A father is still teaching, coaching and leading, happy Father’s Day Al

By Terri Lang

He has been retired for 17 years, but Al Dosch has not given up his duties of teaching, coaching and leading. In 2001, Mr. Dosch retired after 47 years, mostly in the Strasburg School system.

Al, the son of the late Rodney and Teckla Dosch, grew up on a farm northeast of Strasburg, with four brothers and six sisters.

“With a large family like that, it is often hard to lose a loved one,” Al said. “It was something our parents taught us.”

From his parents, Al said he also learned to be conservative.

“Being there were 11 months of the year, and it was during some of the Depresses times, you were limited,” he said.

Al said his mom was very outgoing and she was also the primary discipliner in their family.

His dad was real quiet and very reserved.

“But he was a good role model. He was honest, respectful and caring,” Al said.

His parents, he said, were very generous and often invited people into their home. Those qualities are some that Al, as a father and grand-father, has tried to instill in his family.

“I have really tried to teach the importance of family and respect, and to learn how to share with others, whether it was in my teaching and coaching careers, or as a father to his children,” he added.

Dosch’s teaching career began in the fall of 1951 in a small rural school in Odessa Township (near Hague). The school consisted of 13 students in grades 1-8.

He remembers he had Leroy Fischer as a 4th grade teacher, and then later in Strasburg, taught Leroy’s daughter and then his granddaughter.

Dosch started his high school teaching and coaching career at Napoleon in the fall of 1955; but he served the district just one year.

In the summer of 1956, Dosch was drafted into the U.S. Army. He was stationed at Madison Army Hospital in Tacoma, Washington. He was released from his military service to fill a vacancy in Social Science and coaching at Strasburg High School in January 1958.

Dosch taught and coached football at Strasburg High School (SHS) from 1958-65, and the same positions at St. Benedict’s High School, Strasburg, from 1962-66. In 1966, St. Ben’s combined with St. Anthony’s High School to form Emmons Central High School at Strasburg. Dosch was employed there as a teacher and coach for the duration of the school (1966-85).

Emmons Central closed its doors in May 1985, and in June of that year, Al was a teacher and guidance counselor at SHS for his last 16 years, before deciding to retire. He was also the head coach for the Clipper Football team from 1983-93.

Dosch and Emmons Central, Dosch was best known as the head coach for several outstanding football teams. His 1973 team was selected to the North Dakota High School Football All-State Team.

His honors include his selection to the N.D. Coach’s Hall of Fame and the Valley City State University (VCSU) Hall of Fame.

Dosch was drafted into the Army in December of 1955, but he served the remainder of 1955, before being released.

Al and Judy Dosch graduated from Strasburg High School in 1950.

She knows that their children feel the same.

“All our kids thank him, especially on Father’s Day,” she added.

Al and Judy raised seven children – Cheri, Shelia, Karen, Linda, Kathy, Pati and Tom. Their daughter, Karen, died as the result of injuries she sustained in a car accident near Minot in 1981. The Dosches also have 17 grandchildren (12 boys and 5 girls), four great-grandchildren (all boys), and have another great-grandchild on the way.

In his retirement, Al has enjoyed going to high school and college sporting events, golfing, travelling (going to Arizona for their winters), visits to the farm and watching football on TV.

As he celebrates Father’s Day with his family, he offers some advice to all the fathers and grandfathers out there.

“Show interest in what your children and grandchildren are doing. Support them in their work and in their goals. Encourage them giving and forgiving, joyful, positive, hard-working, faith-filled, competitive, dedicated, an achiever, a finisher, wise and an encourager.”

She said her dad was ultra-busy, but somehow managed to give them time and attention.

“He has a playful nature and he loved to play little practical jokes,” Cheri said.

She remembers impatiently watching for her dad to come home from school and sports practice in the little mobile home they lived in.

“And then it was mealtime, mealtime prayers and eating around the small kitchen table,” she said.

Cheri said their dad was dedicated to family, church, community, his farm and his career as a teacher and coach.

She said it was fun to go to games and cheer their dad’s teams, and that they were all very proud of him.

“As a young child, I took the success of dad’s teams for granted. In my little mind, we were always winners!” Cheri said.

She learned from her dad the importance of keeping your commitments, doing your best, and dealing with people honestly and compassionately, and with a sense of humor.

“I am indeed blessed, and Father’s Day is a great time to share,” Cheri said.
to pause, and with gratitude, thank God for the very special earthly dad that I have been given,” she said. “He and mom made a happy home for us.”

Al and Judy’s only son, Tom, said his dad is humble, hard-working and impact-ful, and as a grandfather, he is generous, caring and thoughtful.

“And he is still coaching when needed!” Tom said.

