

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS



Elkhart Truth Photo

Elkhart legends the late Tom Kurth (left) and Phyllis Tubbs are pictured in this file photo. Tubbs recently received a Beyond the Game award from the IHSAA.

Appreciating Phyllis

IHSAA honors Elkhart legend Tubbs with its 'Beyond the Game' award

By BOB OPPENHEIM

roppenheim@elkharttruth.com

ELKHART — Statewide and locally, there will always be a great appreciation of Elkhart's Phyllis Tubbs and her work in high school athletics.

The latest honor for Tubbs came on April 17th at the Indiana High School Athletic Association Second Annual Impact Awards in Indianapolis.

During that evening the 84-year old Tubbs was presented the Beyond the Game award.

The award celebrates and recognizes an individual or group that has demonstrated a committed devotion and passion towards the IHSAA Foundation and its mission.

The honoree has supported, promoted and protected educa-

tion-based athletics and their benefits for future generations.

Tubbs said she found out that she was receiving the honor a month before the Impact Awards ceremony. IHSAA Foundation Director Trip Lukemeyer notified her.

"I told him that I appreciated it a lot and told him that other people were more deserving than me," Tubbs said.

"I was very blessed to be a part of that evening. I feel very, very honored to get that award.

"I never really thought about getting that honor. I'm just a supporter of the IHSAA Foundation and the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame."

Good friends Darlene Mathew and her husband Rick joined Tubbs for the special event at the Gridiron Hall at the Indiana Farm Bureau Football Center. Darlene was the long-time athletic director at Westview High School.

"It was held at the Indianapolis Colts practice center," Tubbs said. "It's beautiful.

"Me, Darlene and Rick go to vol-

leyball and basketball state finals together. I told someone from the IHSAA that were the only people left in Indiana that go to all those events."

Tubbs spent 57 years working at Elkhart Community Schools in various jobs in administration, coaching and teaching. From 1975 to 2020, Tubbs was the assistant athletic director at Elkhart Memorial High School.

"During my time in education my sole purpose was to help others," Tubbs said. "My big goal was promoting girls athletics in Indiana.

"When I was in high school (at Greensburg) girls didn't have the same chance to participate in sports. There was the GAA (Girls Athletic Association) program when it came to playing sports for girls, but it wasn't at the same level as it was for boys.

"Early pioneers Pat Roy (first female assistant commissioner for the IHSAA) and Mildred Ball (IHSAA assistant commissioner) helped us make great strides (in

girls sports). They stood nose to nose with the good old boys.

"I remember when Title IX came into effect and the IHSAA started recognizing girls sports tournaments. The first girls sport that was talked about having a tournament was basketball. Pat Roy said, no. You had to learn from your mistakes and girls tournaments first started in gymnastics and volleyball. In the 1975-76 season the girls basketball tournament started and thanks to Judi Warren it was a success and has grown since."

Warren helped lead Warsaw to the state championship in the first year of the girls basketball state tournament. She went on to win the first Miss Basketball award.

The Beyond the Game Award will join a long list of honors for Tubbs.

The Indiana Interscholastic Athletic Administrator's Association recognized Tubbs for 50 years of service to high school athletics on

See **TUBBS**, page B2

Powered by TECNIVIA

TUBBS

From page B1

March 2017. She was inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 2007 as its silver medal recipient. Also, the Indiana Coaches of Girls Sports Association Service Award was renamed the Phyllis L. Tubbs Service Award in March 2003. In August 2017, Elkhart Memorial's gymnasium was changed to the Phyllis L. Tubbs Gymnasium.

"What means the most is probably getting inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame and being the silver medal winner," Tubbs said.

"It's also kind of special too to get into the Greensburg High School Hall of Fame. It was also kind of special when they named the (Elkhart Memorial) gym after me."

Is she happy with the current state of high school athletics in Indiana?

"Yes, I am," Tubbs said. "I think they have kept it education-based. The only thing

I'm worried about is the transfer portal. That may lead to the demise of everything.

"But I think the state is in pretty good shape. We got the WNBA and Caitlin Clark and that helps."

Tubbs has kept very active in retirement and is still very much connected to Elkhart High School athletics.

"Oh, I love it," she said about retirement. "But I try to keep busy. If you come home and just sit down you're not going to be around long. I try to walk and me and Darlene plan to golf this week.

"I also do other activities. I still help at school. I chair the Catherine Wolf Award committee (award given annually to Elkhart's top female senior student-athlete). When a lot of different spring sports are going on at Elkhart High School they ask me to supervise a sport. I help out at the Bristol food pantry and I do other volunteer things.

"You've got to keep active. That's the key."