



# DIAMOND LEGACY



Spring/Summer 2025

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# BABE RUTH LEAGUE

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# MESSAGE FROM ALUMNI CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER JAMES WAGONER



As Chief Executive Officer of the Alumni Association, I look forward to working with you and for you as we write the next chapter for Babe Ruth League, Inc.

The Babe Ruth League Alumni have such a sense of purpose and dedication. We have a solid and supportive network of selfless members, graduates, volunteers, and friends of the program. Great things have happened and will continue to occur because of these unique individuals who support Babe Ruth League, Inc. and the Alumni Association. We can never thank you enough for your time, resources, and contributions.

We are thoroughly enjoying the 2025 season. It is a year of growth and positive change – as individuals and as a community.

We are truly changing the world...one child at a time.

I invite all of you to join us on our journey with a winning agenda of excellence for all Babe Ruth League participants – past, present, and future.

Make the trip with us by becoming involved with the Alumni Association.

# DRIVING ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

The Babe Ruth League Alumni Association is a cornerstone of one of the world's leading youth baseball and softball programs. Deeply committed, our focus is vital to enhance the relevancy of Babe Ruth League to the world.



The community young athletes build in Babe Ruth League is an unforgettable, life-changing, and valuable experience that most want to sustain for a lifetime. We take satisfaction from our efforts, perseverance, mental strength, and judgment in everything we achieve. And, we learn to acknowledge the contributions of others upon whose shoulders we stand. The people who worked with us to reach significant goals taught us many valuable life lessons and provided many enjoyable moments.

Babe Ruth League Alumni appreciate the life-long community built during their days on the diamond. However, life can move fast, and sometimes, it is hard to keep in touch with those individuals who have played a significant role in your life.

The Alumni Association believes we can keep the Babe Ruth League experience alive among ourselves and other alumni, current members, and future participants in the Babe Ruth League program.

We put kids first! We are committed to our mission and believe in our vision. We are forward-focused and seek out diversity. We set the example, and we build excellence.

We aim to strengthen lifelong bonds for everyone in the Babe Ruth League—Past, Present, and Future! Alumni are permanent members of the Babe Ruth League family. They are the torchbearers of the Babe Ruth League spirit and guardians of its future.

# Blast from the Past



Varina (Henrico County), Virginia, served as the site of the 2006 Babe Ruth Softball 12U World Series, and they were chosen to host the 2010 Babe Ruth Softball 16U World Series.

The tournament was played at Dorey Park. The well-maintained facilities cater to a range of interests, from baseball and softball to horseback riding.

Varina is a community that measures its history back beyond the very birth of America. Native Americans are believed to have inhabited the lands of Henrico for as long as 10,000 years. One of the three villages that Indian Chief Powhatan – the father of Pocahontas – called home, the village of Powhatan, was located on a hill opposite three islands just below the falls of the James River. Today, Henrico's 300,000+ residents live in a well-planned community of 245 square miles consisting of beautiful residential communities, large expanses of fertile farmland, and carefully developed office, retail, and diversified industrial areas. More than 20,000 businesses call Henrico County home – four are Fortune 500 companies.



# Blast from the Past



The Garfield, New Jersey Babe Ruth League celebrated 50 Years in 2010 during their Official Opening Ceremonies. Pictured above left to right are: Fred Messina, Vice President; Ralph Errico, Northern New Jersey State Commissioner (who now serves as Middle Atlantic Regional Commissioner); Dan Tummillo and Mike Onischuk, Anniversary Committee.



# Blast from the Past



1987—"MARRIED AT HOME" - There's home and then there's home, as in home plate. Debra Cantu of Griffith, Indiana, and Harold Ickles of Gary, Indiana, tied the knot at the Griffith Babe Ruth Field prior to the start of tournament play.



1968  
World Series Banquet  
Klamath Falls, Oregon



# Blast from the Past



Roy Thompson, Assistant State Commissioner in Kentucky, congratulates Bo Bobbit who slammed three home runs in a single game during the 1978 State Tournament, a new record. Roy also received an award as Citizen of the Week by the local Chamber of Commerce.



FIRST NEW YORK STATE CHAMPS—Members of the Chautauqua County, New York Championship Babe Ruth Softball Team are (front row, l-r) Cindy Shrocongost, Leslie Bechtel, Cindy Wissman, Darcel Desnerck, Amy Norris, Nicole Piazza; (second row, l-r) Ellen Brooker, Wendy Tilyou, Danna Fox, Betty Rossow, Rae Ann Hemeger, Karen Walters, Kristen Trudnowski; (back row, l-r) Coach Scott Salemme, Coach Norma Norris, and Manager Gene Hulings.