Going on football scouting trips, staying in the gym after basketball games, helping clean up and call scores to the newspapers, radio and TV stations are all special memo- ries from him,” Tom said.

“It was great having the gym all to myself to shoot baskets once the chores were completed;” he said. “I would get a Mr. Goodbar and Jolly Rancher candies for helping clean up!”

Tom said his dad has left a legacy of kindness and generosity.

“He is a person that can be counted on to show up and to be your best as a person, father, husband and worker every day,” Tom said. “I call this being an ‘everyday guy,’ something I talk about on a regular basis to my teams and players I coach.”

Daughter Linda said their dad is truly the “gold stan-dard” for what a father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather should be.

“Dad is the most honest man you will ever meet but also has a fun sense of humor and doesn’t take himself too seriously,” Linda said.

She said her father is kind, fair, always consistent.

“A generally quiet man, a hard worker, very focused,” she added. “He is absolutely selfless, loving and giving, and very generous.”

She said Al loves watching his grandchildren do what they love to do – sports, music, whatever and simply wants to share life with the people whom he loves.

“He gives people room to be themselves and cherishes each person just the way they are,” Linda said.

She said their dad taught them all to value family, friends and neighbors, and to treat all people with respect.

“Dad is one who teaches by example,” Linda said.

“To live with life in integrity. Be humble. Help others when you can. Give people the benefit of the doubt. Be frugal and live simply. Don’t talk too loudly. Do some- times you have to roll with the punches. These reflect the way that he lives his life.”

“And... put your trust in God,” Linda said.

Their youngest daughter, Patty, said Al is a great dad, father-in-law and grandpa to her six children.

“My dad was always kind, caring, and full of concern for others,” Patty said. “He worked hard and was very dedicated to his family as my sister, Karen, had died in a car accident the previous fall.”

She said “It was so honored that he had agreed to give the address. It is a special memory and I remember what it was about. He compared little to a football game – how appropriate!”

Many, many people know Al Dosch as a great coach and teacher – and that was.

“I think that as great as a coach and teacher he was, he is even a better father,” she said.

“Only my dad has ever been so very loving and tender, always caring and concerned.”

“He draws the best out of people, encouraging ev- eryone to become a better person,” Patty said.

She said he is a very witty and has a great sense of humor.

“Although, it is a dry sense of humor. And he has a wry smile,” she added.

Daughter Sheila was fortunate that her children, and now grandchildren also, are close to home and get to spend a lot of time together with their family.

“Sunday was ‘Sunday soup day’ (dad made the soup and still does) in a family, and is now our boys grew up, we spent most Sundays at my parents being together, enjoying each other company, and spend- ing the day together,” Sheila said.

“We continue to carry on the tradition of soup, and spend time with our kids.”

During the years 2000-2001 high school football season, the Ohlhauser family spent every weekend with their parents, traveling to football games.

“My two oldest sons, Waylon and Brent, were both starters on the Linton Lions team,” she said. “Never a happier or prouder moment for their grandpa then when watching his two oldest grandsons end the year with a state football title in the game he loved.”

She said her dad has a tre- mendous faith in God.

“Dad is strong, kind, caring, compassionate, encouraging, reliable, supportive, understanding, patient, generous as a father and now as a grandfather and great-grandpa,” Sheila said.

“We are blessed to have him in our lives and I am super proud to be his daughter.”

Al believes in teaching the importance of honesty and respect, whether it is at home, church, in the community, or anywhere.

“He believed – a legacy that has passed on to his son, Tom, and grandson, Matthew.

Al loves that he has children, grandchildren, and now great-grandchildren, close at home. Great-grandchildren left to right, Oliver (3), Colten (7) and Weston (3 1/2). Oliver and Colten are Brent and Sarah Ohlhauser’s sons, and Weston is Waylon and Heidi Ohlhauser’s son. They are the grandchildren of Marion and Sheila (Dosch) Ohlhauser.

Al said that when his son, Tom, was four years old, he would be his shadow on the football field and be the water boy. And now, Tom’s son, Matthew, does the same for his dad, Wolves football coach at Northern State University in Aberdeen, S.D.

Football is in their blood. Al Dosch’s grandchildren, are, in front, left to right, Wolves’ fans, Matthew Dosch and Da-vid Erdman, and back, Daniel Erdman and Stephen Erdman. Grandpa Al Dosch, at the time he retired from coaching, had the winningest record of all time in North Dakota.

Al Dosch was in the U.S. Army from the summer of 1956 until January of 1958. He was stationed at Madigan Army Hospital in Tacoma, Wash.

Al cheers for the Linton Hazelton Lions when his grandchildren ended their year with a state football title.

Al dosch guys, Al, son Tom and grandson Matthew all love sports and cheer on their favorite team, Northern State University Wolves!