

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with William (Bill) Wright

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Sports Stories - IHSA* Oral History project

Interview # SIH-A-L-2017-029

William (Bill) Wright, teacher, coach principal and finally superintendent for the Savanna Community School District, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Sports Stories – Illinois High School Association* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: May 10, 2017    Location: United Methodist Church, Savanna, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:40 / 1.67 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on July 24, 2017.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Transcript  
being processed

## Abstract

### Bill Wright, Sports Stories-IHSA, SIH-A-L-2017-029

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** William (Bill) Wright was born in Elkader, Iowa in May, 1943. He played football, basketball, track, and baseball while attending Elkader High School, graduating in 1961. Upon graduation, he served in the Army, and was stationed in Germany during the height of the Cold War, including during the construction the Berlin Wall and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Returning home, Bill attended Upper Iowa University, majoring in history and business, graduating in 1967. He earned a MA in history from the University of Northern Colorado in 1968. He also earned an educational specialist degree at UNC in 1978. Bill spent thirty-six years teaching at Savanna, Illinois High School. While there, he coached wrestling and football (1968-81), served as the assistant principal and athletic director (1981-82), then became the high school principal from 1982 to 2000. He then became the school superintendent from 2000 to 2004. While at Savanna, the school's wrestling team won six state championships. In addition, Bill became involved in the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) working first as a legislative commission member from 1984 to 1993 and then on the IHSA Board of Directors from 1993 to 2000. He also served as the vice president of the Board.

This interview covers Wright's experiences in Savanna as coach, athletic director, principal, and superintendent. He discussed the IHSA from his perspective as a legislative commission member, IHSA board member, and IHSA Vice President for sixteen years. Wright talks about the lengthy process of making by-law changes, and discusses the role of the Legislative Commission, town halls, straw votes, and Board of Directors action. He also discussed the expansion of class championships, championship site locations, adding new activities and sports, adjusting sports seasons, concussion protocols, handicapped sports, non-boundary schools and residency/transfer eligibility.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Illinois High School Association (IHSA); IHSA Legislative Commission; non-boundary multiplier for schools; adding sports and activities to Illinois high schools; determining conference affiliations; process for selecting championship sites;

**Note to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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