

Hard to leave the past alone

By Larry Pritchett

Past PCHS activities director

A few weeks ago at one of the last UNL home basketball games I had an inquiry from a gentlemen sitting next to my wife, Marlene, wondering if I would be interested in coaching again. I had never met this person before and he had been visiting with Marlene earlier and asked where we were from and what we did. She told him she worked at Sargent Irrigation in Grant and I didn't do much because I was retired!

I don't think that was the exact conversation but she mentioned that I had been the boys basketball coach at Grant for a number of years. He asked her right away if I would be interested in coming east and coaching again. He had a granddaughter in school and their coach had just resigned. I think she said that I missed coaching a little but wasn't sure that I wanted to move and start again.

The first chance he got, he leaned over and asked me, "Would you be interested in coming to Seward and coaching the girls basketball team next year?" I was pretty sure I didn't, but he was determined to tell me how great a job coaching at Seward had been in the past and would be in the future.

Seward has been pretty successful for the last number of years. They were 124-5 from 2008-2013 and won 104 straight games and four straight Class B Championships. Still it wasn't attractive to me.

There was this other little thing that made it unattractive and that was the thought that Seward was good as a team and they recruited well from the surrounding schools. Don't know for sure if that is an accurate thought but I do know that two of their best players had gone to school in Malcolm before transferring to Seward.

I had even been told that one player had transferred from LPS (Lincoln Public Schools), and one from East Butler or somewhere. I don't know if there is any ill will left yet, other than my eldest son told me later that if that would have happened he would have hoped that I lost every game on the schedule every year I coached. I think that was a little harsh, but it might help figure out the "Ill Will" thing.

The only reason I mention this is that I just read in the last couple of days that their coach during the glory years is coming back after a one year absence, just when I was thinking about moving to Seward!

Every once in awhile I do think about the things I really enjoyed about coaching and how would it work to give it another try. I miss being around the players and students in school.

After being around the school so much for so many years, I find it hard to look at students now at Perkins County Schools and not know a third of them by name. It doesn't take much time before you are an unknown face to them also.

I miss being around the faculty, and even the administration! I do sometimes think that it is

really easy only remembering the really good things in teaching and coaching.

I have a hard time grasping the fact that 1965 was 49 years ago. It truly did fly by in a blink of an eye. I know I am getting old but reliving some of the past games with players is a fun thing to do. I get to going back to the past with former players and I will get a phone call from California from Marv Tickle every now and then. Regardless of how late at night or how early, it is always good to hear that voice.

It is also good that enough time has gone by and I now am just hearing of some of the things that went on during the past. We were still pretty lucky because we have had for the most part really good people go through the program.

Sometime I will even attempt to find out how far Marlene's old Datsun would float and how fast you would have to be going when you hit the water after a big rain flooded the road by Uehlings in the north part of town.

The boys still think that is on a "Need to Know" basis.