



Sahuaro Cougar Foundation
PO Box 18181
Tucson, AZ 85731

Cougar Tracks Newsletter

July 2019 Edition



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TUSD Superintendent Cup Winner Announced; Gym floors re-done

Dick McConnell, Sahuaro coaching legend, dies at 89 years old

Note: reprinted from Coach McConnell's obituary

Richard "Dick" McConnell passed away peacefully at home on April 23, 2019 surrounded by his family. McConnell was 89.

McConnell is survived by his wife Clarine of 63 years, son Rick McConnell (Pamela), daughter Kelly Byxbee (Charlie), grandsons Matt McConnell (Michael Ann), Mickey McConnell (Meagan), granddaughters Kacy Byxbee (Scott Caan), Karlyn Byxbee, Kennedy Byxbee, and great grandchildren Josie, Miles, Mason and Logan.

McConnell was born in Topeka, Kansas in 1930. He attended Topeka High and Washburn University where he was a three sport star athlete. He played minor league baseball in the Chicago Cubs farm system before joining the Air Force in 1953. McConnell was stationed at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson where he became a pilot, flew multi-engine bombers and was trained in special weapons.

In 1956 McConnell and his wife eloped to Las Vegas then returned to Kansas where McConnell would begin his coaching career and start a family. Two years later he took a coaching job in Tombstone, Arizona. After one season he was hired by Rincon High School where he would coach the junior varsity basketball and baseball teams for the next 8 years.

During this time, McConnell received his Masters in Education at the University of Arizona. When Sahuaro High School opened in 1968 McConnell was hired and went on to coach there for 39 years. McConnell retired from coaching in 2007 at the age of 77 and at that time was the all time winningest coach in Arizona history.

While at Sahuaro he won 4 state championships, was coach of the year 7 times and was awarded the NFCA Boys Basketball Western Coach of the Year. McConnell was inducted into the Topeka High School Hall of Fame, Washburn University Hall of Fame, Sahuaro High School Hall of Fame, Pima County Sports Hall of Fame and The National High School Athletic Coaches Hall of Fame. In 1989 he was the assistant coach of the McDonald's High School All American game and was the first recipient of "The Spirit of Cotton Award." McConnell's coaching career spanned over 49 years and the Sahuaro High School Gymnasium was dedicated to him in 2002.

After retiring from teaching, McConnell and his wife sold real estate together for 20 years and he was awarded the "Lifetime Achievement Award". He was an avid golfer and enjoyed spending time with his grandkids.

McConnell was a man of honor, a role model and a gentleman. He was a great coach but even better man. What mattered most to Coach wasn't the victories but rather the value of character and the way he treated people. He positively impacted thousands of students and athletes on and off the court. Including his great-grandchildren who continued to serenade him until the week before he passed. Coach lived the American dream. He was a winner at life and now he is on God's team. Coach will be greatly missed, but "The Legend" will live on.

Introducing the Dick McConnell Memorial Scholarship

In honor of Coach McConnell's 774 career victories, the Cougar Foundation is proud to announce an annual scholarship in his name. The Dick McConnell Memorial Scholarship will be a one-time, non-renewable scholarship awarded to a deserving Sahuaro senior in the amount of \$774 dollars. The criteria for the award and application process will be announced soon.

To donate to the McConnell Scholarship, the Cougar Foundation, or other initiatives, please see our website at sahuarocougars.org.

**Dick McConnell
Memorial Scholarship**



Sahuaro Cougar Foundation Board of Directors

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**COUGAR FOUNDATION / HALL OF FAME
FOUNDING MEMBERS:**
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Dr. David Ashcraft

Founder's Corner - Notes from Dr. David Ashcraft

In appreciation of those who led the way for Sahuaro High

Past Founder's Corner articles have divulged information about several of Sahuaro's original administrators who so carefully laid the firm foundation upon which Sahuaro still stands. Here is some new information you may find of interest.



Henry D. "Hank" Egbert, for whom the Auditorium is named, played football at Tucson High School and later went on to join the Arizona Wildcat Varsity Football team as a fullback while earning a degree in Education.

A World War II veteran, he served under Generals Dwight D. Eisenhower and George Patton as the commander of an assault gun unit and earned two Bronze Stars. After serving as an assistant principal at Catalina High School, he was appointed Sahuaro's first principal.



Last April's Founder's Corner featured an interview with **Al Sawson** who opened the school as Assistant Principal for Pupil Personnel.

Coming from an administrative post at Palo Verde High School, he was charged with coordinating the Registrar and counselors, as well as supervising curriculum and instruction matters.

