

## 2017 MHSFCA Jim Crowley Award - Jack Carlson



2017 Jim Crowley Award Winner, Jack Carlson, with his family

*Front Row: Daughter, Kristen Renes; grandson, Gabe; granddaughter, Avery.*

*Second Row: Son-in-Law, Rob Renes; wife Paula; Jack Carlson. Rounding out Jack's family.*

*Unable to attend were Jack's son, Jeff; daughter-in-law, Shannon and granddaughter, Elizabeth.*

The 2017 recipient of the Jim Crowley Award graduated from Sparta High School in 1966, where he participated in football, basketball and track.

In the fall of 1966 Jack Carlson enrolled at Western Michigan University. In 1967 he led the marching band on the field and then in his junior year was asked to come out for the football team as a kicking specialist and participated for the

1968, 1969 and 1970 football seasons. At one time during his senior year he held 11 records for the Broncos. One he likes to mention, a 49-yard field goal, and one he would like to forget, punting 11 times in one game.

Upon completing his career as a Bronco, Coach Carlson had tryouts with the Dallas Cowboys, Green Bay Packers and the Pittsburgh Steelers. He began his teaching and coaching career at Fruitport High School in 1972. While at Fruitport, Carlson coached JV football, hockey and boys track. In five years his JV football team had a record of 39 wins and only five losses!

In the fall of 1978 Coach Carlson began teaching and coaching at West Ottawa High School in Holland. During his 26 years at West Ottawa he coached JV football for one year and then served in several positions including: offensive line coach, defensive line coach, linebacker coach and defensive coordinator for a total of 17 years. Carlson is very proud of the fact that during those years, West Ottawa won their very first O.K. Red Conference Championship in 1984 and then their second in 1992.

Also at West Ottawa Jack felt fortunate to coach the girls track team. His girls won nine league championships, finished second eight times, third three times and fourth only once. The girl's record in those 21 years was 163 wins, 25 losses and two ties. In 1979 his girl's track team won their first ever O.K. Red Conference Championship. Carlson retired from all coaching in 1999 and from teaching in 2004 after completing 32 years as a math instructor.

While coaching at West Ottawa, with the help of Dave Woodcock, Jenison football coach, he was appointed as a MHSFCA Regional Director in 1987 and then was appointed Historian of the Association in 1988. This year will mark his 29th year as Historian and his 30th year being part of the MHSFCA.

During his career Carlson has been honored with the following recognition:

- 1983 - MHSFCA East/West All-Star Coach
- 1992 - MITCA Regional Coach of the Year
- 1992 - Nominee for the MITCA State Coach of the Year
- 1995 - MHSFCA Assistant Coach of the Year
- 1997 - Again a nominee for the MITCA State Coach of the Year
- 2001 - Inducted to the West Ottawa Hall of Fame
- 2006 - Inducted to the MHSFCA Hall of Fame

Coach Carlson has been married to his wife, Paula, for 36 years. His children are Kristen, married to Rob Rienes and Jeffrey, married to Shannon. He has three grandchildren, Avery, Gabe and Elizabeth, with another due in March. He said, his longevity and dedication to the Association and his behind the scenes coordination of the selection of members of the MHSFCA Hall of Fame are the things of which he is the most proud.