

Jim Greenwald Set To Retire As Granite City Superintendent, Has Precious Memories Of Education Career

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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SAUGET - Jim Greenwald is set for retirement as superintendent of Granite City Community Unit District Number 9 after a long career in both teaching and administration in his hometown school district.

But he's also very proud to have been a member of the Warrior baseball team that finished fourth in the state in his senior year in 1970.

Greenwald was honored prior to the Warriors' game against Edwardsville Monday night against Edwardsville as part of the Gateway Grizzlies' Sandlot Series at GCS Ballpark. Throwing out the first pitch before the game, and was also presented with a framed jersey he wore when he was an assistant coach for the team by the current Granite team.

"Fifty years, yes," Greenwald said with a smile during an interview when he recalled the 1970 Warrior team. "We won districts, regionals, sectionals, still to this day holds a 17-game consecutive winning streak. It was a very, very magical way to end the senior year."

Greenwald is also looking forward to his retirement as well.

"I had a great career. I'm ready for the next chapter," he said.

For starters, that next chapter entails what many would expect from a retirement.

"Just right now, a lot of rest and relaxation," Greenwald said with a smile while his wife, Karen, looked on with a smile, "just being a good husband, a good father, a good grandfather. It's going to be nice not having a five o'clock alarm every morning," he said with a laugh. "So right now, my intentions are to just enjoy life."

As one might expect, some of Greenwald's favorite memories of his time in education involved the kids.

"Well, sometimes, with all the problems that we solve, it's tough to realize sometimes that we're in it for the students," Greenwald said. "But I think that the recognitions, the highs, the lows, graduation like we had Friday night really, really typifies what it's all about, and that is to provide the best education possible for the children."

The love of the teachers for their students was shown this past spring when the Granite City teachers held a parade for their students, with cars that passed through the various neighborhoods of the city, with the teachers waving to their students and expressing how much they mean to the teachers.

"It's really awesome," Greenwald said. "And you know what really dawned on me in the spring, because normally in the spring, I'm shaking hands with all the little grade school students who read 100 books. You're going to the Brinkhoff awards, saluting the students that are the top students in the fifth and sixth grade. Naturally, it goes without saying high school has senior recognition, scholarships, all types of things, graduation. But you really start sensing that missing the students, once COVID-19 really kicked in."

Greenwald feels that baseball helps in the overall school curriculum, providing another educational platform.

"You know, tonight's a great example of how people have been clamoring for this," Greenwald said. "It's great for people to get out; most of us have been just around our families for four, five months. It's nice to see people out again, and I think baseball really, literally is the national pastime."

The biggest takeaway is all the memories that Greenwald has of his time in the Granite City school system, and they'll be among his most precious as time goes on.

"Lot of great memories," Greenwald said. "A lot more good ones than bad ones, that's for sure," he said with a laugh. "So I'm really blessed to have the career I had."

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