

Les Cranmer

Les Cranmer was born the second child of five to Gene and Norma Cranmer in 1950. He attended schools in the Rockwood School District, graduating from Lafayette High School in 1968. In college, his student teaching assignment was in the Winnetonka High School, where he was able to work as an assistant coach in the sport of wrestling.

Les began teaching at Cedar Hill Middle School in August 1973. In 1975, he began the wrestling program at Northwest High School. Because of a limited budget, mats were hard to come by and Les' parents donated a mat cover to help with the practices and the meets. The mat cover was used over the fold up mats to give the appearance of one whole, complete mat. In 1981, Les and Stan Nelson pushed for Northwest athletics to become part of the Suburban South Conference. Les' philosophy was and still is, 'If you are going to be the best, you have to be the best'. The level of competition greatly improved by moving into the conference. Becoming part of the Suburban Conference was the step the wrestlers needed to become the State Championship team they were to become. Coach Cranmer was the head coach for the 1984 Northwest High School State Champion Wrestling Team.

In 1979, Les married Jan. They have two sons: Justin, the head wrestling coach at Union High School, and Bren, an engineer for Boeing in Seattle, where he settled with his partner, Alex. Justin and his wife, Kati, have blessed them with three grandchildren, Caleb, 10, Gideon, 9, and Lily, 6.

After retiring from teaching and coaching, Les started his own construction company. He retired from construction in 2010. He and Jan enjoy traveling with their fifth wheel camper, visiting National and State Parks, especially Montauk State Park, with family and friends. Coach Cranmer is still involved in the world of wrestling helping host the Union High School Tournament every December.

It is with great enthusiasm that the Northwest Alumni Association presents Les Cranmer as an inductee into the Athletic Hall of Fame for 2023.