

**PASSIONS** for God and for hockey motivate a dedicated coach and church volunteer as he works with North Iowa young people

# MARK HICKS

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**W**hen a person decides to give back to his or her community, it's sometimes a challenge to decide just how to do it.

That hasn't been a problem for Mark Hicks.

When it comes to volunteerism, the Mason City resident channels his efforts into two his biggest passions: God and hockey.

Hicks volunteers at Mason City's Praise Community Church, as well as at the North Iowa Ice Arena.

Hicks has given time to youth hockey programs for more than 10 years, serving as coaching director of Mason City Youth Hockey and a non-voting board member.

"I moved here in 1995 and have been somewhat involved in hockey since," Hicks said. "Since 1997, I've been active in coaching and as a coaching director.

"I started coaching when I was 14, helping my dad with my brother's team," Hicks said.

"Then I came here to coach the Huskies and kept coaching. I've always

enjoyed coaching kids and teaching hockey. Hockey and life is where my heart is at."

Hicks credits his ability to give back to his employer, Heartland Asphalt.

"A lot of thanks goes to George Jessen and everyone at Heartland Asphalt who allow me the time to do the things I can," he said.

Hicks also is head coach of the Mason City High School hockey team and a volunteer assistant coach for the North Iowa Outlaws.

**IF THERE** are two things that trump Hicks' love of hockey, they are his love of family and of God.

Along with his wife, Hicks is a leader of his church's middle school youth ministry.

He also serves and has served on various boards and committees.

"The church is a new church, so there's always a lot of things to do," Hicks said. "Many people have stepped up, so I'm just doing my part."

Hicks' part has also been serving as the men's Bible study leader, as well as giving time and energy to groups such as D.A.R.E. and Habitat for Humanity.

"I can't think of another

person in north Iowa who has had a more positive influence on more people and organizations than Mark Hicks," said the man who nominated Hicks for "30 Under 40" honors, Daniel Burgmeier.

"There are many attributes that Mark has displayed that are too numerous to list.

"I think that Mark makes a huge difference in North Iowa and feel he deserves recognition," Burgmeier said.

Through sports and with God's help, Hicks feels he can impact the lives of many, especially the younger generation.

"It's very rewarding working with kids of high school age and younger," he said.

"I can share experiences that I have learned both through hockey and the church.

## MARK HICKS

**Age:** 39

**Family:** Wife Cassie; stepchildren Alex (wife Mandi), Cole and Jennifer (husband Brian). Grandchildren: Xander, Olivia, Dominick and Dane.

**Words to live by:**

"The people who say they can and the people who say they can't are both right." — Charles Capps.

**I am at my best when:**

"I keep God first place in my life."

"Whether working with kids or adults, sports, spirituality and a relationship with God can help you through life."

"Those relationships, whether spiritually or athletically, can help develop and better a person and their life," Hicks said.

"Sports are a great life lesson," Hicks said.

"It mirrors life with all the ups and downs. And a good spiritual background can make those ups and downs easier. I've begun to learn the last couple of years that God can help you do anything that comes in front of you.

"It has kind of changed my coaching style and outlook on life. A good spiritual base and sports can go hand and hand and I feel the two compliment each other very well," Hicks said.

