



Al Lear

July 21, 1943 - August 9, 2021

Al Lear of Ault, Colorado, known to many as Coach, Papa Lear, or Big Al, passed away peacefully on August 9, 2021.

Born in Fort Collins on July 21, 1943, Al attended FCHS where he was a stand out athlete and High School All American football player his Senior year for the Lambkins. From FCHS he attended the University of Oklahoma on a football scholarship for two years. He returned to Fort Collins and played for the CSU Rams and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Education. His first teaching job was in Fort Morgan for two years where he coached football, wrestling and track. He went to Yuma High School as the Head football coach and PE teacher. He would serve in that role and take on the role of Assistant Principal and Athletic Director for the next twelve years. He moved to Windsor High School, accepting the role of Assistant Principal/Athletic Director and later as Head football coach for the next twenty years.

Preceding him in death are his parents Albert and Lydia Lear, sisters Shirley Zwetzig and Launa Forrester, brother Harlan Lear and in-laws Neal and Phyllis McCurdy.

He is survived by his wife Terry, sons Shawn (Lynn) and Thad (Lisa) and beloved grandchildren Kendrick and Cassidy.

Coach Lear also survives in the memories of his students, players, and colleagues in 35 years of education.

A celebration of his life will be held August 28th at the American Legion in Windsor, Colorado, 624 Ash Street from 1pm to 5pm. Please share your condolences and memories of Al as we will be sharing lots of stories and memories at the celebration. We ask that you plant a tree in his memory.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

AUG 28. 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM (MT)

American Legion in Windsor
624 Ash Street
Windsor, CO 80550

Tribute Wall

DD

“ One day Al and I were playing basket ball, different teams, in our Junior High gym after school. For some reason we got into an argument and began jawing back and forth. Al said let's take it out side. We went out to the play ground, just him and I. We just kind of looked at each other and he said "you throw first". I said you wanted the fight "you throw first". Just then a teacher came up to us and said "what's going on". We said "noting". The teacher said "well then Don why do you have your glasses off?" He said "break it up". Thank goodness he showed up because if it came to blows, Al would have beat the crap out of me. At practice one day when Al and I were playing football on the freshman team, he told me he was going to play football at Oklahoma. That is when Bud Wilkinson was coach and winning national championships. I said, "sure big Al". Guess what, Al did play football for Oklahoma. I also think he got an offer to play for the University of Colorado. Don Dugan

Don Dugan - November 02, 2025 at 04:51 PM

LC

“ I have known Al when I played some city league basketball on the Jones' Campus Conoco in the 60's. More recently Al shared some stories of him and my father, who was a policeman. Ai said he loved the fact that my dad would send him home and say tell your Dad what happened because I will check if you did. Al said telling his Dad was hard but he learned. This story says alot about Al's ability to learn from life and apply it to his interactions with his students and players. Of course ,when he told that story there was the glint of mischievousness in his eye. Whata guy.

Little Andy Chismar - August 28, 2021 at 02:13 PM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Al Lear.*



August 26, 2021 at 10:03 AM



“ *Condolences to Al's family and friends.....
I enjoyed working with Al at WHS. I remember many of our conversations but most importantly I remember the support and encouragement he gave me as a young coach! RIP Al
LaVerne Huston*

LaVerne Huston - August 24, 2021 at 02:54 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Al Lear.*



August 23, 2021 at 07:54 PM

BS

“ I really enjoyed Al's friendship thru the years. We had a lot of fun to and from and at league meetings, as Athletic Directors, and also Coaching. I also really enjoyed having Al as a referee at our wrestling matches, you were always going to get a sincere, honest, and great job from Al. He was one of a kind! His memories will live on in the hearts of all who knew him! My sincere condolences go out to you Terri, Shawn, & Thad and their Families.



Bob Smith - August 23, 2021 at 05:36 PM

JS

“ I may have spent more time in his office due to my troubles, than for any other reason. He was always a kind hearted man, he would be stern, but you knew he cared. He believed in me when I doubted myself.

Jamie Standiferd - August 19, 2021 at 03:15 PM



“ Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant was purchased for the family of Al Lear.



August 18, 2021 at 02:33 PM

AV

“ *Mr Lear I will never forget your guidance and your pure confidence in me. You always knew what to say to motivate me to be the best I could be. You really cared for every student that walked the halls at Windsor. When I wanted to play softball you made that possible for me to go to Fort Collins and helped me whenever I needed anything just someone to talk to. As a young girl I used to love watching my brother and Thad play it was pretty special and how excited my dad was to do Stats for you all
Of those years you really made him feel apart of your teams always.
Much love to The Lear Family*

Amy Vigil - August 17, 2021 at 11:28 PM

BS

“Where to start-as a beginner teacher/coach I modeled everything I did after Coach Lear! He was such an influential role model. I had the pleasure, I guess that’s what they called working your butt off in the summer sun along side him in the summer rec commission. During fball season you never wanted to lose as you knew manic Mondays of running 100 yd zippers were on the schedule! From the chalk board breaking 1/2 time one eye going cross eyed speeches that got you so fired up, to the practices when he’d be so mad he’d grab a helmet and take on the entire team in a drill, to the Y club letterman’s initiation, to his “sayings” about girl friends, to the matching of quarters for donuts...he was the “guy” we all wanted to be. I “earned” the nickname Sputz cuz of my ears and I vividly remember his wife Terri yelling from the stands on fball kickoffs “light em up Sputz!”

