

THE COUGAR

Fall 2018
Issue 6

Gar Forman Credits Lassen College for Helping to Reach Goal of Working in NBA



Lassen Community College provides outstanding programs for all pursuing higher education goals. The core programs offer a wide range of educational opportunities including transfer degrees and certificates, economic and workforce development, and basic skills instruction.

The College serves students, both on campus and in outreach areas, in its effort to build intellectual growth, human perspective and economic potential.

Gar Forman, right, is the General Manager of the Chicago Bulls and a Lassen College Alumnus. He is was a member of the Cougars' first-ever conference championship team that went 18-0.

When Gar Forman arrived on the campus of Lassen Community College in 1978 to try out for the basketball team, he wasn't only excited about the possibility of playing college ball but he knew he could be a recruiting asset to Head Coach John Jones and his young program. He just wasn't sure if Jones would be as equally enthusiastic.

Forman was getting ready to graduate from Miramonte High School in Moraga, California, and had written around 150 California college coaches asking if he could walk-on to their program. Jones was only one of a handful that wrote him back.

Forman, who now oversees the Chicago Bulls as General Manager, loved the game of basketball and just wasn't ready to hang up his high tops. He knew wherever he went, that he would probably sit the bench and he was okay with that. He wasn't athletically gifted but was a fluid and consistent shooter. He won the Pepsi-Cola Hot Shot Challenge for his age group in the Bay Area, a national competition where baskets are shot at marked spots on the court within a time limit – no small feat or luck by any means. However, he also possessed a keen basketball IQ and was able to see the game from a coach's perspective – something coaches and teammates recognized and appreciated.

"I loved to play but I wasn't any good," said Forman. "Coach Jones invited me the

CALENDAR

November 4

Women's Basketball hosts Yuba College, 1 pm

November 6

Men's Basketball hosts Simpson JV, 6 pm

November 8

Lassen Wrestling hosts Simpson, 7 pm

November 11

Veteran's Day

November 22

Thanksgiving

November 22

Thanksgiving

November 21-23

No Classes

November 22

Thanksgiving

LCF and Boosters Host 2nd Annual Charity Golf Classic

The Lassen College Foundation and Lassen College Athletic Boosters hosted their annual charity golf tournament on September 8, renamed this year as the Frank Ernaga Memorial Golf Classic, at the Diamond Mountain Golf Course.

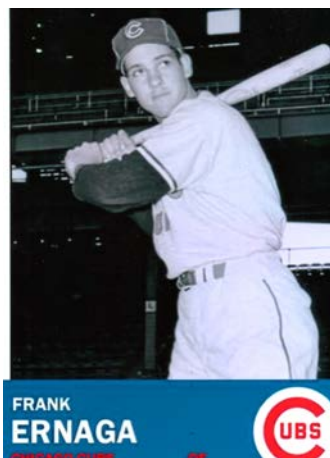
The tournament welcomed 19 foursomes and beautiful Northern California weather and comraderie. Created to generate donations for the Foundation's scholarship fund, which is a 501c3 nonprofit, and the Athletic Boosters, the tournament also offers a fun community event.

The LCF and Boosters renamed the tournament in Ernaga's memory, after the longtime Susanville resident passed away in April of this year. Ernaga was an alumnus of Lassen Community College and played baseball for the Cougars before transferring to UCLA on a baseball scholarship. He was an All American for the Bruins and before graduating from UCLA, he served our Country with distinction in the Korean War for two years and upon his return to the States he was drafted by the Chicago Cubs.

After playing a few years in the minors, he was called up to the major leagues and played outfielder for the Cubs during the 1957-58 seasons. During his first at-bat as a Cub, Ernaga hit a home run and followed it up with a triple, during his second time at bat in the majors. Both hits were off of Hall of Famer, Warren Spahn, of the Milwaukee Braves. To this day, Ernaga is the only Chicago Cub to hit a home run and a triple in the same game.

The LCF and Athletic Boosters are focused on hosting more events that are not only fun for the College, students, faculty and its alumni, but also hosting events that will create unity and excitement between the community and the College.

