

RECEIVED

~~GOVERNMENT BOARD~~ JUN 27 2017  
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RECEIVED

Date: June 23, 2017

To: Dr. Augustine Romero  
Principal  
Pueblo Magnet High School  
Tucson, Arizona

Delivered to Board

JUN 27 2017  
+ Signet

From: Dora Leal Vidal, Class of 1973  
Chair  
"Coach Roland LaVetter Gym" Committee

First, we would like to thank you for taking the time to meet with us in addressing our interest in naming the south gym at Pueblo Magnet High School (aka PHS) after Roland LaVetter. We are asking for your support and guidance in reaching this goal.

While at PHS, Mr. LaVetter served as head coach for both the girls' and boys' basketball teams. He trained, coached, motivated, and led those teams during home games in the south gym. It was his home away from home. During the basketball season, he would spend many hours in that gym helping the players learn the game to obtain many wins for PHS. He also led the boys' varsity basketball teams in back to back state championships during the 1976-77 and 1977-78 years proving to be the best Boys' Varsity Basketball Head Coach in Pueblo High's history. Those of us who attended PHS basketball games during Mr. LaVetter's tenure as coach remember how exciting the basketball seasons were, win or lose.

As a coach and a teacher, Mr. LaVetter was a great mentor for many of his basketball players as well as for his non-player students. He and his wife, Beverly, always kept an open door at their home for any PHS student who needed the comfort of understanding, encouragement, and an occasional stern talk to keep us on the straight path. Due to Mr. LaVetter's influence and encouragement, many of his students and players went on to become exceptional men and women in their personal and professional lives. One of them being Lafayette "Fat" Lever who graduated from PHS, graduated from college, and went on to become a successful professional basketball player here in the United States. In fact, as you know, the west gym at PHS is named after Mr. Lever.

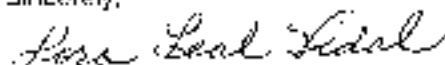
Mr. LaVetter's goal as a teacher, coach, and mentor, was to help in his students' development into successful, well rounded adults that would give back to their communities. One example of his strategy for this goal, was the yearly Canned Food Drive held at PHS. Year after year, under Mr. LaVetter's supervision, the senior class would lead all other classes in obtaining resources to help those less fortunate in the community. Seniors would gather hundreds and hundreds of canned food as well as hundreds of dollars in cash for this well needed drive. It didn't end with the gathering of resources. Mr. LaVetter then would have the seniors deliver the food. This way he ensured the students understood the needs of the community and how giving back is so

important and appreciated. Many of his students, now as adults, continue in this giving back reflecting the lesson well learned from Mr. LaVetter. Something which then reflects a great image for PHS and one PHS can be very proud of. In fact, attached is one, of many Tucson newspaper stories regarding Mr. LaVetter, which shows the love he has for PHS and the community

We strongly believe Roland LaVetter has earned and deserves the south gym to be named in his honor. It would be an acknowledgement on behalf of Pueblo Magnet High School and the community, of a great teacher, a great coach, a great mentor, and a great person reflecting "Si Se Puede" for the students of PHS. Also, be assured there would be no costs to the school or the Tucson Unified School District in naming the gym after Mr. LaVetter as any and all expenses will be covered by donations.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this proposal. We look forward to working with you in this effort. Attached you will also find two of our petitions of those who support the naming of the gym after Mr. LaVetter. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (520) 419-5934 or Mr. Dan Eckstrom at (520) 247-9250.

Sincerely,



Dora Leal Vidal

Cc: Tucson Unified School District Board

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Dr. Mark Stegeman, Clerk

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Assistant Superintendent Secondary Schools





# High Schools

## Pueblo girls are LaVetter's latest stud

By Leighton Glenn  
The Arizona Daily Star

After last season, some people were probably telling Pueblo girls basketball coach Roland LaVetter, "I told you so."

School officials at Pueblo had convinced LaVetter, the boys coach during the 70's, to come out of retirement and take over the girls team last year.

But the prospects for a winning record weren't good. The Warriors had only won two games the previous year, and their experienced players were ineligible.

"Going in, people at the school said, 'We'd love to have you come back, but you don't want to do this,'" LaVetter said. "But I agreed because I love the school and the community. It's like they say, 'You can take the kids out of Pueblo, but you can't take Pueblo out of the kids. To a degree, I'm in that boat.'"

