

Rev. Horace M. (Buddy) Turner
First Baptist Church
32464 Red Arrow Hwy.
Paw Paw, Mich. 49079
October 3, 2006

Kentucky High School Athletic Association
Hall of Fame
2280 Executive Dr.
Lexington, Ky. 40505

Dear KHSAA:

I am writing to recommend long-time educator and basketball coach, John D. Wilson, to you for your consideration. It is my sincere belief that he qualifies for induction into the KHSAA Hall of Fame. Following are the reasons for my strong recommendation.

I have known John D. Wilson for about sixty years. We grew up together in Harlan County, in the community of Bledsoe, Ky. All of our growing up years we played ball, attended Sunday School and church, and enjoyed a close friendship. It was John D. and the Wilson family that influenced me to play baseball and basketball. They helped provide that opportunity for me. For that I'll be forever grateful.

Coach Wilson has taught and coached in the State of Kentucky for about 49 years. Everywhere he's been he has been an influence for good and God. His heart has always been with the people of Kentucky, especially for the mountain people of southeast Kentucky. Coach Wilson has gone the second and third mile in helping the youth of the Commonwealth. He not only taught them and coached them, many times he provided guidance and help in so many other ways. Coach provided them with opportunities to go see University of Kentucky basketball games and Midnight Madness. After teaching and coaching for thirty years in the Kentucky Public School system with great success, Coach Wilson took a teaching/coaching position at Red Bird High School in Beverly, Ky. I believe he in entering his 19th year of coaching the Red Bird High School varsity basketball team. He also continues to serve as the athletic director.

During his almost 19 years at Red Bird High School he has compiled a remarkable record. While teaching and coaching at a small, private, school of about 100 students in grades nine through twelve, coach Wilson led his teams regularly to 20 win seasons. His teams have broken all of the previous records of Red Bird High School basketball including wins, points scored, rebounds, and advancing in the post-season high school tournament. And, the biggest contribution of all is the

positive influence he has had on students who have gone on to success in many endeavors of life.

I think it was about three years ago that Coach Wilson and the Red Bird High School basketball team were featured on ESPN in a presentation called "Bluegrass Madness" or "Bluegrass Basketball". Anyway, I watched it several times and have the video of it. In that excellent presentation of what basketball means to the people in the state of Kentucky, several clips were shown that give insight into the kind of person coach Wilson is. He is shown in team practices, in actual games, in locker-room speeches before and after big games, driving the team bus, and preparing the concession stand and cleaning up afterward.

John D. has been married to his wife, Mary, for close to 50 years. They have successfully raised two fine children, Kathy and Jeff, who are successful in their marriages and careers. Coach Wilson and Mary have worked together to support the students of Kentucky while making many sacrifices.

The greatest recommendation one can be given is that a person has succeeded while displaying the best of character and integrity. Coach Wilson taught and coached with much success while holding to the highest standards. He modeled true Christian conduct and character. His success was played out in the classroom, on the court, and in real life. As he told the ESPN interviewer while driving the school bus with his team to a game, "Find a job you love and you'll never have to work another day in your life." That tells you something about coach Wilson.

It is an honor for me to write this letter of recommendation. Coach Wilson doesn't know that he is being nominated for the KHSAA Hall of Fame. Therefore, he didn't ask me to say what has been said in this letter. Because of his humble posture, if he knew about any of this he would be the first to say, "That's not necessary." But I, and others, believe it is important that high school educator/coaches that are deserving be recognized.

Therefore, I am giving the strongest possible recommendation for coach John D. Wilson for the KHSAA Hall of Fame. If you have questions for me please call me at 269-657-4581 (office), or 269-657 - 2090 (home).