I remember several times I was injured at practices and Coach Lear ALWAYS made a point to come by my house and/or call to check on me. What a great opportunity we Yuma Indians had to have been influenced by Al Lear and his coaching staff-Ernie Stumpf, Bill Kolb, Jim Hess, Simmy

There was none like Coach Al Lear, I sincerely appreciate you! I love you man! God’s peace which surpasses all understanding for Terri and his family. Brad Starnes

Brad Starnes - August 16, 2021 at 09:42 PM

DS

“Al was absolutely one of the best. I will always cherish the memories of the many hours I was able to spend with him in roping arenas. He loved roping, and we had some great times. I'll always be proud to say that Al was my friend...he was one of the good ones. RIP Big Al.

Don Scott - August 16, 2021 at 04:22 PM



“ Coach Al Lear took Yuma to State in AA football. This memory was a highlight in my high school education. Teaching me respect and dignity in who I am and how to work with others. Individuals like him will be missed. I’m sorry for your loss, in these times we come to see how much we touch each other in life.

John Sowder - August 15, 2021 at 09:40 PM

E.

“ Edwin K. . purchased a sympathy card for the family of Al Lear.



Edwin K. . - August 15, 2021 at 08:24 AM

KZ

“ Terry, Shawn and Thad: I hope you know how much Al meant to me during our many years together at WHS. As the years progressed, he became not only a friend, but a mentor and the greatest support a teacher could require, and although he admitted not really knowing much of what I was teaching, he always appreciated, supported, and respected what I was doing in class. It was amazing how two men with very different interests and passions in our personal lives could learn to appreciate and respect the other. I will miss him so much, but I am glad he was surrounded by three such wonderful people who loved him. Kurt Zscheile

Kurt and Kay Zscheile - August 15, 2021 at 08:18 AM

BF

“ Al was a great guy!! He was a High School All American Running Back in High School!! He was very successful as a coach & A.D. in his professional life!!

Terry his Beautiful Wife worked for the CSU Alumni Association for A Few Years & She was great to visit with !! Al will definitely be one of the most Remembered , Great athletes at FCHS IN THE 60's !! I send my positive thoughts to Al's Family in this time of Remembrance of a Great Man !!

Bruce Frye-1961classmate - August 14, 2021 at 10:17 PM

JB

“ We are all better off for having known, worked, and enjoyed a friendship with Al. His tenure in Windsor was marked by great success and even better leadership. He always had your back and feared nothing as an athlete, coach and man. His presence made all of us better and was a great influence on his players and peers. He will be sorely missed. Our condolences to Terry, Shawn, Thad and their families. John Burke

John Burke - August 14, 2021 at 03:38 PM

HW

“ Harold Wagner purchased the Simply Elegant Sp athiphyllum for the family of Al Lear.



Harold Wagner - August 14, 2021 at 11:13 AM

HW

“ I grew up with Al. We were both FCHS class of 1961. He was a very good friend. We played in lots of sporting events during the 50's and 60's together. He will be sorely missed.

Harold Wagner - August 14, 2021 at 11:07 AM



“ Coach Lear in high school and Big Al later in life made me a better person and a better man. Larger than life and holding me accountable are memories that I will all always hold close. Blessed to know him and my deepest condolences to his family and many friends.

Clay Drake - August 14, 2021 at 12:47 AM

PK

“ Al was such a great friend to so many., especially to Mo. He spent many hours with Mo during his illness, laughing and telling each other wild tales. Al made sure that Mo would attend Nate's All Star football game in Denver - loading us into his van, driving us down, staying with him on the sidelines in Mo's wheelchair, taking us to dinner afterwards. That was Mo's last meal. I'll never forget Al's kindness and beautiful heart. We all have lost a very special man. God bless his family and all the thousands of friends who are mourning him.

Pat Kvamme - August 13, 2021 at 11:58 PM

AW

“ My son Chad Walker played for him in high school. They were in the state play off game and won!!! Oh what a victory and a feeling!! Chad than came home with his hair shaved off completely and I said "What in the world did you do? He replies " We all agreed on the team that if we won the state championship than we would shave Mr Lears head and than ourselves. What a memory. Those kids loved him. I believe that was in 1994. Alberta Walker

alberta j Walker - August 13, 2021 at 06:37 PM

BW

“ Always pushing us to be better on and off the field, Papa Lear was a great coach. He will be forever missed, but will live on through our stories/memories. -Wydra, Brandon

Brandon Wydra - August 13, 2021 at 05:43 PM

GB

“ Just wanted to express my condolences to all of you. Many in our family had the privilege of knowing Al - whether as their coach/teacher and in my case working with him through his administrative years. Hold on to those memories as I will myself. Glenda Brungardt

Glenda Brungardt - August 13, 2021 at 04:03 PM