



Distinguished Educator - 2025

Gary Koeder

1963-1997

They Lit the Way



DISTINGUISHED
EDUCATOR

The Life and Times of Gary W. Koeder

Gary Koeder was raised in Winnebago, Mn, and graduated from Winnebago High School in 1954. In high school, he was an all-sport athlete, sang in the choir, and played in the band.

College years were spent at St. Olaf College, University of Minnesota, and Mankato State. He earned both a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree in Education.

Gary arrived in Albert Lea in 1963. His first assignment was Ramsey school, teaching 4th grade. He also taught 5th grade at Hawthorne and at Halverson for a total of 36 1/2 years, retiring in 1997. He was an active member of ALEA, MEA, and NEA. He served on various committees throughout the years.

In addition to teaching, he coached elementary students in basketball and football. He was head coach for high school girls' basketball for eight years.

Outside the classroom, Gary participated in volleyball, slow pitch softball, football, basketball and tennis.

Gary made time for community activities. He served on the city park & rec committee for many years. He was instrumental in starting the Discover History program at the Historical Museum for 5th graders and high schoolers. He was an active member of Jaycees for many years, a member of the

Careyaires, and a volunteer coach for girls' tennis.

For Fun, Gary enjoys traveling, reading, watching sports, and picking up recycling.

Gary is married to Margaret. They have a daughter Tamara, son-in-law Salvador, and a grandson, Jeffrey.

As a teacher, one of his goals was to install a sense of pride in his students. He hopes he has done that. He is proud of the fact that he has touched so many lives.