

SPORTS

GRAVANTI HAS HEART OF GOLD FOR YOUTH CAUSES

By Ed Brown

The sign at 3545 Las Vegas Blvd. North reads: Clark County Motors — and you see the northern portion of the lot filled with used cars. The southern portion takes on a different

setting. It is not what you see at any used car lot anywhere in the country.

There you see a huge outdoor boxing arena — the outgrowth of an idea developed about 5 years ago by auto dealer Tony

Gravanti.

Tony, who hails from the New York-New Jersey area, saw hard times in his youth and often found the "life in the streets" a mecca for street gangs. He had to fight for survival. Tony

survived but "he never forgot from whence he came."

Shortly after arrival in Las Vegas, Tony had the urge to do something for the youth. While heavily involved in his various business interests here, he found time to get involved with the area youth boxing programs. Tony sponsored 4 or 5 kids in the Golden Gloves. From that point, Tony was hooked.

He expanded his youth boxing efforts by setting up a boxing gym at the Moulin Rouge Hotel. It did not take very long for Tony to realize that he had to search for larger facilities. The rest is history for Tony Gravanti with the help of

volunteers, community and civic groups set up a boxing training camp on his used car lot.

More than 300 kids have filed through the boxing program there. He has been ably assisted by Glenn Powell and his group of boxers known as Powell's People. Tony Mara, a "boxing nut," handles a huge group of boxers; namely, 44 amateurs, 82 juniors and 27 pros. He gives help there daily.

Gravanti has also been getting good assistance from L.C. Morgan, Buddy Galtney, Jake Simidian and Bill Beligia.

He has also received strong support from the

North Las Vegas city officials, Optimists Clubs, the Juvenile Department and from the World Boxing Council heavyweight champion Larry Holmes. The overall program is handled through Tony's Veterans Boxing Association.

Everyone associated with the program is very proud of their recent effort during Jerry Lewis' Muscular Dystrophy Telethon. Tony's camp, with the help of Powell's People, Tony Mara's group, some associated with the AAU program and various recreation programs, staged a 24 hour "box-a-thon" as a fundraiser for the (See Gravanti page 23)



TONY GRAVANTI, RIGHT, AND LARRY HOLMES

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Casals Returning For Riv-Buick Tournament

Knee surgery in 1978 put an eclipse on Rosie Casal's bright career for the past two years. She burst onto the scene in 1974 at the age of 16, was ranked among the top five in the United States and has maintained that rating for 11 years.

But, in July of 1978, she underwent knee surgery and has not made a singles finals since. Ranked No. 6 by the WTA in 1976 and 1977, she slipped to No. 11 in 1978 and No. 28

last year. Casals will join a host of other top women tennis players for the \$200,000 Buick-Riviera Women's Tennis Classic Sept. 16-21 at the Riv's courts.

A superb doubles player, she has won eight Grand Slam titles in that event; at Wimbledon in 1967-68, 1970-71, and 1973, and in the US Open in 1976, 1971 and 1974.

Ten times she was ranked No. 1 in the United States in

doubles, eight times with Billie Jean King and once with Chris Evert Lloyd in 1977 and JoAnne Russell in 1978.

On eight other occasions Casals has been a finalist in Grand Slam Tournaments, including the US Open singles in 1970 and 1971.

Casals currently is 12th in winning with \$81,353.

Casals, who lives in Sausalito, Calif. is a distant relative of the renowned cellist Pablo Casals.

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