**BABE RUTH LEAGUE**



**A STEPPING STONE**

Former Baltimore Orioles pitcher Scott McGregor (center) with 1969 Babe Ruth World Series Champion El Segundo teammates (from left) Ed Carroll, Steve Curtis, Stewart Swiggum, and Jeff Tidwell. Photo Courtesy of DAVE SELVIG

## **Former Major Leaguer McGregor Remembers Babe Ruth Experience Fondly**

***Reprint from The Bismarck Tribune Newspaper—August 9, 2019***

*The Bismarck Tribune is a daily newspaper in Bismarck, North Dakota. Owned by Lee Enterprises, it is the only daily newspaper for south-central and southwest North Dakota.*

Former Baltimore Orioles pitcher Scott McGregor hasn't lost his love of the game or his memories of winning the Babe Ruth 13-15 World Series a half-century ago.

McGregor was one of five members of the 1969 El Segundo, California, Babe Ruth team at Bismarck Municipal Ballpark to throw out the first pitch of the 2019 Babe Ruth World Series.

"It was a lifetime of memories," said right fielder Stewart Swiggum. "We knew we had a good team and we had a lot of fun. We look back at that for a lot of humorous things that happened."

It's always fun when teams are winning and El Segundo won a lot. It won Babe Ruth titles in 1964, 1969, 1974, and 2002.

The 1969 team survived a challenge by a talented Hawaiian team in the region to reach the World Series in Mattoon, Illinois. Once there, it was all El Segundo. With McGregor and Ed Carroll tossing two shutouts apiece, the team marched to the title.

"We came out of California and our stiffest competition was out in California," McGregor recalled. "But Hawaii scared the heck out of us. In the region, it was like 11-10. They were wailing on me. We were 15 and it was like we were throwing to 20-year-olds. But we got through there. Once we got to Mattoon, we cruised from there."



"Nobody scored on us. We had the best pitchers in America," third baseman Steve Curtis said. "They were throwing 90 miles an hour with great control."

"We fell asleep out there (in the field)," Stewart added. Center fielder Jeff Tidwell recalls the scores of 2-0, 1-0, 5-0 and 2-0. "We played 17 games from start to finish," Tidwell said. "We had shutouts in 11 of the 17 games. Scott had 30 strikeouts in two World Series games and Ed had 25 strikeouts in two games."

Another highlight was Swiggum's two triples in one game. "I got a triple to drive Scott in in the fifth and in the seventh got another and drove him in again," Swiggum recalled. "Our team could beat these guys," Tidwell interjected.

Carroll's baseball career reached as high as Triple-A for the Los Angeles Dodgers before arm and ankle injuries forced him out of the game.

McGregor ultimately reached the major leagues and stayed there for 13 years between 1976 and 1988. He won 138 games, including 20 games in 1980. He won at least 13 games each year between 1978 and 1985. In his career, he appeared in 356 games -- 309 as a starter -- and threw 83 complete games and 23 shutouts.

The bond formed with the players in El Segundo was evident the day McGregor beat the Anaheim Angels to earn a berth in the 1979 World Series. There in the stands making sure he saw them were his teammates from El Segundo -- all but Carroll, who was with the Milwaukee Brewers Winter League team.

It's one of McGregor's career highlights. "Pitching a shutout to win the World Series was great," McGregor said. "But in 79, I pitched a shutout in Anaheim to go to the World Series and all these guys were there. It was a Saturday and we were up two games to one. If we don't win that game, we're facing Nolan Ryan in the twilight the next day and that's not good. I walked out to warm up, everybody was there and I thought this was more pressure than the game. I saw everybody."

All five said baseball in El Segundo played a prominent role in their lives, from Babe Ruth and every level after. "We did this in 99 for the 30-year reunion back in Mattoon where we won it. Five of us showed up then," Tidwell said. "We have three other starters that are deceased and one other had a prior commitment."

"We came up in an unbelievable baseball era in southern California," McGregor noted. "Our high school coach won a thousand games and we had the Bretts (George and Ken). My whole professional career was played against kids I played with in Babe Ruth and high school. "I was 15 and pitched a game and an Astros scout came up and gave me a card."

"The Babe Ruth World Series was a springboard for all of us," Tidwell said. "We won a state championship in high school in 1971. The sportswriters of California named that the third-best team ever in California. That team had George Brett on it."