Later in his career, Mr. Sawson became Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Tucson Unified School District where he was in charge of Lee Instructional Resource Center.



Our Cougar Foundation Co-Founder and first Assistant Principal for Student Activities was **Harry B. Johnson** whose name, along with his wife, Fran, graces the Cougar Foundation Hall of Fame.

Mr. Johnson also played football at Tucson High School and the U of A, and subsequently went into education as a career after serving in the Air Force.

Prior to coming to Sahuaro, he served as a teacher, coach and administrator at several schools. Mr. Johnson also coordinated the new school's steering committee prior to the Fall 1968 opening.



Bill Ismay, who worked proudly as Sahuaro's first Dean of Boys, served as a teacher and wrestling coach at Palo Verde High School.

A former Phoenix Union High School Coyote, he was a state champion wrestler, and also wrestled for the University of Arizona.

He played football while in the Navy, and later at the U of A. Active in student government, Mr. Ismay also served with distinction as the elected vice-president of the University student body.

Following his impressive tenure at Sahuaro, he served in administrative capacities at Tucson High School and Palo Verde High School.



Dr. David Ashcraft (1970)
Co-Founder and Founding
President of Cougar Foundation

Unknown to many in more recent years as she moved away from Tucson after retiring from the Tucson Public Schools in 1977, **Jane Stratman** was Sahuaro's first Dean of Girls.



Born and educated in Indiana, Miss Stratman earned her Administrative Certificate at the University of Arizona and served at Tucson and Pueblo High Schools before joining the Sahuaro Staff. She was known for her nurturing spirit and her connection to students. Miss Stratman later served as an administrator and school board member in Pinetop, Arizona.

These outstanding and talented educators worked as a team, administering Sahuaro High School in its formative years when it was comprised of some 2400 students. They brought expertise from a variety of other institutions and cohesively adopted a philosophy that molded Sahuaro into a comprehensive school of excellence that has stood the test of time. Each of them continued their service to education after leaving Sahuaro.

The Cougar Foundation lists the first purpose in its Mission Statement as follows... To perpetuate the history, traditions, and spirit of Sahuaro High School.

These five individuals were present when it all began. Look how far we have come.

A note from the editor

It should be obvious to any person who has read the *Cougar Tracks* throughout the years that Dr. Ashcraft holds a deep reverence for those who have helped the school develop in it's infancy and beyond.

Though he would never write such lofty praise for himself (and might not appreciate my aside), it is indisputable that he himself has played an incredible part in Sahuaro's history.

Dr. Ashcraft served as Sahuaro's Choral Director for over three decades, was a student leader at Sahuaro, and is the co-founder of the Cougar Foundation itself.

He continues to honor the school with his experience, enthusiasm, and his tolerance of constant article requests from an editor that shall not be named.

We are eternally grateful.



Saharo High School Cougar Foundation

Charity Golf Tournament

Saturday April 18, 2020

Forty Niner Country Club

Join us for 18 holes of golf at the world-class Forty Niner Country Club!

Win cash at the **money hole!** Enjoy a **delicious lunch!**

Win some fabulous **raffle** or **silent auction** prizes!

**Cindy Rarick**

Saharo Class of 1978

Former LPGA Pro

Honorary Tournament Chair

» **Contact Information**

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Company _____

Address _____

☐ **YES**, I would like to donate a raffle prize!

a Foundation representative will contact you. Donations are tax-deductible, ID 86-0720942.

☐ **YES**, I would like to join the Cougar Foundation (add \$15)
» **Player Information**

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

» **[A] Golf and Lunch Selections**

Golf and Lunch _____ x \$80 = _____

Fdn Membership _____ x \$15 = _____

Lunch Only _____ x \$15 = _____

Donations _____

[A] Subtotal _____» **[B] Sponsorship**Title ☐ \$5000 Red ☐ \$2500Blue ☐ \$1000 Plat. ☐ \$400Tee ☐ \$125 Green ☐ \$75**[B] Subtotal** _____**Total owed: (total of sections [A] and [B])** _____**Event Information**

Registration 6:30am

Start Time 7:30am

Contact Information:

Fran Johnson 520-247-0336

Fred Knapp 520-609-6392

Debbie Glasser 520-360-3788

Jeffrey Gardner 520-990-1190

Ed Rothlisberger 520-465-9048

Amy Fitch-Heacock 520-331-2261

Find out more at saharocougars.org**Sponsor the event!**

Sponsors are incredibly important to the results of the tournament - and it's a great way to have your business seen by local, well-qualified residents.

