

Ballfield to be named in honor of longtime coach

■ John Weingart appeared before the Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening to request that the ballfield at Noble Park be named " Paul Rockey Field" in honor of the memory of the longtime American Legion manager and coach.

**(KNZA)--A Hiawatha ballfield will be named in honor of the memory of a longtime coach and community volunteer.**

**John Weingart, speaking on behalf of a group of residents, appeared before the Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening to request that the ballfield at Noble Park be named "Paul Rockey Field."**

**Paul died May 26th at the age of 63.**

**Weingart says Hiawatha baseball was a major part of his life. " Paul spent the last 38 years involved in Hiawatha baseball programs in someway. He started in 1980 by coaching little league baseball and was a member of the youth baseball board for many years. In 1993, Paul became involved in the American Legion baseball program by coaching."**

**Weingart says Paul spearheaded the renovations of Noble Park at its former location, where the Hiawatha Middle School is currently located, and as a result secured a state American Legion tournament in Hiawatha. " The field became an icon among baseball fields in northeast Kansas and area teams wanted to come and play on it."**

**When the park was relocated, Weingart says Paul and several volunteers cut and moved the sod from the old park location to its new location to save the city money.**

**Weingart says the ballpark became Paul's dream. "The hours and labor he spent on this project are almost unbelievable for a volunteer. He actually took Friday's off (from his job) so he could work three full days at the ballpark. He designed equipment for the field and put a lot of his own money into the field."**

**The Commission voted to have a resolution prepared for their approval making the ballfield name change.**

**On hand at the meeting were former players, coaches, Hiawatha American Legion representatives and members of his family.**

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