

Southwesterner In Focus
YSLETA SCHOOLS OFFICIAL KEEPS
INTEREST IN ATHLETICS

By Hugh Morgan
EPT Sundial 1/2/66

Clyde Wafer would probably have been happy to spend all his life in athletics.

“But when it comes time to move along, you better move along or you’ll get sidetracked. I’ve always hated to leave a job, but I couldn’t do otherwise,” said Wafer, who has advances from star athlete to coach, to high school principal and now assistant superintendent of Ysleta Independent School District.

He is a giant of a man, with a mild, unmodulated voice. He is a native of Louisiana, but his western boots, and his dry humor, testify he is at home in the Southwest.

Wafer was born in Saline, La., but was reared in Coushatta, La., a small town 75 miles south of Shreveport. He was a stand-out on his small school’s basketball team, which reached the semifinals in the state tournament in 1921.—Wafer’s senior year.

He accepted a football and basketball scholarship to Centenary College in Shreveport. From 1921 to 1925, he was a stalwart tackle on the football team and center on the basketball team. He was named to the all conference team for both sports.

He was 6 feet, 4 inches in height and weighed 210 pounds. And there were others like him—Cal Hubbard, who weighed 265 pounds and is now superintendent of National Baseball League umpires, and Bard (Mexico) Farrell, who weighed 220 pounds and is now a lawyer in Laramie, Wyo., to name two.



SCHOOL OFFICIAL—*Clyde Wafer, assistant superintendent of Ysleta Independent School District, removes wood for his fireplace from a wheelbarrow in the back yard of his home. Wafer previously had been football coach and principal of Ysleta High School. —(Times Staff Photo)*

GREAT RECORD

The football team—organized before the recruiting rules became stiffer—was a mean one. While Wafer played, the squad lost only three games—two to an almost semi-pro football team from Tennessee and one to Boston College.

When the squad lost to Boston College, the Centenary coach vowed he would return and beat the Boston team the next year. And the team did.

Wafer dropped out of school for a few semesters to earn enough money to complete

his college degree, which he earned in 1927 in Bible and biological sciences.

His one desire was to be a high school coach. Wafer accepted a position with Haynesville, La., High School, which had one of the top football teams in the state. But Lynn B. Davis, principal of El Paso High School and the brother of Wafer's roommate, came to Haynesville and convinced Wafer he should come to El Paso and become assistant football coach.

So in 1927, Wafer came to El Paso High School.

"I was just going to stay a year and then go back to Louisiana. That's been 43 years ago, I guess," Wafer said.

In that first year, El Paso High School lost to Phoenix, Ariz., Union High School. The players—of nearly all would return to high school the next year—and the coaches vowed they would beat Phoenix the next year. So Wafer stayed another year.

In 1928, he was married to Katherine Harris, a girl from Louisiana whom he had dated for three or four years. She liked El Paso, and this helped in his decision to remain here.

WENT TO YSLETA

He continued as assistant coach until 1931, when he became the coach of El Paso High School. In 1932, he went to Ysleta High School as head football coach.

In 1943, Wafer was made acting principal of Ysleta High School and because of the shortage of other male faculty members due to the war, he also continued as the football coach. He also coached the basketball and track teams.

In 1946, he was asked whether he wanted to become the principal and drop his coaching duties or whether he wanted to resume coaching. He decided to take the principal's job, thus ending his career as a coach.

His football teams in Ysleta won the district championships in 1941 and 1943.

As a principal, Wafer used the same principle that he used as a coach—and that is to get the confidence of the other teachers and students.

"I've been in the school business since 1927, and I can say I've never laid my hand on a student. If a youth wants to plead his case, I will always listen, but I won't always agree. If I can't talk to a youth and get him to see the way, I'll let him cool his heels at home," Wafer said.

In 1962, Wafer became assistant superintendent of Ysleta Independent School District, and took charge of such functions as maintaining school buildings and grounds, and acquiring land for the school.

When he joined Ysleta High School it had only two or three elementary schools in school had about 300 students.

Now the school district contains four high schools, 19 elementary schools with a scholastic population of about 26,000.

Wafer is member of the board of stewards of Ysleta Methodist Church, a charter member of Ysleta Lions Club and a member of several educational organizations.

He and his wife have one son, Dr. W.S. Wafer of Show Low, Ariz., and two daughters, Mrs. Carl Robinson and Melissa Wafer who is a senior at Ysleta High School.

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Ysleta Schools Official Keeps Interest In Athletics

By HUGH MORGAN

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