

## Wayne Ewing

Inducted February 7, 2014

Wayne Ewing has been a fixture in the Oklahoma Soccer Association Referee Corps since 1982 when he helped establish club soccer in El Reno. Always a man of energy and drive when he involved himself in a project, creating soccer in El Reno became his passion and within years it would drive him to become a referee, an assignor, an assessor, an instructor, and then a State Referee. With his vast experience as an official in a game that he never played as a youngster growing up in Oklahoma City and El Reno, it was a testament to his passion for officiating that eventually led him to become the State Referee Administrator and the leader of the Oklahoma Referee Corps.

A graduate of El Reno Junior College Wayne also served his country in the Medical Corps during the Vietnam era. His military background may have provided his attention to details as a referee and a businessman. 47 years ago, he married his wife Pat and together with the 3 children Laura, Anthony, and Dereck they involved themselves in soccer and Wayne's job with Western Electric.

Mentoring came naturally to Wayne, and he was always working with young up and coming referees from clubs all around western Oklahoma. He would gravitate to the young refs and surprise them with supportive comments and suggestions. To facilitate guiding referees, Wayne himself began the upgrade process himself and by 1986 he was a State Referee grade 6. Within three years he achieved the highest grade a referee can get in the state: Grade 5. Then it was on to become an Assessor, Instructor and Assignor. All this to improve the game, not for personal gain.

His willingness to serve his fellow referees drove him to create his own sporting goods operation for soccer families. The store would provide soccer equipment to players, coaches, teams, and referees. It was not uncommon for him to discount the price to families with several players or to create team uniforms for teams and then not charge for the additional players who couldn't afford the uniform. Wayne would park his van at an event and either sell or take orders for the materials. His desire to assist those who wished to play but weren't financially able to play cut into his profit, but that wasn't what drove Wayne so it mattered little to him.

The high school, college, and adult programs in Oklahoma also benefitted from Wayne's involvement. With those organizations he officiated, assessed, and instructed while maintaining his position with El Reno Soccer Club. He was elect Vice President of the NISOA college chapter and then President. He was also a regular at indoor soccer matches and officiated many USISL games.

In 2007 Wayne was asked to serve as the State Youth Referee Administrator and he gladly accepted the position working with close friend Mike Pollock who was the SRA. In 2009 Wayne suffered a medical condition that required him to resign as SYRA and which affects him to this day, but he maintains contact with many of his friends and young referees he taught and mentored for decades. For many referees, he represents what hard work and determination can accomplish, not only as a referee, but as a man who has found his passion.