Next year's tourney is slated for September.



Week of Welcome Assists Students During First Week of School

LCC hosted WoW, the Week of Welcome student orientation from August 20-24 and featured the 2nd annual Lassen Fest Pool Party, movie night, activities, community connection events and more. The weeklong event kicked off the first week of school, welcomed students back to campus and helped new students transition to their first year at college or first year at Lassen.

Hundreds of students took advantage of various events and learned about all the programs and resources available to them.



Academics

Student Services



Athletics

Alumni Directory Registration Form

By submitting your information, you consent to receive information from the Lassen Community College \$20 to the Lassen College Foundation Scholarship fund for each registered alumni.

First Name *

Last Name *

Program

Year Attended

Address

You are part of a group of more than 100,000 who attended Lassen Community College. In an effort to provide better opportunities, resources and services to more of our alumni and friends, we are creating exciting and meaningful changes to how alumni can get involved and support LCC students. Help us build our alumni network by emailing us at:

lccfoundation@lassencollege.edu or by visiting our website at: **www.lassencollege.edu**. Go to the "Support LCC" tab to sign up with our alumni directory.

FORMAN, CONTINUED

final seconds. Susanville native, Dan Sezzi, who went on to play at Fresno State, was one of Lassen's star players. Sezzi drove to the basket, tying the game but got fouled and in the process, was injured. With Sezzi out, Jones had to select another player to shoot the free throws.

"Even though I wasn't a good player, I could shoot," recalls Forman. "Coach walked down the bench to me and the way he remembers it, he asked if I can make two. What I remember is him asking if I can make a free throw. All we needed was one."

Forman made the first and missed the second, and time ran out, giving Lassen their first conference championship, the first of three for Jones, which also snapped Butte's 107 consecutive conference game win streak. Their 18-0 record pitted them as a number one seed entering the state tourney but were eliminated in first round by College of the Desert. A game Forman, Sezzi and Jones agree they should have won.

Forman and Sezzi have remained close. Sezzi's family hosted Forman and a few other teammates in the basement for a few weeks the summer before their sophomore year which brought the team even closer together, and more comfortable with each other.

"He wasn't afraid to call a teammate out," said Sezzi. "He would tell you if you were out of position or if you weren't working hard enough," said Sezzi, who owns and operates Sezzi Concrete and Materials, Inc. in Susanville, less than a quarter-mile from the College. "He definitely surprised me a few times."

Sezzi added, "Gar would do this thing in warm ups that was an optical illusion of a dunk. If you



looked away for just a second, you swore he dunked it. He was only 6-1 and could not jump. He was, however, a great shooter. That was his street cred."

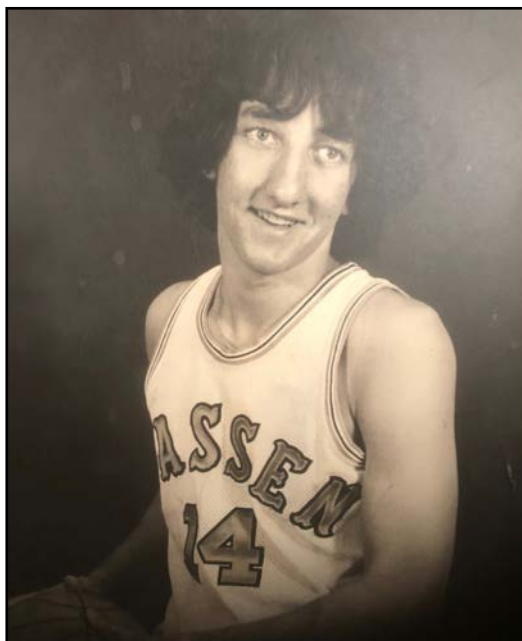
Forman went on to play one year at the College of Notre Dame, an NAIA school near his hometown, then transferred to Utah State to finish his degree in Business and focus on a career in basketball. Forman knew from the time he was in junior high that he wanted to work in basketball. He thought he would be a high school coach and credits Jones for mentoring and leading him to his first college job at Utah State. Forman saw first-hand from Jones, how to build a program, and that piqued his interest in college

athletics. From there, Forman knew he wouldn't do anything outside of basketball or education.

