

# Dennis “Tonto” Rasmussen

1942-2010

Dennis’ legacy means many things “Advocate,” “Athlete,” “Fan” and “Friend” to name a few.

As an advocate, Dennis helped break down stereotypes about people with disabilities in the community with his outgoing, social nature. He was a fixture at Premontre games, Bobcat games, UWGB games, area softball games and always jumped at the chance to attend a Green Bay Packers game. In fact, Green Bay Premontre even gave him a lifetime pass to all its home games.

Dennis worked for the Green Bay Packers in the mailroom during the early 90’s, rubbing elbows with Packers greats. Brett Favre and Reggie White would frequently stop by to say hello and joke with Dennis. The earlier legends also knew him. One day while riding in a car with an ASPIRO staff, they pulled up to a stop light next to Ray Nitschke who rolled down his window to say hi to Dennis.

His love of sports also went beyond being a spectator. Dennis was an athlete. His Special Olympics efforts earned him many ribbons and medals. He even worked as a Recreation Assistant at ASPIRO until his death.

Finally, we remember Dennis for what he meant to ASPIRO and what ASPIRO meant to him. In a 1977 Green Bay Press Gazette article on Dennis, he is quoted talking about then Recreation Director, Steve Daffinson, “I just can’t say enough about Steve,” Rasmussen said nodding toward Daffinson. “If it wasn’t for him, I’d have nothing.” In 2007, Dennis was honored by Rehabilitation for Wisconsin with an Excellence Award for his contributions to ASPIRO.

On the morning he passed way, Dennis spoke with ASPIRO staff, Mark Wescott, telling him he was preparing to come back to ASPIRO. He never did walk through our doors again. He had been a client for 49 years.

We fondly remember and sadly miss you Dennis. You are forever in our hearts.