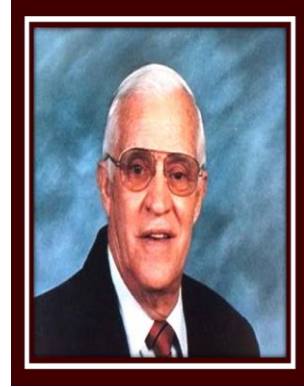


RICHARD “DICK” HOLT

If ever there was a heartwarming story of an Amherst County man who stayed close to his roots and served his neighbors, it was that of the life of Dick Holt, long-serving teacher in Amherst County who brought joy and love to countless students, while giving them an appreciation of school and sports. An only child, he grew up in old Madison Heights on Fifth Street, first becoming involved in sports with the kids in his neighborhood. They used a vacant lot behind the Methodist church as their playground and athletic field.



At Madison Heights High School, where he was a member of the class of 1950, he played baseball for one year and basketball for two. This was at a time that the school had two basketballs – one for practice and one for games. He considered two of his teachers and coaches, Ed Bragg and Ed Evans, to be his inspirations for his lifetime of following in their footsteps. After high school, he joined the U.S. Navy during the time of the Korean Conflict.

Holt graduated from Lynchburg College in the class of 1957. He returned to Madison Heights, and coached and taught math, science, and physical education, first at his alma mater, then elementary school, and later, the junior high, retiring in 1991.

Dick Holt was among the most popular teachers of his generation. He was firm but fair, and had a knack for challenging students, often staying after school for extra practice in the fundamentals in sports. He held high standards both for his students and for himself. Because he had grown up in Madison Heights, he had an edge in student discipline – he knew the families. He would know the student’s situation and how best to handle the problems. “Mr. Holt” has often been cited by Hall of Famers as their early inspiration for excelling in sports.

His uniqueness is exemplified in his life without an automobile. He always walked to school, as a student, then as a teacher at Madison Heights High School, then elementary. He continued to walk, even when Monelison Junior High opened, although he would then accept rides from those who recognized him. He reportedly loved the sport of fishing. The only problem was that he was not very effective as a fisherman, even to the point that when someone would see fish breaking the surface, he would tell his inept fishing companion that “the fish are laughing at you.” But Dick Holt probably laughed the most.

Richard Nathaniel “Dick” Holt – November 15, 1932 - November 9, 2002

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Madison Heights High School: Basketball, 2 years; Baseball, 1 year
- Adult : Softball – Lynchburg City Leagues; Church League; numerous championships
- Coaching: Madison Heights High School – Basketball, 3 years; Baseball, 3 years
- Amherst County Teaching: Madison Heights High School, Madison Heights Elementary School, Monelison Junior High School