Norbert Kollodge

Holdingford Class of 1949

Norbert was born February 10, 1931 as the 14th child of 15. After grad-uating high school he joined the Air Force for 2 years. He married Dora Wrobel and raised 2 sons and 2 daughters. He has 14 grandchildren. Norbert graduated from college in December of 1956 with a Bachelor of Science degree in industrial arts and a minor in phy-ed. Since there were no teaching jobs available he applied for a position at the St. Cloud VA Hospital, and started on September 10, 1958 in his area of interest. After 31 years, 8 months, he retired June 3, 1987.

Growing up in the depression years was rather tough, however he doesn’t regret it because he really appreciates what he has. His childhood memories are too numerous to mention stating, “We kids were lucky to make it out alive through our growing up years.” Norbert loved going to school, especially when he became involved in sports. He enjoyed basketball, football, track and baseball. In 1949 He was all conference in football. In basketball, in 1948 and 1949 he was all conference and all district. “As a Husker basketball team, our greatest victory was in 1949 when we defeated St. Cloud Tech 39-38 in the District 19 Tournament. This was Tech’s first elimination from the tournament in 26 years. Tech was seeded first and we were seeded eighth. We went on to win the North Sub-district Championship, defeating Royalton and Albany (in overtime). In the sports newspapers, this game was listed as the biggest upset in Minnesota,” Norb remembers proudly!

He was class officer for 2 years, member of the Lettermen’s Club, Choir, and Aiki staff. In 1998-99 Norbert was presented with the Central Minnesota Conference Volunteer of the Year Award. He also was named Outstanding Lay Person in Education in 2001. Rounding out his volunteer career, he served on the Holdingford School Board for 9 years, was chairperson of the Community Education Advisory Council going on 38 years, Post Prom 17 years, HS kitchen and LMC going on 30 years, and coaching youth basketball going on 63 years.

Norb says, “Norbert Vos was the best coach I could ever have played for. He taught team discipline, to be very aggressive, and most of all to play to the best of your ability and beyond. Lucky for me, he coached all 4 sports. He also demanded you play as a team, not as an individual.”

Honor Hacker was Norbert’s social studies teacher. At age 85, he still thinks about her. Visiting with her after school she said, “Norb, you should go to college.” A little stunned at what she said, he replied, “I am trying to get through high school, let alone go to college.” As it turned out he and one girl from their class went to college. “To this day, I am still trying to figure out what she saw in me that I didn’t” said Norbert.