team, serving as head football coach and junior high and high school teacher. Mr. Rossiter would then return to Holton in 1967, where he was hired to teach and to serve as the head football coach. Mr. Rossiter would serve in many capacities at the school, including that of teacher, coach, class advisor, and mentor. Mr. Rossiter taught at Holton High School from 1967 until he retired in December of 1988. Mr. Rossiter also served in the United States Army in 1960.

Mr. Rossiter was instrumental in the development of the youth football program in Holton, first taking the program as an arm of the Fremont Youth Football Program, and then making the youth program Holton's own. Mr. Rossiter was also passionate about coaching youth baseball. Mr. Rossiter worked tirelessly with young Little League baseball players helping them improve in all facets of the game. Mr. Rossiter also coached men's track and field at Holton High School, junior varsity men's basketball, and varsity football. Mr. Rossiter was passionate and highly supportive of athletics at Holton High School. Fond memories are often shared about Mr. Rossiter's involvement of Holton High School athletics, such as the times of Mr. and Mrs. Rossiter traveling to scout football games, making weekend trips to watch wrestling matches, or traveling to any athletic event to support Mr. Rossiter's beloved Red Devils. In fact, Mr. and Mrs. Rossiter may be the only individuals who can claim having been at the wrestling state finals in 1974 when Clieve Young took home the state championship, having been at the state championship in 1977 when Craig Cramblet won the state title, and then again in 1994, having been in Kalamazoo when the women's volleyball team won the state championship. Now, all members of the Holton Athletics Hall of Fame.

Mr. Rossiter has been a loyal fan and supporter of the Holton Red Devils, he has likely attended more athletic games in support of student athletes than anyone in the Holton community, and was seen as a strong supporter and proponent of the successful bond millage at Holton Public Schools responsible for the creation of the beautiful athletic facilities that we have today. A former colleague and community member describes Mr. Rossiter by saying, "He bleeds red and white, and has done so for well over 50 years."

While Mr. and Mrs. Rossiter can still to this day be seen at virtually every home athletic event, regardless of sport, times were not always easy. Mr. Rossiter believed in "fighting the good fight for kids, especially when others often would not." Mr. Rossiter had strong beliefs about providing boundaries, limits, and expectations for students and athletes, and most importantly, Mr. Rossiter work hard to stress the importance of team discipline, for success was dependent upon it. Working hard to establish team discipline in the athletic programs that Mr. Rossiter coached often meant standing up for what was right so that students and athletes were provided with the best possible chance of success. While Mr. Rossiter coached in a time when there were few highlight reels, news feeds, or social media posts about a team or individual's performance, many of the early teams coached by Mr. Rossiter experienced great success and developed talented student athletes that would compare with some of the best athletes ever to have played at Holton High School.