

# A family calling steered Tryon onto teaching, coaching road

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A native of Glidden, Jerry Tryon found the road to a long, successful career as a teacher and coach right outside his door.

He just followed Highway 30 much of his career, a trail also blazed by his brothers.

Tryon last week wrapped up a 33-year education career, spending the last 20 years at Ar-We-Va. He coached for nearly 30 of those 33 years and earned hall-of-fame honors.

Tryon got a career head start in his family of 10 children — eight boys and two girls.

A son of the late Clarence and Dorothy Tryon, Jerry's dad served on the Glidden School Board more than 30 years after the family moved there in 1943.

"I think because he was so involved in the school board and the family was so education- and athletics-centered, that was just the direction you drifted into," Jerry said in a recent interview.

The athletics example was set by his brothers who excelled in sports at Glidden High School and Buena Vista College.

Jerry grew up watching his brothers compete on many successful Glidden High School and Buena Vista teams. They also played on Carroll, Coon Rapids and Storm Lake semi-pro baseball teams.

"I chased many foul balls at the Carroll stadium," Tryon says. "They used to have some good baseball around here, tough baseball."

Keeping up family tradition,

Tryon made his own mark as an outstanding Glidden High School athlete in football, basketball, track and baseball.

None of the family members competed on a state-championship team, Tryon says, "but we were always knocking at the door."

After graduating from Glidden in 1961, Jerry, too, went on to Buena Vista and captained the football team as a running back during his senior season in 1964.

After graduating in 1965, Tryon's first teaching and coaching jobs took him to Pomeroy-Palmer, Ballard of Huxley, Alta and Jefferson. He also served as athletic director at Alta and Jefferson.

At Alta, his boys track team won a state championship and the football team rolled to a couple of undefeated seasons in years preceding the state playoffs.

It was also at Alta where Tryon became good friends with Al Koster, whose boys basketball team there won the 1972 state championship.

"One thing led to another, and we decided to try private business for awhile," Tryon says.

So Tryon and Koster opened their Iowa Sporting Goods store on Main Street in downtown Carroll.

They operated the store for a few years before Koster had a chance to join the Kuepfer Catholic High School faculty and become Wayne Chandlee's assistant boys basketball coach.

Also at this time, Tryon's sons began entering high school and he wanted to coach



Jerry Tryon

them.

Tryon rejoined the teaching and coaching ranks in 1985-86 at Ar-We-Va, where he coached football and boys track.

Ar-We-Va, he says, has had a run of outstanding athletes. His sons, Lynn and twins Todd and Tyler contributed to Ar-We-Va's success. Lynn earned all-state basketball and football honors, went on to become a basketball starter at Colorado State University,

which qualified for the NCAA Tournament three years during his career, and then played professional basketball in Europe. Todd, who played quarterback, and Tyler, a receiver, were all-stars who helped Ar-We-Va qualify for the state football playoffs during their junior and senior years.

Tryon's Ar-We-Va football teams played an exciting, wide-open offense.

"We really did," he says. "We wanted to make it fun for the kids, kind of fun ball. We opened things up and the kids enjoyed it."

Fun ball led to a 108-62 record and three playoff appearances in his 19 years as a head football coach. In seven years as Ar-We-Va coach his teams were 44-21.

Tryon has been inducted into the hall of fame of both the Iowa Football Coaches Association and Iowa Track Coaches Association.

Nearly all the Tryon brothers went into teaching and coaching and enjoyed outstanding success. Larry and Dale also were inducted into the football coaches hall of fame.

The Tryon brothers practiced their careers at many different schools, but there was also a remarkable central Iowa route connecting them.

Besides Jerry at Ar-We-Va and Jefferson, there were Bill at Denison and Carroll; Dale at Boone, Cedar Rapids and Iowa City on former University of Iowa football coach Ray Nagel's staff; Larry at Ogden; Gaylord at Ames; Dick at Nevada; and Randy at Adel.

The brothers did indeed at times coach against each other, and sometimes brotherly love temporarily got lost in sibling rivalry.

"That was the tough part," Tryon says, "because maybe you'd get some hard feelings, and somebody might not talk to somebody for a week or two, but they'd eventually get over it."

Overall, though, having a family of coaches was an ad-

vantage.

"You'd get together every year and have your own family coaching clinic," Tryon says. "Or we'd get together on Saturdays and bring game films and hash over questions. You'd spend a lot of time on the phone talking to different brothers."

Tryon proudly remarks, "It's really a close-knit family." Nine of the 10 children have had education careers and another brother took over dad's feed-store business. Eight of the 10 children graduated from Buena Vista and one from Iowa State University.

Tryon got a last taste of coaching this spring as his Ar-We-Va junior high track team won the conference championship.

Tryon calls his teaching stint at Ar-We-Va a typical small-school experience in which he got to know all the students through various courses.

"The seniors I had in government this year I had in kindergarten PE. In a small school you kind of catch them all," he observes. Since he also taught freshman Geography, sophomore U.S. History and junior World History, he adds, "I basically ended up with all the kids."

Tryon says of his career that spanned five decades, "There wasn't a day that I wasn't excited about going to school. I'm laden with mixed emotions."

"On one end I really enjoy what I'm doing. After five decades I still really enjoy it. But I also have a great opportunity to go to work with my good

friend John Reglein at Graphic Edge."

Tryon, who's celebrating his 62nd birthday today, joined Graphic Edge in Carroll as a salesman, mainly responsible for corporate sales at custom screen printing, embroidery business, owned by Reglein. In an incredible rags-to-riches story, Reglein bought Iowa Sporting Goods and Graphic Edge, which employs about 140, evolved from that business.

Tryon believes his coaching experience can also translate to his sales work.

"I'm really looking forward to that challenge," he says. "I can utilize a lot of things I've done through coaching and put it to work in a different profession. The contacts, organization, having a game plan, it's the same type of approach in the sales business."

Tryon's wife, Jerilyn, is a teller at Commercial Savings Bank.

"We were high school sweethearts, and she supported us all the way," Tryon says.

The Tryons' daughter Traci, who graduated from Carroll High School, is married to Craig Griffith, formerly of Carroll, who owns a Ford dealership in Vinton. Son Tyler works in sales at Carroll Broadcasting, and sons Todd and Dale own fitness centers in Sioux Falls, S.D. Todd, who quarterbacked Ar-We-Va football, played wide receiver and offensive back for the Sioux Falls Storm arena football team five years and is now an assistant coach for the team.