



THE STAMPEDE

The Best From Munster HS Athletics



Honoring One Of The All-Time Greats

If somewhere in Lake County there was a Mount Rushmore-like figure featuring larger-than-life and memorable high school coaches, Munster's John Friend would be prominently featured. He is a member of multiple halls of fame at the high school and college levels and Munster High School is making another push to remember him upon his passing this spring.

Back in the 1960s, kids living in Munster often attended Bishop Noll or Hammond High. And as MHS was literally being built, it was Coach Friend who was there at the start. He was hired in 1964 as the school's first football and basketball coach and continued until 1980. Coach Friend won 79 percent of his games and captured seven conference titles while 25 all-state players came through the program. Eight times Munster found itself in the state's top 10. Coach Friend was inducted into the Indiana Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1987.

“He was a magnificent guy and built a successful program,” said alum Bob Grand '74. “He was known for helping everybody. Even after they graduated, he stayed in touch and did neat things for people. That was his legacy - he found ways to be helpful to people.”

Grand, among other lifelong friends, stayed connected to the legendary coach for decades. Coach Friend gave Grand many opportunities as a young person and encouraged him to pursue academics and a career in law. Grand and several friends even vacationed across Europe with their longtime mentor.

“He took care of me. I worked with him closely at a young age and it wasn't just me. He was there for a lot of people and that's why we try to be as helpful as possible with this project.”

Jim Dedelow '80, a local media executive still closely linked to Munster, added similar thoughts. “You don't realize how momentous playing for him was while it was happening,” Dedelow said. “He coached us at a high level, and later I realized all the life lessons he put forth.”

John Friend literally wrote the book on coaching football. He authored *Coaching Youth Football*, a book that was adopted as the national manual for Pop Warner football beginning in 1977. He also founded Grid Coach Magazine as a resource for youth football coaches and served as president or chairman on countless organizations in sports.

Not only does Coach Friend's name hang at MHS, but also at Purdue Northwest where he was the school's athletics director and a pivotal fundraiser for 22 years. PNW plays on John Friend Court and Grand and others formed the John and Betty Friend Scholarship Fund for student-athletes at PNW. The annual golf outing he started at PNW in 1980 still continues today.

“How many guys can say their name is on a high school field and a college basketball court?” said Grand. “And still, he was such a humble person. He didn't do anything for recognition.”

“So many young men looked up to him as a role model for how to compete and perform under fire,” Dedelow said. “That's why so many guys like me will say glowing things about John Friend.”

All Mustangs are **invited to a special fundraising event Friday, October 11** when MHS plays Lowell at 7 p.m. The night features a catered event for alumni and supporters. John Friend and Leroy Marsh will be honored at halftime. This event will raise funds for the renovation of the Tom D. Largus Football Facility, "The Stable." Your support will help build new lockers, a player lounge, and a film room for our student-athletes. **[RSVP today!](#)**

Mrs. Marsh Wins Service Award

Over the years, familiar faces reinforce the notion that Munster is and always will be home. Whether its memories made Friday nights under the lights or triumphs in any of our programs, the pillars of our community have been there to encourage generations of Mustangs to great heights. There may be no more familiar face than Jamie Marsh, wife of former football coach Leroy Marsh, who has been our press box host for 45 years.

For her decades of great work, Mrs. Marsh has been named this year's IIAAA District I Service Award winner. In that role, Mrs. Marsh prepares the pressbox for working press and gameday staff, manages the hospitality and even brings her own homemade cookies.

“In many ways, Jamie is the one holding everything off the field together behind the scenes,” MHS alum Jim Dedelow said. "On Friday nights it's always easy to find people to broadcast Munster's game. It's a comfortable and welcoming environment and it's well-known when you go to Munster you'll have a quality experience.”



Today's Mustangs Visit Tomorrow's Mustangs

Several Munster athletics teams visited Frank Hammond Elementary recently. Boys soccer is pictured above welcoming future Mustangs and brightening their school day.

Mustang Trivia

John Friend coached Munster football for 16 seasons. How many games did he win? Keep reading to find the answer!



'86 Regional Champs!

Leroy Marsh and the Mustangs captured a regional title in 1986. MHS outscored its sectional opponents 84-47 and then beat Hobart for the regional title.

Mustang Must Sees

- Help us honor Coach Friend and **renovate THE STABLE!**
- We want to hear from you! 60th anniversary celebration - **CLICK HERE**
- Milestone! Coach Val Pflum **wins her 200th soccer match**
- Don't miss these upcoming home events! **Schedule**



Back 2 Back Champs!

Munster girls golf captured the conference title for the second straight season. Hannah Ingersoll was the individual medalist and Bill Smitka was named NCC Coach of the year.

Make A Difference For Munster

The Stable is an important part of our daily routine at Munster. It's where the Mustangs dress. Where they build memories and friendships. And it's a highly-visible part of our Friday night gameday atmosphere. Please click the button below to make a difference at Munster and help us renovate The Stable.

Your generosity will give the Mustangs a locker room, proper meeting space and the resources need to compete and keep students playing for MHS!

[Learn More](#) 

Trivia Answer

119. John Friend won 119 games at Munster from 1964-79, with a winning percentage of .788.

