

The LaFleur family built two NFL coaches

BY THEO MACKIE
Arizona Republic

In two football offices across America, split by the 1,500 miles that separate Tempe, Arizona, from Green Bay, Wisconsin, there exist identical copies of a poster.

At the center, a football coach is pictured commanding a pep rally sometime in the 1970s, his head shining bald and his face framed by a Fu Manchu mustache befitting the era. Around the edges, index cards depict pieces of the coach's playbook.

When the coach, Bob Barringer, passed away in 2010, BreAnne LaFleur, his granddaughter-in-law, crafted these posters. They now hang in the offices of Matt LaFleur and Mike LaFleur, commemorating the legacy of a man whom Mike recently described as "the rock of our family."

And they explain, to a degree, how Matt and Mike became head coaches of the Green Bay Packers and Arizona Cardinals, five decades after their grandfather patrolled the halls of Loy Norrix High School, back in Kalamazoo, Mich.

As kids, the boys — seven years apart — were raised with football as the backdrop to their childhood.

They watched their dad, Denny, arrive home late at night, after long evenings at the Central Michigan



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Current Cardinals coach Mike LaFleur, left, and Packers coach Matt LaFleur are pictured in their high school football jerseys at their parents' home in Green Bay, Wis.

facility, where he spent decades as an assistant coach. They spent all week looking forward to Saturday afternoons, when they would carry his cords on the sidelines, back when family members were allowed to do that. And they saw the dedication of their mom, Kristi, who balanced the demands of motherhood with the responsibilities of being a teacher and coaching multiple sports at Mt. Pleasant High School.

"When you've got educators as parents, you're gonna work hard," Kristi LaFleur told The Republic. "... And we never really had

to get on them about it. I think they had enough respect for themselves that they wanted to do well."

When the boys were young, Denny and Kristi never pushed them into football. As kids, they alternated football practices with little league baseball and rec soccer games. In high school, fall football rolled into winter basketball, which became spring track.

But really, football was inevitable.

They saw it from their dad and heard the stories from their grandfather, who drove up for every high school game and tried

to do the same in college, even when his health began failing him.

"That's what these boys know," Kristi said. "That your family is always there. They've carried it on, just within themselves."

That effect was more pronounced for Mike. When Matt became the starting quarterback at Mt. Pleasant High, Mike was still in elementary school, the perfect age to view the high school players as heroes. This entrenched football in his own future plans — even if his attempts to infiltrate Matt's friend group came with some brotherly scorn.

"Matt would get irritated with him," Kristi said. "Like, 'Get out of here.' "

"He was a pest," Matt confirmed in a recent press conference.

The age gap, though, never prevented a close relationship between the brothers. Matt, Kristi said, was always "very protective of Mike," even then. And when Mike was a senior in high school, Matt accepted a graduate assistant role at Central Michigan — in part to be in close proximity as his brother followed in his footsteps.

"They're not the same," Denny said. "You don't want them to be. But they had outgoing personalities. They were always doing the right things and had good friends."

When asked what those differences were, even their parents had to do some searching. Eventually, Kristi landed on an answer.

"Mike is always smiling," Kristi said. "He is a really, really happy kid. And Matt, sometimes, would grumble a little bit. But really, to say that there's any (significant differences). No. They came from our family dynamic, and they are a lot alike. Hence, they're doing the same thing."

As they pursued that shared profession, their relationship only grew closer. Even now, with the demands of head coaching schedules, they talk five

times a day, Mike estimates.

Fortunately for all parties, no regular season games are scheduled between the teams until 2027, when Green Bay is set to visit Arizona. That, everyone can acknowledge, will be a tense affair.

"My mom, she rarely watches the games," Matt LaFleur said at his brother's introductory press conference. "She just paces and tries to hide because of the stress. And (Rams general manager Les Snead) said, it's probably a good idea for your mom, between September and January, to move to Europe. So maybe we'll try to find a place for them over there."

Good luck getting Kristi on board. She and Denny have already planned out most of their fall schedule, with flights crisscrossing the country to watch both the Cardinals and Packers in equal measure. Some weeks, they've even managed to fit in two games, taking advantage of Green Bay's appearances on Thursday Night Football.

And, eleven years into retirement, there are no plans to slow down any time soon.

"It's a blessing, I'll tell you," Kristi said. "We certainly are very proud of what they have accomplished. And it happens to be that it's the NFL, but whatever it would've been, you're proud of your kids for putting in the work and being the best person they can be."

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Kentucky Housing Corporation will accept public comments on the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report

August 31, 2026 – September 18, 2026

The draft Kentucky Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) will be available for public review and comment beginning August 31, 2026. The CAPER is prepared by Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC) and the Department for Local Government (DLG) and is submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development. The CAPER details how the state utilized block grant funds allocated for Federal Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026).

Written comments received by September 18, 2026, will be accepted, addressed, and where applicable, incorporated into the document. A summary of comments will be submitted to HUD along with the CAPER on or before September 28, 2026.

The proposed CAPER and related reports will be available for review online at the KHC website at <https://www.kyhousing.org/page/consolidated-and-action-plans-caper>. Please send comments by email to corplan-report@kyhousing.org.

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THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be purchased at Lynn Imaging, 328 Old Vine Street, Lexington, KY 40507, 859-255-1021, www.lynnimaging.com.

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