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Horace M. (Buddy) Turner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Horace M. (Buddy) Turner



JOHN DEE WILSON HONORS & AWARDS

1973 – 1974 Undefeated 20 and 0 Season Loyall Grade Team
1973 Jr. Pro Basketball Outstanding Public Service Award for Youth & Basketball
1974 Kentucky Jr. Pro Champions 13 – 15 Year Olds
1974 Harlan County Grade School Coach of the Year
1975 Cumberland Valley Conference Coach of the Year
1974 – 1979 Outstanding Service Award at Cawood High School
1976 Cumberland Valley Conference Coach of the Year
1976 Harlan County Champs at Cawood High School
1977 – 1978 Cumberland Valley Conference Coach of the Year
1978 – 1979 Cumberland Valley Conference Coach of the Year
1991 – 1992 Three Rivers Conference Coach of the Year
1993 – 1994 Three Rivers Conference Coach of the Year
1996 – 1997 Three Rivers Conference Coach of the Year
1996 Red Bird High School 300 Wins Club
1997 – 1998 Three Rivers Conference Coach of the Year
1998 Regular Season Runner-up & Three Rivers Conference Certificate of Achievement
1998 Big Dipper Coach of the Year – Jaycees Outstanding Young Educator of the Year
2001 - 400 Wins Club – Kentucky Association of Basketball Coaches
2003 Red Bird High School Outstanding Service Award
2003 Three Rivers Conference Coach of the Year
2005 Red Bird School John Bischoff Memorial Award for Outstanding Administration Volunteer

E. Ann Wilson
10893 St. Andrews Drive
Union, KY 41091
(859) 384 8254 – Home
(859) 283 1501 – Work
(859) 802 1401 – Cell

October 6, 2006

OCT 20 2006

Kentucky High School Athletic Association
Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame
Attention: Nominations
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, KY 40505

Dear Nominating Committee:

The enclosed Nomination Form is being submitted for your consideration for induction into the KY High School Athletic Hall of Fame on behalf of John Dee Wilson for the 2006 through 2007 school year.

John Dee Wilson attended Cumberland College at Williamsburg, KY for two years (1956 – 1958) and earned a teaching certificate. He began his teaching and coaching career at Green Hill Elementary in Harlan County in August of 1958. After spending two years at Green Hill, he was hired at Pine Mountain Settlement School (also in Harlan County), a small school, grades K – 10, where he taught and coached for two years. He then returned to Green Hill and after five years, he moved to Loyall Elementary (in Harlan County) where he stayed for seven years. Green Hill and Pine Mountain had never participated in any organized sports programs until John Dee's arrival. Neither school had a gymnasium and had to rely on other county schools' gymnasiums to practice and play their games. While at Pine Mountain, John Dee conducted fundraisers to raise money to construct an outdoor asphalt basketball court to play on, when weather permitted. In 1974 his Loyall 13 to 15 year olds won the Junior Pro Championship title for the State of Kentucky.

At age 36 John Dee was hired head coach at James A. Cawood High School where he worked from 1974 through 1978. During his five years at Cawood, his won/lost record was 110 wins and 38 losses. In 1976 he narrowly missed taking his Cawood Trojans to the Kentucky State High School Tournament, losing to Clay County by one point on a buzzer beater in the championship game of the 13th Region Tournament. In 1978 John Dee moved to Webster County High School in Dixon, KY where he worked for six years before retiring in 1988 at the age of 50 with 30 years coaching and teaching experience. However, he didn't quit. He returned to the mountains to teach and coach at Red Bird High School – a small private Methodist school in Clay County, KY.

In the fall of 2006, John Dee will begin his 19th year at Red Bird and his 49th overall, coaching in the State of Kentucky.

Prior to John Dee's arrival at each school, none had ever been very competitive on the basketball court and each provided a challenge and extreme effort to build a respectable basketball program. Cawood had been operating since 1965 and had never produced a winning record. Webster County was a small rural farming community and competed with the likes of Christian County, Henderson County, Union County and Hopkinsville, all of which were large schools with rich basketball tradition. Red Bird was a "homecoming" for John Dee, and a dream fulfilled in that he had always wanted to teach at a private Christian school after retiring from the public school system.

He has often said: "find a job that you like, and you'll never have to work a day in your life." He has thoroughly enjoyed taking a group of young men, teaching them to play basketball, and most of all, to develop into outstanding citizens: doctors, lawyers, teachers, coaches, engineers and even some outstanding coal miners.