Coming back for another Babe Ruth World Series is another lasting memory for McGregor, who lives in Sarasota and has worked in the Gulf Coast League, Class A, Class AA, and some Major League Baseball.

"You love it," he said. "I came out of high school and went right into it. You know it well and you know how to teach kids and what they're going through."

It was a life forged in El Segundo. In 1969 the team was playing in Elko, fans in El Segundo filled the stands at the local diamond and had youth players moving around the field with everything that was on the radio. "The town was there," Tidwell said. "The community support was amazing."



## **GRACE PAGLIONE ELECTED TO BABE RUTH LEAGUE, INC. INTERNATIONAL HALL OF FAME**

During their annual meeting, the Babe Ruth League International Board of Directors elected Grace Paglione of Ewing, New Jersey, into its Hall of Fame.

Grace began her professional career with Babe Ruth League, Inc. in November of 1980, working as an Assistant to the late Jeanne B. Layton, who was serving as Vice President then. Working with Jeanne, Grace gained a vast knowledge of the Babe Ruth League program and its administration.

A few years later, Grace assumed a new role, assisting with the promotional products and materials offered to affiliated league programs. In this position, Grace typically had managerial tasks, including reviewing, verifying, and processing purchase requisitions; maintaining records and files related to purchasing activities; assisting with equipment, supply, and inventory management; and providing additional assistance to the Executive Staff.

In 1990, Grace was asked to serve as one of the Babe Ruth Headquarters Service Representatives, a position she gladly accepted and held until her retirement in 2020. As a Service Representative, she worked directly with the leagues, commissioners, and all other volunteers, providing them with the best information, resources, and services available. Her dedication as a Service Representative has enabled Babe Ruth League to maintain its recognition and respect as one of the most successful youth baseball and softball sports organizations.



Throughout her career, Grace Paglione demonstrated integrity and an enduring commitment to Babe Ruth League, Inc. She rarely used her annual vacation and sick time. She was not a nine-to-five employee, as on many occasions, her workday would continue at home after the office closed.

Her time with Babe Ruth League, Inc., has assisted the organization in enriching the lives of thousands of children worldwide. The value of her contributions to the program is immeasurable, her character unsullied, and her merit unquestioned.





# Spotlight on Alumni

*Babe Ruth League Graduates are Major League Baseball's Brightest Stars*

Babe Ruth League Alumni have made their mark all over the world. We are honored to celebrate the following alumni who achieved great success in 2024.

## C.C. SABATHIA

Congratulations to Vallejo, California, Babe Ruth League alum Carsten Charles (CC) Sabathia on achieving one of baseball's greatest honors—induction into the Hall of Fame! CC wasn't just a force on the mound but a dedicated supporter of Babe Ruth League for many years. We're proud to count him among our legendary alumni!

Cleveland selected Sabathia in the first round of the 1998 MLB Draft when he was just 17 years old. He debuted in the major leagues as a 20-year-old phenom and quickly evolved into an All-Star and Cy Young Award winner before becoming the ace of a World Series winner.



Along the way, Sabathia carved out a legacy as one of the most durable and effective left-handed starters the game has ever seen. Sabathia's 3,093 strikeouts ranked 16th on the all-time list at his retirement, and he was just the third left-hander to join the 3,000-strikeout club. He retired as one of only five pitchers with at least 250 wins, 3,000 strikeouts and a .600 winning percentage. In 26 postseason games, Sabathia was 10-7 with 121 strikeouts in 130.1 innings.

## MOOKIE BETTS

Los Angeles Dodger (outfielder, shortstop, and second baseman) **Mookie Betts**, a Babe Ruth League graduate from Nashville, Tennessee, was named outfielder to the 2024 All-MLB First Team. This was his fifth All-MLB selection and his third consecutive First-Team selection. The versatile superstar shifted to shortstop to begin the season before moving back to right field for the eventual World Series champion Dodgers. Through it all, he slashed .289/.372/.491 (.863 OPS) with 19 home runs, 75 RBIs, and 16 stolen bases.





# Spotlight on Alumni



*Babe Ruth League Graduates are Major League Baseball's Brightest Stars*



Betts also won the 2024 National League Silver Slugger Award for utility player. This was his seventh Silver Slugger Award and his fourth with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Betts is an eight-time All-Star, a six-time Gold Glove Award recipient, a three-time World Series champion, and was named the Most Valuable Player in the American League in 2018. He is also second in Wins Above Replacement (WAR) among active position players, behind Babe Ruth League graduate Mike Trout.

