

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Proclamation



WHEREAS, Harold Otto Swanson was born in South Milwaukee on April 20, 1935, to Carl and Marion Swanson. Harold went to school in South Milwaukee, graduating from South Milwaukee High School in 1953. During his time at the high school, Harold captained the basketball team which won the Wisconsin state championship in 1952; and

WHEREAS, after graduating, Harold attended the University of Minnesota, earning letters in basketball and tennis for four years. After graduation from college, Harold began his teaching career in Minnesota for two years before returning to Milwaukee. He and Kathryn Lindall married on June 9, 1962, and would raise three children, Kristen, Thor and Erik; and

WHEREAS, after his return to Milwaukee, Harold served as the first tennis pro at the Western Tennis Club in Elm Grove for 10 years. He then taught at South Milwaukee Middle School before joining the faculty at The Prairie School in Racine, where he coached boys' and girls' tennis for decades, leaving a strong legacy on and off the court; and


WHEREAS, Harold led Prairie tennis teams to six state championships and individual athletes to over 50 state recognitions. In 2013, Harold was recognized as the Division II Coach of the Year by the Wisconsin Tennis Coaches' Association, a distinction conferred by his peers. In 2014, he was inducted into the Wisconsin Tennis Coaches' Hall of Fame. Harold's career as a coach was based on his drive to work with students and young adults, mentoring them to be the best they could be of themselves and seeking to achieve personal growth and advancement through hard work and commitment. To Harold, trophies and "wins" were secondary to the experience of doing your best; and

WHEREAS, Swanny's love of tennis is equal to his passion for working with students. For 46 years, Harold was a social studies teacher at Prairie, demonstrating tremendous patience and commitment, individualizing his approach to learning by organizing after-school study sessions and developing games to help students prepare for exams; and

WHEREAS, Harold passed away on March 2, 2020, leaving a legacy worthy of praise.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Mayor Erik Brooks and the Common Council of the City of South Milwaukee, do hereby declare June 22, 2020, as "Harold Otto Swanson Day" in the City of South Milwaukee in recognition of a life well lived and in his honor.




ERIK BROOKS, Mayor