



Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



JIM SLOAN

July 29, 1937 - July 31, 1998

Stillwater High School Class of 1955

8th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony

October 4, 2003

Jim "Jimmy Ray" Sloan was born in Stillwater on July 29, 1937 to James Everett and Mary Viola Dietrich Sloan. He attended Lincoln Elementary School and Stillwater High School. Jim graduated from Stillwater High School in the Class of 1955. From there he went on to many more academic achievements at OSU. In 1960 he graduated from OSU with a BS in Math and Science. He then returned to Stillwater High School to teach Industrial Arts. He continued his teaching career with the OSU Vocational Education Department. He took his wife and two small sons to Thailand for three years to teach the Thai people how to build safe modern schools and improve their standard of living. He and his family gave up their standard of living to help others improve theirs. Jim showed the Thai people what a true American is! While in Thailand he almost lost his life. He suffered a brain aneurysm and underwent an emergency operation performed by an American surgeon that just happened to be at the hospital in Thailand to speak at a seminar. There were no other doctors in Thailand qualified for that delicate of an operation.

Jim returned to OSU as a professor of Industrial Technology and in 1976 earned a Masters Degree in Industrial Arts. He later went into real estate and then back into construction. It has been said that you can go just about anywhere in Stillwater and find a house or building built by the Sloans. On July 31, 1998 Jim died on the job doing what he loved!

That was the path Jim took, student, teacher, educator and hard worker. However SHS number 40 was no saint, he liked to hit people on the football field. We were a small team and got knocked around quite a bit, but that made no difference to Jim. Listen to what number 40 wrote in my 1955 annual. "I really enjoyed being in school with you and playing football together. We may have not done well as far as wins and losses were concerned but I think we had one of the greatest bunch of guys that Stillwater ever had. I wish we had another year to go out and knock the hell out of them." That was never say die, never quit Jim. Jim never lost his love of sports. He was an avid supporter of OSU wrestling, basketball and football. He loved to play golf. He had a game scheduled for the day after he died. I would like to point out one other thing. Jim's teaching career did not start when he graduated from OSU and came back to SHS to teach. If you look in the 1955 annual you will see that he and Max Burch were student teachers in blueprint reading while still in high school.

Jim was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth, nor did he have the easiest of life. He faced many challenges both personally and professionally that would have humbled most men. Jim stood by his family through the hardest of times.

Jim was born in Stillwater, grew up in Stillwater, educated in Stillwater, taught in Stillwater, lived in Stillwater and died in Stillwater. He is a true example of Pioneer Pride and is very deserving of this honor.

Presenter
Bill Emmons
Stillwater High School, Class of 1955