

Youth baseball alive and well in West Las Vegas

By Lee Brown
Sentinel-Voice

Ricky Towers Sr. knows what it's like to be a winner. The native Las Vegas and 1973 graduate of Clark High School was a member of two football and one baseball state championship teams — memories he will carry with him forever.

But with that in his past, he now hopes to help area youth preserve a few memories of their own through Community Little League.

Now in its fifth year, Community Little League will get its 1998 season underway Friday, April 24th on newly renovated baseball diamonds — thanks in part to the help of Las Vegas City Councilman Gary Reese — at Doolittle Community Center at 6:30 p.m. Games for the 1998 season, which will run through June 10th, will also be played at Charles West Middle School (2050 Saphire Stone Ave.). Doolittle Community Center is located at 1940 N. "J" St. at Lake Mead.

Towers organized volunteers throughout the community to develop a little league program in West Las Vegas after noticing its absence since he had participated in one in the late 1960s — over twenty years ago.

The fact that there were no community leagues in the area when his own children were growing up was added inspiration.

"Five years ago, I and some other concerned volunteers from the community decided it was important to get the program back on track," said Towers, an employee at Caesars Palace. "It was a vision that came to me — being concerned about the youth — and we're just trying to keep them busy and active. That's always a way to deter all the negative that's going on."

His dedication to the program has more than paid off over the years. Having started out with just five teams in its inaugural season, the program has now grown to 28 teams participating in five separate age divisions: T-ball, 5-6 years; Rookie, 7-8 years; Minors, 9-10 years; Majors, 11-12 years; and the Juniors, 13 years. Currently there are over 350 youth participating, with each team having a maximum of 17 players.

"We've grown tremendously in five years, and most of the players are from right here in the community," Towers says proudly.

This season will mark the second year Community Little League has been chartered by the national little league organization, according to the leagues' founder. Being in a chartered program will allow Community Little League teams to participate against other teams from throughout the city, as well to compete regionally in the hopes of making it to the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pa.

"This is our first year competing city-wide," said Towers. "Last year we were basically getting organized and we didn't feel that we were prepared, based on everything we knew we had to do."

"We have all-star teams, and then those teams are selected to play against all the other leagues in town in tournaments," adds Towers. "Then from there you can go as far as you can go, which would be the western regionals, then possibly all the way to Williamsport."

Towers, however, is realistic when speaking on how long and what it will take to make Community Little League a top-notch program.

"It's going to take us ten years, I would say, to really build a strong program where we can really compete nationally," he said. "We can compete now, but in terms of getting the game back to where it should be, it's going to take some time."

To get to that level, Towers says a continued effort to keep its participants interested in the sport will be a must in the years ahead.

"As president of the league, I plan to extend my role to include instructional clinics. "We have, in an organization like this, kids who haven't been around the game in years, and it's important that they learn the fundamentals first, which in turn will help the program overall down the road," he adds. "My main goals are

player development and putting in programs that will help the kids physically and mentally. Help them learn how to deal with people socially, and how to interact with each other — so it's not just baseball."

Down the road, Towers also plans to add some type of educational programming to what they're currently doing. Also working with Towers are Fred Haron, vice president; and Norma Gray, secretary. The League's board of commissioners, which oversee each division, are Eric Jordan, T-ball; Vince Jordan, Rookie; Ike Williams, Minor; and Arthur Banks, Major and Junior commissioner.

Corporate sponsors such as Caesars Palace, the Black Taverns Association, Las Vegas Housing Authority, Jimmy's Market, Anderson Dairy, Rebel Oil and B-Mor Security, to name a few, were partly responsible for the program's success early on, but they are still in search of corporate sponsors for the league. Any business or individual interested in donating time or money to the program can call Ricky Towers Sr. at 390-8867.

"I can see the program really growing to possibly 50 teams in the next couple of years," said Towers. "We're just trying to get prepared for it, and again, player development is the key. With player development we can put out good athletes, good role models and good citizens."

Begin family research with familiar subject: You

By Courtney L. Cannon-Scott
Special to Sentinel-Voice

When beginning their family history research, most people start with their immediate family.

This is good advice, but not the best advice. Start with documenting your life first.

We are the link between past and future. No one else can provide an accurate record of our life or explain what we experience, see, or feel.

And, surely, no one else could ever expect to understand what goes into the decisions we make everyday, from which school to attend, to why we don't eat certain foods or how

we spend free time.

Besides leaving details for our descendants, in documenting our own life, we can also strengthen current family relationships.

As we compile information about ourselves, we can target that information to several individuals and begin establishing a deeper sense of self as well as of family.

There are many unique ways to document the present that will let us share parts of our life with those yet to be born. Most of us have a resume that chronicles our work history. To truly begin the immortalization process,

however, get a [file] box to gather an assortment of items that pertain to your own life.

Examples of the items it could contain: birth certificate, marriage certificate, military registration/discharge papers, a resume, old date books/calendars, letters and greeting cards received and paycheck stubs.

Some of our ancestor's lives were disrupted by challenging events which in many cases have not been documented individually. There is no way

to know what they were thinking at any one time.

We can make sure that never happens again by preserving our own life first and then making a printed record (family tree chart) of where we stand. Finding "the fountain of youth" to preserve one's life can be as simple as maintaining a diary and scrapbook or photo album.

Besides things already mentioned, include vacation itineraries, meal receipts, ticket stubs and legal judgments.

Lyons

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Baptist Convention is that he has taken the largest Black denomination to unprecedented heights.

"For all of its first 117 years, this large organization never operated on a budget," he said. "When I became president, the International headquarters in Nashville was literally empty, with only two employees. We now have 12 employees — a full-time staff — and a full service bookstore."

He said the convention has also contributed more money toward institutions of higher learning, including the American Baptist College. But he said the controversy has hurt the flow of funds that go to various programs and could also affect the more than \$25,000-a-month payroll at the Nashville office, along with other basic operations.

Kendall Wilson writes for the Philadelphia Tribune.

Racism

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white and black communities together.

"Irony of ironies," said Martin, who was pastor to the late Harold Washington, Chicago's first black mayor. "Here are wonderful, God-loving citizens ... and here they are on the front pages of newspapers because their children are involved in this terrible, controversial situation."

Jury selection, scheduled to get underway Monday before Circuit Judge Daniel Locallo, is expected to be a lengthy process. Two separate juries will be in the courtroom to decide the guilt or innocence of Caruso and Jasas. Locallo will decide Kwidzinski's fate, since the defendant declined a jury trial.

Lenard is expected to testify. Although he has said he doesn't remember what happened that night, attorneys say he can recall his long weeks in a rehabilitation hospital and the painful efforts to piece his life together.

"Right now he's trying to cope with the emotional and psychological effects of what has happened," said Dan Kotin, an attorney who will represent Clark if he sues the alleged assailants and their families.

After the attack, Clark and his family moved out of the projects and into a four-bedroom home provided by the city's housing authority. Because of his impaired cognitive skills, he needs round-the-clock supervision, and doctors say he may never make a full recovery from the attack.

"He's going to school and he's at his appropriate grade, but he's in special classes," Kotin said. "He has a brain injury and it affects his ability to perform in school. He's getting around and trying to lead as normal a life, but he needs constant care."

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