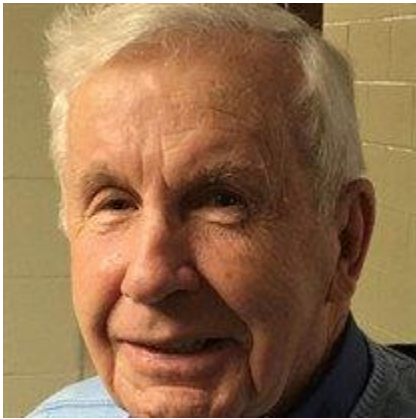


The beloved 'Face of Godfrey': Eldon 'Twirp' Williams will be remembered

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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GODFREY - On Christmas Day, everyone reflects on lost loved ones, but today one of the most remembered in terms of community service and his commitment to family and friends will be Eldon “Twirp” Williams.

Williams died at age 87 in a tragic crime this past year, but his memory will always resonate with his family, friends and Village of Godfrey and Alton residents.

Village of Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick was terribly shaken at the loss of his friend and colleague Eldon “Twirp” Williams. He delivered a eulogy for Mr. Williams and he said it was one of the hardest things he has ever done.

“I think a compliment to Eldon is all the media did much more about the man than what happened to the man,” he said. “Eldon was a basketball player at Alton and he received his nickname ‘Twirp’ from what someone started calling at him that time because of his

height. Twirp was a name more prominent in the 1940s than it is now. He still loved Alton basketball. He enjoyed supporting anything in our community, not just Godfrey, but the whole Riverbend area.”

McCormick said everyone in Godfrey misses Twirp so much today.

“We were all in a state of total shock when he died,” the mayor said. “He meant so much to Godfrey, his family, friends and the region. I will always remember Twirp the most for being my friend. I miss him a lot each day.”

Margaret Freer, a prominent business owner and community activist at Freer Auto Body, described Twirp as “the face of Godfrey.”

“He was always one of our biggest supporters and he believed in keeping business in Godfrey,” she said. “He was a wonderful man.”

Pam Whisler, the Godfrey Village Clerk, said Twirp was always a good mentor to her.

“I was very fortunate to know him over 40 years,” she said. “He was a good supporter of me, but also a very true friend. We always had agreed to disagree, but we never really disagreed.”

Twirp had a loving family spread all over the country with daughters, stepchildren and an abundance of grandchildren. Mayor McCormick and Whisler said they know Christmas Day will be tough for the Williams family and they extend their love and prayers.

“Twirp’s loss is one you can never bring back,” Whisler said. “He was a man who loved Godfrey and wanted everyone to be served and he didn’t want anyone to wait, he wanted service and problems to be resolved. He wanted residents to continue on with their lives and be comfortable.”

“Eldon started in 1957 with Godfrey Township as the justice of the peace and trustee. In 1959, he became the assessor. He retired as the township assessor in December 1997 and in 1999, he ran for village trustee until the present. He was a realtor for a long time. He ushered on Sundays at Saints Peter and Paul Church in Alton. You couldn’t ask for a more All-American hometown boy. He was born here and loved his family, his friends and his community.”