"Coach Jones knew I really wanted to coach and I learned so much about coaching and leadership from him," said Forman. "He was a mentor and has been throughout my career. After I left the College of Notre Dame, I wanted to start my coaching career and he was the one that got me a grad assistant position at Utah State (1981)."

In 1982, in a twist of events, he got hired by the same school that eliminated Lassen from the state tournament, College of the Desert. He served as assistant coach for one year and then head coach for two seasons. In 1985, New Mexico State (NMSU) hired him as an assistant coach, where he remained until 1987, when he accepted a position at Cal Poly Pomona as an assistant coach/recruiting coordinator. He returned to NMSU a year later to accept a similar position and accepted his last coaching position in 1994 when he served as an assistant and recruiting coordinator for Iowa State.

From there, the Chicago Bulls hired Forman as a scout in 1998.



In Memoriam: Dr. Robert Middleton

Lassen Community College lost one of its greatest advocates and intellectual stewards this Fall. Dr. Robert Middleton passed away, October 21, 2018.

During his time at Lassen College, he served as Instructor Counselor, Vice President of Instruction (twice) and Dean of Students, leading a period of unprecedented growth in enrollment and in programmatic offerings for students in Lassen



County. Early on, he saw the educational potential of computers and pushed to integrate personal computers into the information systems and curriculum of College programs.

He also was passionate about international students, and directed the very first programs for Micronesian students to travel to the United States to obtain higher education. Those programs still exist, providing benefit not only to Micronesia, but the economy and culture of Lassen County. When students of all walks of life had difficulty with finances, he regularly housed them in the family home, integrating them into his extended family.

But Bob's first love was teaching: Direct, personal contact with minds, young and old, led him to recall in his memoirs, "I never did not want to go to work!" Alumni of the 70s and 80s will recall their experiences with him as a teacher of History, Geography and Anthropology and Department Chair of Humanities. He was active organizing field trips to important archeological sites, piling students into College vans and driving them around the Western US, or to the

East Coast to experience firsthand, the cultural wonders of our great nation. When hearing of his passing, his family received

hundreds of kind notes, many saying, "He changed my life."

Changing lives was the essence of Bob's educational philosophy. Each student that passed through his classroom had special gifts to be identified and

nurtured. He spent many office hours counseling students to help direct them to maximizing their potential.

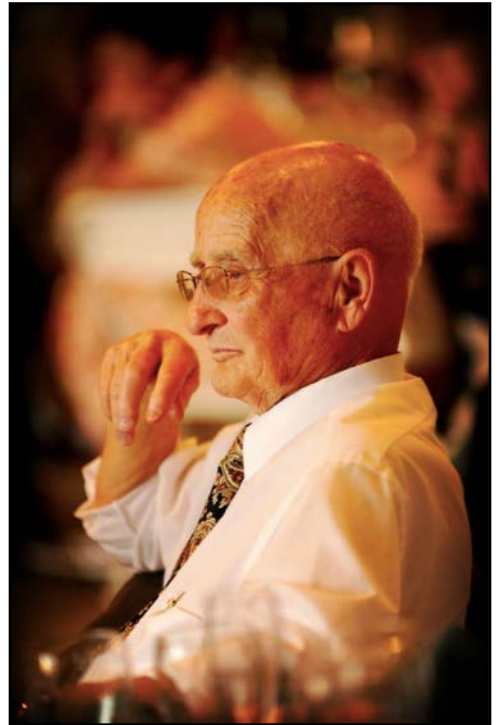
One of the reasons Dr. Middleton was so dedicated to Lassen College stems from the fact that he himself was a graduate. As a veteran, coming out of WWII and Korea, he took advantage of the GI Bill, and distinguished himself as a student, working as a milkman, clerk and laborer, to support his family as he pursued higher education. He understood the value that the community college provided him and the larger community, and he never forgot those early days when he worked so hard to accomplish his dreams.

