

2004 Cardinal Citation Recipient

Ralph “Deadeye” Dennis ’46

Retired teacher and coach Ralph Dennis, Olathe, Kansas is a native of Parsons. He attended Washington Elementary School, West Junior High, Parsons High School and Parsons Junior College. He graduated from PJC in 1946. Dennis is often called “Deadeye” by his friends, a name attached to him in grade school during a chase-and-capture game.

He was student body president in his sophomore year at PJC. The summer after graduating from PJC he managed a Pee Wee baseball team, then enrolled at Kansas State Teachers College—now Pittsburg State University. He graduated from KSTC in 1948 with a bachelor’s degree in education.

He began teaching in the Olathe, Kansas public school system in 1948 and taught there for 43 years in the junior high school and the senior high school. He retired in 1991. In addition to regular teaching assignments he was assistant football coach, assistant basketball, head basketball coach, and head tennis coach. In 1969 he was named athletic director and continued teaching half days. He served as vice president and president of the Olathe Teachers Association and was a sponsor of the Kansas Association for Youth and the Future Teachers of America.

He organized the Olathe Recreation Program in 1956 and served as its part-time director until 1969 when a full-time director was hired. He taught the high school Sunday school class at his church for 31 years and was usher for 56 years. He continues ushering.

He married his high school sweetheart, Betty Roche. They have two sons, Daniel of Olathe and David of Chicago; two daughters, Suzanne Leach and Jane Clark, both of Olathe; five grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Dennis’s public honors include: Olathe Jaycees Outstanding Young Teacher, Emporia State University Master Teacher, Olathe Citizen of the Year, Elmer Carpenter Award for service to athletics and community, Kansas State High School Activities Association Hall of Fame, and Olathe Community Pride Award.