

Dorsey Man Leaves Legacy With Two Area Wrestling Communities

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EDWARDSVILLE - It has been a year since Daniel “Kevin” McCoy passed away at age 67 from complications due to the COVID-19 virus but local communities Bethalto and Edwardsville continue to reap the rewards from the gracious efforts and donations of Kevin and Janelle McCoy of Dorsey.

Kevin was born on June 22, 1954, in Alton, Illinois. Kevin was active in sports as a child and developed a competitive spirit which led him to the Illinois state arm wrestling championships as an adult. Kevin graduated from Edwardsville High School in 1973 and married the love of his life and best friend Janelle McCoy in 1977. He and Janelle had two children, Ryan McCoy of Bethalto and Chad McCoy of Bethalto, who took over the family flooring business from Kevin. Although Kevin owned and operated McCoy’s Flooring, he still found time to coach his boys in baseball, wrestling, and any other sport they competed in as children. Kevin loved competition and passed that on to

both his boys and his grandchildren. Over the past 10 years or so it was his grandchildren, Luke, Josi, Cash, Cooper, Nova, Kimmy, and Holden, that stoked his competitive fire and provided Kevin with a tremendous amount of pride as he watched them compete in baseball, softball, football, soccer, and wrestling in and around the community.

In the 1990s, Kevin was instrumental in helping to form the Edwardsville Wrestling Club. Kevin used his business savvy and technical skills to help secure funding and design a youth wrestling building in Edwardsville. Janelle contributed behind the scenes as the long-time treasurer for the club. It was these efforts that helped build the youth club and ultimately the Edwardsville High School wrestling program into a state power.

Prior to Kevin's involvement, youth wrestlers from Edwardsville were forced to sign up with wrestling clubs in neighboring towns. Kevin believed Edwardsville would support a wrestling team and his beliefs were proved correct as the Edwardsville Wrestling Club consistently boasts the largest membership of youth grapplers south of Joliet. Over the years, Edwardsville wrestling has produced multiple youth and high school state champions with several Edwardsville athletes going on to wrestle in college. Currently, 2018 Edwardsville graduate and current Missouri Tiger, Noah Surtain, is the #14 ranked collegiate wrestler in the country at 125 pounds. Another Edwardsville graduate (2020), Luke Odom, wrestles for the University of Illinois. Numerous other Edwardsville graduates have competed collegiately since the Edwardsville Wrestling Club was founded in the 1990s. It was in part due to Kevin's and Janelle's efforts in the early years of the youth club that these successes were possible.

Bethalto, also a long-time wrestling power at both the youth (Bulls Wrestling Club) and high school level (Civic Memorial High School), was another benefactor of Kevin's and Janelle's generosity. All of Kevin and Janelle's grandkids are in the Bethalto School District and Kevin's oldest grandson, Luke, wrestled for both the Bulls Wrestling Club and Trimpe Middle School (Bethalto) before high school. If Luke was wrestling, you could find Kevin in the gym. Kevin let it be known to his friends and family prior to his passing that he wished to leave a legacy to the wrestling programs and community that will impact his grandchildren.

With the building of the new Civic Memorial High School wrestling facility, the McCoy family found it to be the perfect opportunity to turn some of Kevin's good fortune into helping mold the new wrestling facility from vision to reality. Chad McCoy took his knowledge gained from working with his brother and his father in the flooring business and installed a nice turf floor in the facility. Following Kevin's passing, the McCoy family also donated significant funds to the Bulls Wrestling Club, Trimpe Wrestling Club and Civic Memorial High School wrestling team to build a subfloor under the mats in the new facility and purchase odds and ends needed to finalize construction. Those

contributions were key as now the Bulls and Eagles are positioned to maintain wrestling dominance in Illinois for years to come.

Like Edwardsville, the Eagles have sent several wrestlers to the Division 1 level over the past several years. Currently, 2020 Civic Memorial graduates, Caleb Tyus (SIUE) and Vinny Zerban (University of Northern Colorado) are ranked on InterMat's Division 1 rankings with Tyus being ranked 23rd in the country at 149 pounds and Zerban at 31st at 157 pounds. Caine Tyus, also a 2020 Civic Memorial graduate, also continued his wrestling career at SIUE. Abe Wojcikiewicz, an expected 2023 Eagle graduate, is ranked 5th in the country amongst high school 170-pounders and has signed a letter of intent to wrestle at Stanford University in California next year. With the new donations and efforts to the new wrestling facility, it seems likely that more Eagle grapplers will take the path from youth wrestlers to college wrestlers.

Luke, Kevin's oldest grandson and currently a freshman starter on the Civic Memorial Eagles High School varsity wrestling team, may be one of those kids. Luke has competed for the Eagles wrestling team at 152, 160 and 170 pounds this year accumulating a record of 23-11 and is a large part of why the Eagles support dual team record of 16-2 and a ranking inside the top 20 in 2A state despite having 1A enrollment. With several state-ranked wrestlers on the Eagle squad and a state-of-the-art facility, Luke and his teammates are poised to improve on the mat over the next several years.

Kevin left an impact on the Edwardsville and Bethalto wrestling community that is likely to reverberate for a long time. A community leader and wonderful family man, Madison County and specifically the wrestling community, owe a debt of gratitude to Kevin and Janelle McCoy.