We assure you that your sponsorship will be of tremendous value to your company and that the Cougar Foundation will work hard to promote and support those who have helped us support the Saharo community.

To find out about all the sponsorship opportunities available for this years' event, please see the next page!

Please mail this form to the Saharo Cougar Foundation - PO Box 18181, Tucson, AZ 85731

Checks should be made out to Saharo Cougar Foundation. If you prefer to use credit card, enter information below or visit saharocougars.org

Name on card: _____

Card # _____

Expires: ____ / ____

CSC/CVV: _____





Sahuaro High School Cougar Foundation

Charity Golf Tournament

Saturday April 18, 2020 Forty Niner Country Club

Title Sponsorship (limit 1) - \$5000

- Exclusive position as the ONLY Title Sponsor
- Tournament foursome with preferred seating at Lunch
- Additional lunches provided for up to 2 lunch guests
- Strong association with the Sahuaro Community
- Opportunity to insert prizes into golfer's goodie bags
- Opportunity to insert literature into golfer's goodie bags
- Opportunity to speak to event attendees at the lunch
- Visibility for your company name/logo
- Tournament literature
- On-course signage (includes 1 tee sponsorship)
- Golf Cart signage
- Cougar Foundation Website and social media
- Thank-you letters to participants

Other sponsorship opportunities

Sahuaro "Red" Sponsorship (limit 3) - \$2500

- Tournament foursome with preferred seating at Lunch + 2 lunch guests
- Visibility for your company name/logo
 - Tournament literature
 - On-course signage (includes 1 tee sponsorship)
 - Cougar Foundation Website and social media platforms
 - Thank-you letters to participants
- Strong association with the Sahuaro Community
 - Opportunity to insert literature in golfer's goodie bags
 - Special recognition during lunch

Sahuaro "Blue" Sponsorship (limit 5) - \$1000

- Tournament foursome + 2 lunch guests
- Visibility for your company name/logo
 - Tournament literature
 - On-course signage (includes 1 tee sponsorship)
 - Cougar Foundation social media platforms
 - Thank-you letters to participants
- Strong association with the Sahuaro Community
 - Opportunity to insert literature in golfer's goodie bags
 - Special recognition during lunch

Platinum Sponsorship - \$400

- Tournament foursome + admission for up to 2 additional lunch guests
- Visibility for your company name/logo
 - On-course signage (includes 1 tee sponsorship)
- Strong association with the Sahuaro Community
 - Special recognition during lunch

Tee Sponsorship - \$125

- Tee sign and opportunity to have representative at the tee

Green Sponsorship - \$75

- Signage at the event, to be seen by all participants and volunteer staff

If you'd like to sponsor the event, please contact Fran Johnson at 520-247-0336

Activities Department News & Notes



Steve Botkin
Athletic Director and Girls'
Basketball Coach

- Sahuaro is proud to have won the 2019 TUSD Superintendent's Cup for the highest-achieving athletic program (beating the rival Sabercats of Sabino).
- The floors of the McConnell and Aux Gymnasiums have been refinished and re-painted with the attractive Sahuaro logo pictured below!



SAHUARO
COUGAR
FOUNDATION

Membership Form

In 1992, the Sahuaro Cougar Foundation was established as a non-profit organization that raised funds to benefit the students, faculty, and alumni of Sahuaro High School. This organization was started by a group of dedicated and loyal individuals who cared about the mission and existence of Sahuaro High School.

Membership is open to anyone who has an interest in supporting the Foundation and its work.
Your membership provides very valuable support to the Sahuaro Community.

The mission and purpose for the Foundation are:

Your Name: _____ Class of: _____

Last First Maiden (if applicable)

Address: _____
Street, City, State, Zip

Phone: _____

Home *Work* *Cell*

Email: _____

Annual Dues *Note: Member year runs from January 1 – December 31.*

Donations are gratefully accepted.

Gifts of \$1,000+ will receive a **lifetime foundation membership** and their name on the donor plaque in the Cougar Hall of Fame.
Gifts of \$500 & \$250 will have their name on the donor plaque in the Cougar Hall of Fame.

*Make checks payable to "Sahuaro High Cougar Foundation". Donations and membership dues are tax deductible.
We also proudly accept Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover Card*

Name on Card: _____
Card Number: _____ CSC # _____ Expiration _____

Sahuaro High Cougar Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) organization and your donations may be tax-deductible. Please consult your tax preparer for information specific to your filing circumstances. The Foundation's Taxpayer Identification Number is: 86-0720942.

Sahyaro Cougar Foundation **PO Box 18181 Tucson, AZ 85731**