Additionally, the bleak predictions reminded LaVetter of a similar time when he was coaching the boys team.

In 1974, a junior high basketball coach gave LaVetter a pessimistic forecast of his incoming freshman, who were all under 5-foot.

"He said, 'They're five kids, but they're not going anywhere,'" LaVetter said.

That class went on to win back-to-back state titles in 1976-77 and 1977-78, including a 28-0 season in 1977-78. One of those kids even turned out to be a two-time NBA All-Star — Lafayette "Fat" Lever — who Pueblo's gym is named after.

But coaching Pueblo's girls hasn't been as fruitful. LaVetter had his worst season, record-wise, going 0-20 last year. This year's team has been competitive, but has managed only a 1-5 record thus far, entering last night's game against Amphitheater.

However, LaVetter, 52, thinks if you just judge success by wins and losses, you're not seeing the whole picture.

"Ninety-nine percent of the work is done on the practice floor. The important thing is learning to prepare to win. If you just go through life looking just for that win, then your life is over at 15 when you're out of Little League."

"(Last year) the kids really rejected, and they felt they were learning skills about the game and could appreciate working together. That was good in itself. . . . We may have lost games, but they didn't feel like they were losing anything. They felt like winners."

Placing teaching over winning has always been a LaVetter trademark. If you ask his former assistants, they will tell you the same thing.

"I don't think he likes playing the games where there's a winner and a loser," said Bob Cifer, a former assistant coach who took over the Rincon, University boys basketball team in 1989 after LaVetter retired.

"He likes to take players and teach them things they don't know and take them to a level they haven't been. Whether it's boys or girls, it doesn't make a difference."

LaVetter has been a head basketball coach since 1973, when he took the Pueblo job. In 1981, LaVetter moved to Rincon so he could coach his son, Lance. In 1988, he retired from coaching.

Cifer is one of four former assistants of LaVetter's who have gone on to successful high school coaching. The others are Barry O'Rourke of Pueblo, Barry Wilson of Tucson and Tim Demorech of Sabino.

One of LaVetter's former players, Randall Moore, was head coach at Pima and has worked as an assistant at NAU.

Tying over the Pueblo girls program last year isn't the first time LaVetter has coached a girls team. From 1984-87, LaVetter coached Rincon, when the girls season was in the spring.

The Rangers went from one win



Pueblo girls basketball coach Roland LaVetter says he is more concerned with 1

birth in the state playoffs in LaVetter's fourth and final year.

But those were his most difficult years coaching because of events in his personal life.

In 1984, his 23-year-old daughter Tobie Lynn LaVetter died in Prescott from toxic-shock syndrome. Soon after her death, the girls basketball season began.

When the Rangers qualified for

years later, LaVetter chose not to go with his team because of the painful memories of his daughter.

One of LaVetter's changes in coaching the girls is the use of a frequent substitution pattern, rather than a seven- or eight-player rotation, so all his kids are ensured of playing time. Additionally, he won't cut anyone who tries out for the team.

It is LaVetter an impressive coach indeed.

"It's like taking the air with him," says you the coach good person.

"One time

# High Schools

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## LaVetter's latest students of game

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Jim Davis, The Arizona Daily Star

Pueblo girls basketball coach Roland LaVetter says he is more concerned with teaching the game of basketball than wins and losses.

berth to the state playoffs in LaVetter's fourth and final year.

But those were his most difficult years coaching because of events in his personal life.

In 1984, his 22-year-old daughter, Tinsie Lynn LaVetter, died in Prescott from toxic-shock syndrome. Soon after her death, the girls basketball season began.

When the Rangers qualified for the state playoffs in Prescott four

years later, LaVetter chose not to go with his team because of the painful memories of his daughter.

One of LaVetter's changes in coaching the girls is the use of a frequent substitution pattern, rather than a seven- or eight-player rotation, so all his kids are assured of playing time. Additionally, he won't cut anyone who is let out for the team.

This LaVetter's coaching that has left an impression that lasts throughout each individual's life.

"He's like my godfather. Everything I've accomplished has to do with him," Lever said. "He inputs to you the dedication you need to be a good person."

"One time I told him, 'I want to be just like you,' he said, 'Don't set your

goal to be like me. Set it to be better than me.'"

And Lever feels in time, LaVetter will have the same impact on his girls team.

"He gets the most important message out to the girls," Lever said. "They might be losing and struggling, but if they listen to him, and apply it in their lives, then they'll still be winners."