

## **Daise to receive Lifetime Service to Wrestling award from Hall of Fame**

Written by Chris Lee

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“It means a lot to me,” Gene Daise said when asked about being named a recipient of the Lifetime Service to Wrestling award from the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Daise, a longtime Holyoke teacher and wrestling coach, will travel to Colorado Springs and the Crowne Plaza Hotel Saturday, May 12 to receive his award during the National Wrestling Hall of Fame Colorado Chapter 14th Annual Honors Banquet.

Daise, 84, was recognized in Holyoke Monday, March 26 during the high school winter sports awards banquet. Athletic director Kimberlee Bennett read a letter that Daise received earlier this year from the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum informing him of his accomplishment.

Longtime friend Gary Sperber said a few kind words for the man he wrestled for and coached with throughout the years. Following the words, Daise stood on the stage where he was given a standing ovation by those in the crowd and HHS coaches on stage.

Following the recognition, Daise and Sperber took seats on the stage and shook the hands of each wrestler after they received their awards from coaches Jack Garrison, Cutter Garrison and Dusty McConnell.

Daise, who began the Holyoke wrestling program during the 1953-54 school year, has been deeply involved in the sport throughout his life. He wrestled in high school, college and even tried out for the Olympics in 1948.

Daise wrestled in the Old Timers league in Wray for three years where he won a trophy each year.

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