

# North students call Jones a mentor

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Ron Holland has been a lifelong friend and mentor to Rick Jones and Jones, the new North Farmington High School principal, seems to be doing the same with his students.

"He was always a mentor, always there," said John Lesaway, ex-Raiders football player who is now in his senior year as a record-setting fullback for Albion College.

Lesaway, a standout at North, was heavily recruited by Division I colleges and just when it was becoming too much, he recalls, Jones stepped in and recommended the small Michigan college, which is his alma mater.

It worked out: as a freshman, Lesaway

broke the school record for longest touchdown run and became the first frosh to rush for 100 yards.

"We still keep in touch. It's developed into a lifelong friendship," said Lesaway, who was on hand to see his former coach named North principal.

Jones has "always given John good advice, telling him to keep his options open," said Jones's mother Tricia, whose younger son Zach is co-captain of this fall's Raiders team.

Zach, co-captain Brian Lafer and teammate Ron Chika, all of whom played freshman football under Jones, also were at the school board meeting Wednesday afternoon.

"Basically, that's when we got closer to him," said Chika, while Lafer noted Jones "cares so much about academics and sports overall" that he's an inspiration to them.

While most board members offered congratulations to Jones with comments such as Gary D. Sharp's "It's a great day for North," at least two made more serious, albeit good-natured, comments.

R. Jack Inch quoted Franklin D. Roosevelt: "To some generations, much is given; of others, much expected."

Then he modified that to, "To North, much has been given. And Rick, much is expected of you."

Frank L. Reid quoted Jones's own application, in which he said he likened himself to a sculptor who "daily chips away at a block of granite until it has form and substance."

The problem there, he reminded Jones, is that "Every day, you have a different block of granite."

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"Maybe I can get that much if I resign."

But the show late Wednesday afternoon belonged to Jones, the sixth principal in North's 38-year history, who said he was "honored and humbled" by "the opportunity and challenge of a lifetime."

Jones - president of the 1997 senior class, North's fourth - for the last 26 years has been a teacher, coach and administrator.

With the help of the community, school board, faculty and students, Jones said he would "build on a proud and rich heritage of teaching excellence" at North.

The school's new top administrator also pledged that North "will be a place that champions excellence and that honors genuine effort."

### 'Shapes ideas'

It will be "a place that shapes ideas with ideals, a place for kids to grow up and grow close," he said, "a place where kids fall in love with learning (and) a place where some may even fall in love."

In his speech, Jones thanked his parents and wife, Kathy.

He praised Len and Joyce Jones continuing encouragement and support - his father even has helped him coach junior varsity football three of the last four years - then joked that, "Of course, they didn't know their 50-year-old son would still be in high school."

He said wife, Kathy, "my best friend," has handled as much stuff at home, on top of her highly demanding job, that (she) has allowed me to play at mine."

Kathy, mother of the couple's daughters, Kelly and Lauren, both North graduates, resigned last year as North's data processing director to become director of computer services for Wayne County RESA.

Jones, whose North tennis team finished second in the state last year, also cited, among others, the late Lynn Nutter, third North principal, and Ron Holland, who coached Jones and recently retired as district athletic director, for their influence on him.

"The thing that strikes me

about both of those men is they had core values and integrity that they didn't compromise on," he said.

"Both of those guys believed that the school was an extension of family. Both of those guys had a tremendous relationship" with both the teenagers they coached and the youngsters' parents.

### Stop to talk

"Both lived in the community and they ran into people at the store or church or while working out" and would stop to talk with them, Jones said.

"The two were part of the people they served, and that's always been very strong with me," said Jones, a Hills resident.

Jones, who went back to teaching and coaching after four years as assistant principal because "I had the nagging feeling I got out of the classroom too soon." He said it's only normal that he will miss teaching, since he's done it so long.

But being principal, he said, "is an opportunity to teach in a different way."

"It's obvious this place really matters to me," he said of North. "I was here with that first era of teachers" who said, "If we're going to do it, we're going to do it right" regarding running the school and treating people.

"There's a whole generation who went to North in the early days and remember that pride in the kind of place it was. What's very significant is the extent that it (pride) has held up through the years."

Both staff and parents "are still proud of the place," Jones said. "They feel a part of the North Farmington family. We want to build on that important piece of who we are."

North has been named a national exemplary school, and "the toughest thing for (someone) running a quality school is to maintain it," Jones said. "Expectations get high."

"The teachers' challenge, he said, "is to recognize it's the kids' first experience with high school and their only experience."

# Anhut lauded for years of activism

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When people would ask where Botsford Hospital was, Botsford Inn owner John Anhut recalled the response was, "behind the Inn." Today more than 30 years after the hospital opened, the perspective is just the opposite.

"In terms of a compliment that is it," said Gerson Cooper, Botsford Health Care Continuum chief executive officer.

Cooper was on hand July 26 to honor Anhut, a trustee of the Farmington Hills-Farmington Community Foundation at a luncheon during which foundation officers gave \$125,000 to support after-school programs.

During the July 26 program, Cooper and Anhut, who has served on the hospital board since the facility opened in January, 1965, related the recent sale of the historic Botsford Inn to the hospital.

Anhut resumed operations of the inn last November after previous owner Crean Smith defaulted on a land contract.

"There is nobody who should have the inn but Botsford Hospital," Cooper recalled Anhut telling him last fall.

The inn has since been bought by the hospital. "This is a traumatic week," Anhut announced. "This is the week we close the inn for food and beverages. It's tough to say goodbye."

The inn has operated for the past 163 years and - at least under Anhut's leadership, has hosted approximately 50,000 functions.

"We've never missed one and I've got a story for everything," Anhut said. He later added: "Thank you for supporting for for my 48 years."

Cooper said the inn will have a number of uses, including housing



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CANNIGAN

**Honored: John Anhut, longtime owner of the Botsford Inn was honored by the Farmington Hills/Farmington Community Foundation this past week.**

visiting medical students. "We will in fact do what is necessary to restore the exterior. It will always be known as the Botsford Inn. Be assured the inn will be in very friendly, very supportive hands."

# Contributors make foundation successful

The following are major contributors to the Farmington Hills/Farmington Community Foundation, which recently presented a check to community leaders to continue after-school programs for kids:

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