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The Lineup



KIWANISMIRACLELEAGUE.ORG VOLUNTEER! CONTRIBUTORS 2011 SEASON Friday, December 9, 2011

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Highlight Reel

2011 Fall Season Ends with Celebration

The fall season for KML included spectacular weather, wonderful buddy experiences (including a visit by the Des Moines Police and Fire Departments), and fun for the kids and volunteers all around. On October 23 over 400 kids and parents attended the Pizza and Trophy Party at Lutheran Church of Hope. After devouring 85 pizzas, the families were treated to a new video, highlighting the experiences of 5 families with children playing in KML. Our Board President, Jan Burch, presented plaques to all the coaches, thanking them for their time and efforts this year. Jordan Anderson was emotional as he was recognized for his final year as a player, but congratulated as he'll be an assistant coach next year for the White Sox. Then the "Voice of KML", Al Knudsen, distributed trophies and certificates to all the kids. Coaches have the trophies and certificates for kids unable to attend the party – so be sure to contact your coach to arrange to pick up your trophy!



Delaney Wetzel sings Take Me Out to the Ballgame



Jordan Anderson is congratulated by Jan Burch



Jordan Anderson is congratulated by White Sox coaches

The Voice of KML — Al Knudsen

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Volunteers' Corner

A Beautiful Day for Baseball by Gavin Jerome, Member, Ankeny Kiwanis

The excitement was in the air. It was unmistakable...palpable, in fact.

And I am not just talking about the buzz of anticipation that usually accompanies Opening Day at any ballpark, not just Kiwanis Miracle League ball park.

It was also Free Maid-Rite Day.

Free Maid-Rite Day alone would send chills down the spine any normal sports fan, but COMBINE the two and you now have an event of "Woodstock" proportions. I took my usual spot behind the concession counter and prepared for the first post-game rush. Players would now have tickets for both food AND drink and it was my job to deliver them smoothly.

Before the Marlins and the Athletics took the field for the National Anthem, our good friend and fellow Kiwanian Jan, mentioned that they were short "buddies" for the first game. In the grand scheme of things, my job as food and drink distribution specialist is miniscule compared to the responsibilities of the "buddies" that accompany the Miracle League players and help them navigate the base paths and gobble up ground balls.

I have to admit that I was apprehensive to say the least about being a "buddy". In the safe confines of the concession stand, I was at ease interacting with both players and parents but I had no experience being around kids with any kind of special needs. When Jan asked for volunteers, I quickly averted my eyes and pretended to be working hard on my concession duties. Luckily, another Kiwanian volunteered and I was safe. For now...

The second game had enough buddies but sure enough, the third game, the Phillies and the Orioles were short as well.

Facing my fears head on, I decided to volunteer to be a buddy. Not knowing what to expect I threw myself into it with gusto. The player I was assigned to was named Terrance, and looking around he was by far the most profoundly disabled on the team.

"You can do this," I told myself with all the false bravado I could muster.

We took the field first and I positioned Terrance at shortstop. We were sure to get lots of excitement at that position and I figured Terrance would have lots of fun. After the second batter, Terrance or "T" as he was called, informed me that he wanted to go sit down. I helped him back to the dugout and he plopped himself on the bench.

I was devastated. My guy didn't want to play. I had failed. I was heartbroken. I managed to talk him into batting and he was second to last in the lineup. I didn't know what to expect but he CLOBBERED the ball and he needed little encouragement from me to take an extra base and stretch that hit into a double. Things were looking up.

He refused to take the field during the top of the second and I sat next to my "designated hitter" not really knowing what to do. He asked me for some water and I was able to call upon my many years of food and drink distribution skills to deftly comply with his wishes. We watched in silence as the Orioles scored a bunch of runs as ground ball after ground ball went to the empty hole that would have been ripe pickings for a shortstop. I was perhaps the biggest loser in the history of buddies anywhere...

He wanted to bat again and his second hit was even better than the first one. He stretched it into a triple and I tried valiantly to keep up as he rounded second and screeched into third.

I made a fist and held it towards him as real ballplayers do. In my giddy enthusiasm I said "Pound it, T!" and he made a fist himself, pounding his knuckles into mine in the universal gesture that has replaced the handshake for his generation.

The game complete, we all converged on the pitcher's mound for the final cheer. We were almost there when I felt "T" throw his arms around me. In what was maybe only the third time he spoke all morning he said, "I love you..." Unsure of what to say at first, I hugged back.



"Love you too...I am proud of you..." was all I could get out.

We said our cheer and walked back to the dugout still hugging.

Not really knowing how to say goodbye, I just left with another, "Pound it, T!" which he enthusiastically did. He was embraced in a huge bear hug by his dad and the rest of T's entourage that were cheering loudly for him. As I turned quickly to leave, I must have picked up something in my eye or maybe they watered because of all the excitement in the air.

It being Free Maid-Rite Day and all...



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Des Moines' Best Coupon Book is available
at all Des Moines Area Hy-Vee and Hy-Vee Drugstores

100% of the proceeds will benefit
The Kiwanis Miracle League



**Hy-Vee has selected the Kiwanis Miracle League
for 100% of the proceeds from its sale of Des Moines Coupon Books.
The books are filled with area coupons for restaurants and activities (and \$20 of Hy-Vee
coupons). Pick one up at your Hy-Vee Today!**

Players' Corner

A Thank You Note for the Trophy Party by Nadine Kastner

Ian had been talking about his sports banquet since I signed up over two weeks ago.