Not only is John Dee a good coach and teacher, he's a wonderful brother, husband, father and grandfather. He is a man of outstanding integrity, good character and good morals. During all his years' coaching, he has yet to be assessed his first technical foul. He has always played by the rules and deserves to be inducted into the Kentucky High School Athletic Hall of Fame.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Wilson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Ann Wilson

P.S. During June, 2002, John Dee starred in ESPN's three-week documentary narrated by Ashley Judd, covering Kentucky High School Basketball. As always, he represented himself, basketball, his school, and the state of Kentucky in a professional, classy manner. Also, he began working on the coaching staff of UK's basketball camp during the summer while Joe Hall was coach, and continued during the tenure of Eddie Sutton, Rick Pitino and Tubby Smith.

Attachments: Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame Nomination Form
 List of Honors & Awards
 Copy of June, 2002 ESPN VCR Tape:
 "Kentucky High School Basketball"
 Copy of 1988 Harlan Daily Enterprise Newspaper Article:
 "John D. Wilson Finds His Way Back Home"
 Six (6) Letters of Recommendation:
 Needham Saylor, High School Coach
 Burton Rogers, Former Director Pine Mountain School
 Mike Howard, Former Player & Student
 Bob Ferguson, Current Principal Red Bird High School
 Rev. Buddy Turner, Family Friend
 Ann Wilson, Nominator
 One (1) 5 x 7 Picture

John D. Wilson Finds His Way Back Home

By JOHN HENSON
Enterprise Sports Editor

Road 2011 to Red Bird High School is not listed on most road maps.

The winding pathway through the hills of Bell and Clay Counties takes a traveler under a canopy of trees and past numerous scenes of natural beauty that is southeastern Kentucky.

John D. Wilson needed no maps or directions to find the tiny, private school. After a 10-year absence Wilson is back home.

From The Sidelines

The Pine Mountain area was where Wilson spent most of his life. For 25 years he coached basketball on the Harlan County side of the mountain.

First at the old Pine Mountain Elementary where he was 20-15, then on to Green Hills where he compiled a 75-25 mark. Loyall Junior High was next and Wilson led his teams to a 160-30 record with seven county championships in eight years.

Then came Cawood High School.

When he got to the 1,000 student school in the fall of 1974, Cawood had never experienced a winning season or made it as far as the district finals in their first eight years of existence.

Cawood finished 15-12 the first season under Wilson. After that came consecutive district championships in 1976, 1977 and 1978. The Trojans lost a heartbreaker to Clay County in the 1976 13th Regional finals in Barbourville.

The 1978 team was perhaps the most promising. The same group Wilson coached to a Junior Pro state championship while at Loyall were now seniors.

Cawood led the regional rankings all season long, but fell to Pineville in the opening round of the tournament in a game that still stands as perhaps the biggest upset in recent 13th Region history.

Nevertheless, Wilson put together a 108-38 record and Cawood had become a winning basketball program. It was the coaching job Wilson had always wanted and thought he would keep until he retired.

That was until 1979 when a political upheaval on the Harlan County School Board cost him his job.

Wilson moved on to Webster County High School in western Kentucky and compiled a 75-83 record in six years.

He had been out of coaching on the high school level for the past three years before making a trip home last spring.

Wilson had retired from teaching, but after talking to school officials at Red Bird, which had just changed from a public to private school, he decided to accept a position as basketball coach and assistant principal.

"I love it here, but I've never been anywhere I don't like," said Wilson. "I needed something to do really and this is a challenge."

"We can have a good basketball team here, but it will take awhile. We have a good freshman class and I told them I would be here at least for their three remaining years," Wilson added.

When the conversation turns to Cawood and the events of a decade ago, Wilson flashes the toothy grin that became one of his trademarks.

"I had a good time at Cawood. There are no bitter feelings. I'm proud of what we accomplished and we left the program in good shape," said Wilson.

One former player that is now a basketball coach himself speaks fondly of his former mentor.

"He made things a whole lot better when he came to Cawood High School," said Everts coach David Parks, a standout guard for Wilson at Loyall and later on the 1976 regional runner-up squad at Cawood.

