

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Volunteer soccer coach will be deeply missed

Dear Editor:

Our friend Leo Moss died this summer. He lived in the Sewickley area for nearly 80 years. He touched many lives in our area when he introduced youth soccer to Sewickley.

After a stellar career in the Peace Corps and the U.S. government, he moved his family to Leetsdale and opened a store in Sewickley.

As his children moved into adulthood, he began volunteering his time and energy to youth soccer.

Sewickley Area Soccer was born and grew into a program for youths ages 6 to 14. Quaker Valley School District added soccer to its sports programs and became successful in its divisions. Graduates began playing at the college level and earning scholarships. Several All-American players were named from the

Sewickley-area schools.

Our three sons all played soccer for Mr. Moss' teams. While he taught them soccer, he also became a role model. They learned good morals, commitment, mental toughness and sportsmanship from him.

For example, every minute late for practice meant running a lap around the field. He expected 100 percent effort and respect from his players.

He always was "Mr. Moss" — they never called him Leo. He seldom raised his voice. He taught them a good team can train on a rocky field, wear plain cotton team shirts and drink only water and win.

Professionally groomed fields, expensive uniforms and fortified sports drinks did not make a team better. Other teams paid high fees to coaches; Mr. Moss volunteered his time. He was

a great example that there are community leaders purely motivated to make the lives of those around him better.

At a time in his life when his own family was raised, he could sit back and relax. Instead, he was at soccer practice several evenings a week, plus at games Saturday and/or Sunday. He also went a step further and introduced the cup team level and identified top players from the Pittsburgh area to compete at a higher level. He created the first three boys "Hotspurs" teams for Western Pennsylvania.

These players had phenomenal success and wonderful experiences of traveling out of state to tournaments and many times brought home a trophy or state title. He was a fixture at local high school regular and playoff soccer

games.

So, thanks, Mr. Moss, for giving us the best gift ... yourself. You always will be an important part of our family's years and life in Sewickley.

Carol Perkovich
Edgeworth