Following his student days at Lassen, he went on to obtain his bachelors', Masters', and Ph.D. degrees. He taught at Lassen High School for a decade and then moved to Lassen College where he remained in various capacities for the remainder of his career. He retired in 1989. Middleton Hall, on the LCC campus, is named in his honor.

He is survived by his wife, Virginia, and his four children, Mike, John, Jim, and Lisa, each of which graduated from Lassen College,

benefitting from the personal relationships they forged with faculty, coaches, and students there. They all went on to graduate from CSU Chico, and obtained advanced training and graduate degrees.

Upon his passing, the family has set up the Robert Middleton Memorial Scholarship Fund. This scholarship will be awarded each year to a student from Lassen County, pursuing a transfer program at Lassen College, who demonstrates commitment to helping others in their chosen life's pathway.



Donations can be made to the Robert Middleton Memorial Scholarship fund at Lassen Community College. Go to <http://www.lassencollege.edu/support-lcc/Pages/default.aspx>. Donations can be made via check or PayPal: *Please specify Robert Middleton Memorial Scholarship on the order form.*

Checks can be mailed to: Lassen College Foundation: P.O. Box 3000 Susanville, CA 96130.



Spring Sports Report

BASEBALL

The Hustlin' Cougars had a successful season on and off the field. The team finished 18-22 overall and third in the Golden Valley Conference with a 12-13 record. Eric Carlson and Robert Lujan were named 1st Team All-Conference. Tiler Whiteaker received the Marlon Hall Jr. Award.

Off the field, the team organized and participated in many community service events including a Veteran's Day Parade and a Shop with a Cop event with the City of Susanville Police Department.

Head Coach Frank Avilla reported a 100 percent transfer rate to four-year schools for the ninth year in a row.

SOFTBALL

The Lady Cougars battled in a competitive Golden Valley Conference to finish the season 7-13 and in fourth place. As a team they finished first in stolen bases with 84, and eighth in the state.

Their overall record was 14-22. Mia Torres was named First Team All-Conference. Sabrina Johnson was given the Marlon Hall Jr. Award.



Dr. Hall introduces Motari Ngaritmab as the 2018 Alumnus of the Year. Ngaritmab, a native of Palau, graduated in 1984 with an AA in Auto Technology. He is currently an EOP&S Advising Specialist, and has worked for the College for 32 years.



2018
Lassen
Community
College
Commencement
May 28

FORMAN, CONTINUED

He traveled around the world scouting for the Bulls for six years until a huge opportunity to serve as the team's Director of Player Personnel opened up. Forman jumped at it and was the best person for the job but he knew he had one more goal in mind. In 2009, Forman was named General Manager of the Chicago Bulls, his first year in the job, supervising player personnel, coaching, scouting, training, and administration. Two years later, he was named NBA Executive of the Year along with Pat Riley, then Head Coach of the Miami Heat.

Since leaving Lassen, Forman has accomplished nearly every career goal he set for himself. He believes in a strong work ethic and loyalty, and doing a great job where you are in that moment of your life. He believes that it's not about chasing the next opportunity but taking care of business. By doing that, people will tend to take notice and opportunities will come along.

He credits Jones, and Lassen College for creating the foundation for that success. Forman has been back to campus a few times since graduating in 1980 and Jones remains a huge part of Forman's career and life. The two talk consistently. Forman has hosted Jones at training camps and they meet up regularly at Final Fours.

"Being in that environment, it's all about people – a high level of communication that builds trust," said Forman. "At Lassen, it was my first time away from home and living in the dorms. Being at a smaller school in a small community with a family atmosphere really benefitted me. It was such a positive experience that I look back at fondly."

Forman lives in Chicago with his wife, Leslie, who is the daughter of a basketball coach. He has two sons, Braeden, a senior and drum major in his high school marching band, and Jaxsen, who lives and breathes basketball.