

Norm Donnelly



Norm Donnelly, who made it possible for more Norwalkers to participate in sports than he can remember, is among those to be honored this year by the Old Timers.

Norm will not be remembered for his prowess as a hitter, a quarterback, or a set shot star, but he is certainly remembered for what he and his company did to help hundreds of Norwalk youngsters who did have the ability to hit or pass or shoot baskets.

Old Timers will recall Donnelly's as one of the outstanding local athletic and department stores of the period before and after World War II. Probably what many do not know is that Donnelly's, with Norm as the spearhead, made available to young Norwalk athletes the equipment they needed so they could pursue the sport of their choice.

With the Spaulding franchise in Norwalk, Donnelly was able to arrange special discounts for Norwalk teams, and, more often than not, arranged for equipment at no cost to those who needed it. Donnelly never sponsored a team officially, to prevent any favoritism. Instead, Norm and his family unofficially sponsored just about all of the youth in the city, including junior football, baseball, and basketball leagues.

Norm Donnelly is remembered by many of those who are old timers today because of his unstinting generosity. His compensation was the satisfaction of the achievements of those he was able to help.

Donnelly did have one accomplishment in sports, which is somewhat unusual. His hobby was dog obedience training, a hobby which he pursued in the 33rd Infantry Scout Dog Platoon in Italy, during World War II.

Norm is retired and spends his time at golf and fresh water fishing. He lives in Wilton with his wife Lois. They have one son, Gary.