"You will never find a better man or basketball coach," said Parks. "John D. Wilson is a first class individual. He is responsible for turning the program around at Cawood and he made the game enjoyable."

Wilson now says the Harlan County board may have done him a favor with their move 10 years ago.

Even though Wilson created some of the pressure himself with the success the Trojans began to enjoy, just winning basketball games and having a respectable program was not good enough for some fans. An elusive state tournament berth still teases Cawood just as it did when Wilson was in charge.

Going to the state tournament is not a first priority for the 3-11 Cardinals. Building a solid basketball program with class is and it won't happen overnight in a school with 125 students in high school.

Wilson doesn't seem to let the long odds he faces at Red Bird concern him, because as he speaks the sun shines through his office window as students walk by outside on an unusually beautiful January day.

"The wins will come in time. Right now it's good to be home."

Needham Saylor
106 Saylor Lane
Wallins, KY 40873
606-664-2119

February 14, 2006

Kentucky School Athletic Association
Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame
Attention: Nominations
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, KY 40505

Dear Nominating Committee:


Having coached John D. Wilson in football, basketball and baseball back in 1956 at Loyall High School, I earned the utmost respect for this young man who strived to do his best in all he attempted. Some of the things that stand out vividly in my mind today about John D. Wilson are the fact that he never missed a practice, he thumbed to get rides across rural Pine Mountain for his 25 mile commute to and from practice and events, and he would do anything he could to help me as his coach or his team. He never caused any trouble, always maintaining the integrity of his character and that of the school he represented.

I will never forget John D. Wilson's love for basketball. He was an excellent athlete with a true passion for the sport. He always worked hard and would go the extra mile to succeed.

It is important that I emphasize that I had the greatest of respect for John D. Wilson back when I coached him in the 1950s and now as he is a coach and leader of today's youth. I have continued to follow his career over the years as he led successful programs in Harlan County, Webster County, and for the past 19 years at Red Bird High School. He has devoted his life to teaching and coaching Kentucky's youth.

I am honored to be able to forward this nomination letter to you on behalf of John D. He is most deserving of the honor for induction into the Dawahares/Kentucky High School Athletic Association's Hall of Fame. Please contact me if you have specific questions that I can answer or provide additional insight on the outstanding character, skill and talent of John D. Wilson.

Sincerely,


Needham Saylor

BURTON BRUSH ROGERS
1538 BLUEBIRD LANE
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40503

TELEPHONE
606/278-4886
859

May 12th, 2006

Kentucky High School Athletic Association
Dawahares / KHSAA Hall of Fame
Attention: Nominations
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, KY 40505

At age 97 writing is exceedingly difficult to arrange, but I cannot fail this opportunity to place in your hands my heartiest recommendation of Mr. John D. Wilson for your earnest consideration for the school year 2006-2007.

Mr. Wilson began his career at the Elementary and Junior High School jointly operated by the Pine Mountain Settlement School and the Harlan County Board of Education at Pine Mountain, Kentucky, under the supervision of Berea College.

Mr. Wilson's teaching was of the highest quality and his further voluntary services in physical education and athletics were far above average. His understanding of and work with rural children was remarkably effective.

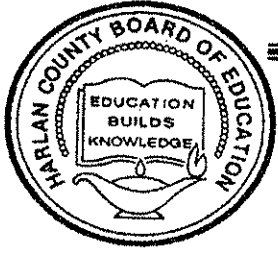
Mr. Wilson fully deserves my highest admiration and respect. I recommend him without reservation.

Sincerely yours,

Burton Brush Rogers

Former Director
Pine Mountain Settlement School, Inc.
1949-1973

bbf/mkr



Timothy W. Saylor, Superintendent

251 Ball Park Road
Harlan, Kentucky 40831-1753
Phone (606) 573-4330
Fax (606) 573-5767

February 6, 2006

Kentucky High School Athletic Association
Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame
Attention: Nominations
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, KY 40505

Dear Nominating Committee:

It is with great pleasure that I encourage your consideration of Mr. John Dee Wilson for induction into the KHSAA Hall of Fame.

