**WILLARD AND DORIS ELDER SCHOLARSHIP**

Dear Scholarship Seeker

This short bio is to give you the framework of who Willard and Doris Elder were and their belief in the importance of an education beyond high school - whether it be a technical or college degree.

Willard and Doris Elder began their college education at Fort Hays State University in the late 1930's. Each came from two different backgrounds. Willard was born in a dugout in Colorado and came to Smith County where his parents farmed and raised a family of six children. Doris was born and raised in Hays, KS along with her sister. Her mother taught school in a one room classroom that included students from kindergarten through eighth grade. Her father was a farmer and builder that helped in the construction of several structures in Hays. He also coached baseball for Hays.

After graduating High School from Woodston, KS, Willard and his brother came to Hays to attend college and play football for books and tuition. Willard and his brother, along with two other football players, found a train box car near the college that became their living quarters-no heat, water, or electricity. Each found a job that contributed to their livelihood. Willard worked for a laundry, and the others held a job with a grocery, a dairy, and a garage. They also worked on the side by cutting sod and planting it on the Hays football field to give a good covering. There is discussion that this may be the origin of the sod that is there today.

Travel to out-of-town games found the players riding in two extended station wagons that had running boards on the side. These vehicles did not hold all of the players and some had to ride on the running boards. Players would take their turn from inside the vehicle to the outside as they traveled to places like Kearney and Chadron, NE.

Willard and Doris married in September of their senior year. Following graduation, Willard began teaching and coaching football and basketball. Doris followed in her mother's footsteps and became an education major in physical education and later speech. She would remain at home with her children until they entered school.

In the meantime, World War II found the family headed to California where Willard served in the Navy. Following the war, they returned to Smith Center. Willard worked on his Master's through the summers and then became a principal. Doris loved teaching and was so proud in recognizing student accomplishments - one of which was her speech student who would become the announcer for the Kansas City Chiefs -Mitch Holthus.

Through the years, the surrounding towns of Smith Center found the Elder family a part of their school systems and their communities. Farming and horses were an important side to their busy life, but sports were always on the forefront. The seasons were referred to as: football, basketball, track, and summer baseball. Their children were involved in all activities of church and school and each went on to receive their college degree.

Willard and Doris Elder would be most honored with your application for scholarship in their name. Education and sacrifice were the framework and their children are honored to continue with the funding.