He has been attending similar events for his brother for years, and was so excited to go to his own celebration.

From the team and individual photos you shoot at the beginning of each season... to the award and certificate at the end of the season, Kiwanis clearly understands the importance of acknowledging these kids participation in the program. I know this is a tremendous undertaking and I wanted you to know how much it is appreciated by the kids and the parents.

And thank you for asking us to participate in the video. As a mother, I was so proud of Ian and all of the kids. They did a great job and the videographer did such a beautiful job putting it all together.

Enjoy some well earned time off from baseball... And see you in the spring!

Thanks again,
Nadine Kastner



Ian and his Mets teammates on Opening Day with the Urbandale Girls softball team.

SPECIAL THANKS Go to a Very Special KML Friend - BOB EGR

We can't let another day go by without publicly thanking Bob Egr, USSSA/Central Iowa Sports, for his contribution to the KML. Bob not only provided, but also constructed, ALL of our 2011 trophies and plaques. We know that each and every player loves to receive a plaque and certificate at the end of the season, and, thanks to our good friend Bob, we can give each of our players a truly beautiful trophy. Bob also made the recognition plaques for all of our coaches and assistant coaches, as well as our 2011 board members. THANK YOU, BOB!





Board President Jan Burch presented our ML Coaches with plaques commemorating their work this season

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Board Report

Annual Meeting, New Directors

The Board held its Annual Meeting in November, and elected the following new Directors:

- Rob Baldus – coach of the Twins, (Isaac's Dad)
- Will Sales – coach of the Brewers, (William's Dad)
- Becky Gruening – member of the Downtown Kiwanis Club
- Kerry Walter – Ashby – member of the Ankeny Kiwanis Club

Thanks to these departing board members for all their support and hard work over the last several years:

- Melinda Berte – member of the Downtown Kiwanis Club
- Bob Dunaway – member of the Merle Hay / Urbandale Kiwanis Club
- Melissa Clarke – Wharff – Jack Clarke's Mom (Phillies)
- John Keck – member of the Downtown Kiwanis Club



Members of the 2011 KML Board posed with commemorative plaques are: (back row) Daryl Pietersen, Ron Peterson, John Keck, Russ Bitterman, Steve Scott, Pete Hamlin; (front row) Bob Mitchell, Evan Swanson, Joyce Byrne, Ron Heggen, Jan Burch, Carol Stone (Not pictured – Melinda Berte, Bob Dunaway, Bill Keck, Tom Pflanz, Melissa Clark-Wharff)

Special Thanks

We want to recognize and give a special thanks to retiring director John Keck, a long-time member of the Downtown Kiwanis Club and Kiwanis Miracle League Board member from the very first meeting. John was instrumental in obtaining the wonderful location for the Miracle League Field through his contacts with the Iowa Cubs, and his help was invaluable in our capital fund-raising efforts. John has been a guiding force in the development of the project from the beginning. His support on behalf of the Kiwanis Miracle League is appreciated by all involved. John says he hopes to continue to stay involved with the Miracle League as much as possible. THANKS JOHN!



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Upcoming Events

Spring Season

Can you believe we're already planning for spring? Player committee chair, Joyce Byrne, has tentatively scheduled the following dates – be sure to put them on your calendar:

Registration Clinics at Westminster Presbyterian Church 9:30 – 11 AM, 4114 Allison, Des Moines, IA:

- February 18
- March 17
- April 21

Opening Day: May 12, 2012

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Memorials

Memorials Received

Many of our KML Friends are donating to the Kiwanis Miracle League in the name of their friends and loved ones. This spring, we were saddened to learn of the death of William Sales. The family expressed its wishes that memorial contributions be made to the KML in his name. Contributions received **IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM SALES, father of Will Sales, coach of the Brewers, and grandfather of William Sales, Brewers player, include:**

Barwick, Betty
 Bray, Charles
 Buchanan, Andrea
 Campbell, Victoria
 Chenoweth, Michelle
 Cooper, Donna
 Crawford, Carmela
 Gilbride, Dwight
 Gioffredi, Delores
 Graham, Katherine
 Heaberlin, Pam
 Hewitt, Ronnie
 Holmes, Carolina
 Hunter, Mary
 Huntsinger, Joey
 Hurwitz, Marilyn
 Johnson, Chad
 Lancaster, M. Carol
 Larson, Gary
 Lathrum, Judith

Lehenbauer, Denise
 Lugar, Daniel
 Lundgren, Kirsten
 McCann, Julie
 McCoid, Judie
 Miller, Alice
 Mueller-Yurgae Associates, Inc.
 Mulvihill, Josetta
 Payton, Rick
 Penix, Gary
 Peno, Tommy
 Rubschlagel, Joan
 Sales, Annette
 Sartori
 Stockdale, Michael
 Stoffer, Dick
 Tetmeyer, M.T.
 Tolpingrud, Alton
 Waldschmidt, Adam
 White, William

Additionally, his company, "Lomar Distributing" has contributed a granite paver in his name. This paver will be placed in our KML memorial garden prior to start of the spring 2012 season.

Should you wish to designate contributions in memory of a loved one or make other types of contributions to the Kiwanis Miracle League, please contact any of our board members.

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Kiwanis



 Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute
Class of 2007-2008

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[Forward-to-a-Friend](#)

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