Coach Wilson has touched so many lives of youth in our region through the sharing of his wisdom and knowledge that extends well beyond the basketball court. As a player at James A. Cawood High School in 1974-75, Coach Wilson did much more than to prepare his team for the upcoming game. He taught us the importance of being good citizens and always stressed that his players possess high moral character. He has been a perfect role model for me and his many players throughout his career. I would not be the person I am today if it had not been for coach Wilson. He retired from the state of Kentucky in 1988 at age 50 with 30 years in the education profession.

While he has retired from teaching, Coach Wilson continues to coach at Red Bird High School. He has been there for the past 19 years. He worked hard to put himself through college. He has raised an excellent family and now has three grandchildren. His career took him from the most rural of settings, Pine Mountain in Harlan County, to Webster County to Red Bird.

Having played for him early in his career and having followed his career after that time, I believe Coach Wilson is most deserving of induction into the KHSAA Hall of Fame. He has devoted his life to the education and coaching profession.

Sincerely,

T. Michael Howard
Assistant Superintendent
Harlan County Schools



RED BIRD MISSION SCHOOL

"A Witness for Christ in the Heart of Appalachia"

HC 69 Box 710 - Beverly, Kentucky 40913

(606) 598-2416 Fax (606) 598-7314

email: school@rbmission.org

April 18, 2006

Kentucky High School Athletic Association
Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame
Attention: Nominations
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, KY 40505

To Whom It May Concern:

It gives me great pleasure to give a reference for John Dee Wilson to be inducted into the Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame. In fact, when I was looking at the pictures of those in the Hall of Fame at the KHSAA office several weeks ago, I wondered why he was not included in that elite group. He certainly represents what is so good about high school athletics in Kentucky and in the United States.

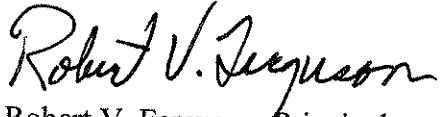
I have been principal at Red Bird Mission School for twelve years and John Dee has been the Athletic Director and Head Boys Basketball Coach here during those years. In fact, he still holds those positions. I certainly appreciate what John has done and is doing for the school and for the male and female students that have participated and are participating in sports here at Red Bird Mission School.

Mr. Wilson always represents our school and high school athletics in a courteous and professional manner. It has been reported to me that he has never received a technical foul in his many years of coaching. This is an outstanding feat for anyone. I was also very proud of the way he represented the school and Eastern Kentucky Basketball when ESPN did a three or four part series on Eastern Kentucky Basketball several years ago. He was shown driving the bus, washing the uniforms, coaching the boys, praying with the boys, and even almost crying when he announced that one of the boys fathers had been released from intensive care.

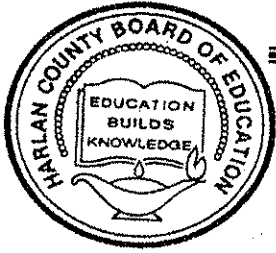
John's entire life has been dedicated to the youth of Kentucky through his many years of teaching and coaching. He is a very skilled coach and has a very fine win/loss record but his greatest achievement is how he has affected the youth he has taught and coached. There is no way to measure the tremendous amount of influence he has had on the youth in Kentucky. I am sure that many lives have been changed for the better because of his dedication and example.

I highly recommend that Mr. John Dee Wilson be inducted into the Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame. I believe that the Hall of Fame will never be complete until Mr. Wilson is part of that elite group. He is a fine Christian man and an example of the very best of Kentucky High School Coaches.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert V. Ferguson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Robert V. Ferguson, Principal
Red Bird Mission School



FEB 16 2006

Timothy W. Saylor, Superintendent

251 Ball Park Road
Harlan, Kentucky 40831-1753
Phone (606) 573-4330
Fax (606) 573-5767

February 6, 2006

Kentucky High School Athletic Association
Dawahares/KHSAA Hall of Fame
Attention: Nominations
2280 Executive Drive
Lexington, KY 40505

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Sincerely,

T. Michael Howard
Assistant Superintendent
Harlan County Schools