

## ***Memories of Dick Eckert, Teacher and Coach***

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Mr. Eckert taught chemistry at WHS for 35 years. He was also head basketball coach for 11 years. I had two years of chemistry with him; possibly I was a bit slow on the uptake. My basketball career never reached his varsity coaching level, ending at the JV stage, where we were required to shoot foul shots underhanded, based on some (unknown, at least to the players) theory that this would improve our probability of success, the results of which, according to memory, remained undetermined.

I remember two basketball experiments initiated by Mr. Eckert.

In the first, we all donned half glasses, which completely blocked our vision below horizontal. The theory was that this would improve our dribbling skills, since we couldn't see the ball while dribbling. I remember a lot of balls flying every which way. For me personally, my dribbling skills remained pretty much unchanged.

In the second experiment, we all donned our snow boots in the gym. Surely you remember those rubber galoshes with the metal clasps that we all wore when it snowed. The theory seemed to be that moving about in these clumsy boots would somehow improve our mobility and dexterity. Alas, after about twenty minutes this experiment was deemed a failure when it was observed that the basketball court was covered with rubber scuff marks, which we players spent the rest of the practice removing with rags on our hands and knees.

On June 8, 2013, Dick Eckert and Marlin Klinger (who passed away March 18, 2017) joined us at our class breakfast. Photos can be seen [here](#).

Success aside, I loved chemistry and I loved basketball. Thanks Mr. Eckert!