## CHRIS SALES

2024 was also a magical season for another Babe Ruth Alumnus, **Christopher Allen Sale**, a Babe Ruth League graduate from Lakeland, Florida. Sale is a pitcher for the Atlanta Braves. He previously played for the Chicago White Sox and the Boston Red Sox.

Chris Sale is the first pitcher ever to have five top-five finishes in Cy Young voting before winning the award for the first time. He's also just the sixth pitcher to win the award for the first time after turning 35.

Sale, who led National League pitchers in victories (18-3 record) is the ninth "triple crown" winner in the league to capture the Cy Young Award. He led the National League in wins, strikeouts, and earned run average in his first season with Atlanta.

Sales was also selected to the 2024 All-MLB First Team, won his first Gold Glove Award, and was named the NL Comeback Player of the Year.



# Spotlight on Alumni

*Babe Ruth League Graduates are Major League Baseball's Brightest Stars*

## CORBIN BURNES

**Corbin Burnes**, a Babe Ruth League graduate from Bakersfield, California, is a pitcher for the Arizona Diamondbacks. He previously played for the Milwaukee Brewers and Baltimore Orioles.

Burnes was selected by the Brewers in the fourth round of the 2016 MLB draft and made his MLB debut with them in 2018. He is a four-time All-Star and won the National League (NL) Cy Young Award in 2021, after leading the NL in ERA. He led the NL in strikeouts in 2022.

The 30-year-old right-hander was recognized for his strong 2024 campaign with the Orioles when Burnes was named to the 2024 All-MLB First Team.



## MICHAEL KING



**Michael King**, a Babe Ruth League graduate from Providence, Rhode Island, is a pitcher for the San Diego Padres. He previously played for the New York Yankees, making his MLB debut in 2019.

King was named to the 2024 All-MLB Second Team after his first full season as a starter for the Padres. He had a 2.95 ERA in 31 appearances, including 30 starts. King also struck out 201

batters in 173 2/3 innings. He was considered one of the top pitchers in baseball in 2024.



# Spotlight on Alumni

*Babe Ruth League Graduates are Major League Baseball's Brightest Stars*

## CHRISTIAN WALKER

While playing for the Arizona Diamondbacks, **Christian Walker** won the 2024 Gold Glove Award for first base. This was the third consecutive season that Walker won the award. He also won the 2024 Heart and Hustle Award.

Walker is a Babe Ruth League graduate from Norristown, Pennsylvania. He played in 130 games for the Diamondbacks in 2024, batting .251/.335/.468 with 26 home runs and 84 RBIs.

Walker's 13 outs above average were the most among National League first basemen. He is considered one of the best defensive first basemen in the majors.

On December 23, 2024, Walker signed a three-year contract with the Houston Astros. He previously played for the Baltimore Orioles before joining the Arizona Diamondbacks. Walker helped the Diamondbacks win the National League pennant in 2023.



# Spotlight on Alumni



*Babe Ruth League Graduates are Major League Baseball's Brightest Stars*



## STEPHEN VOGT

A winning record in his first managerial season wasn't enough. An American League Central title wasn't enough. A run to the AL Championship Series wasn't enough. Stephen Vogt, a Babe Ruth League graduate from Visalia, California, also had to make history. Stephen Vogt was named the 2024 American League Manager of the Year by the Baseball Writers' Association of America. This was Vogt's first season managing the Cleveland Guardians.



Vogt was selected by the Tampa Bay Rays in the 12<sup>th</sup> round of the 2007 MLB draft. He played for the Tampa Bay Rays, Oakland Athletics, Milwaukee Brewers, San Francisco Giants, Arizona Diamondbacks, and the Atlanta Braves. He was an MLB All-Star with the Athletics in 2015 and 2016. The two-time All-Star catcher hung 'em up in 2022, worked as a bullpen coach for the 2023 season and then took on manager duties.

Vogt played college baseball at Azusa Pacific University, where he was a two-time All-American selection and set multiple school records. He spent six years in the minor leagues in Tampa Bay and was named the franchise's Minor League Player of the Year in 2011, before debuting with the Rays in 2012 at age 27.

Vogt participated in both baseball and basketball, joined the Associated Student Body, sung in choir, played trumpet and baritone horn through his sophomore year of high school, and participated in plays and musicals all throughout high school. He also performed in church musicals since his youth, and dreamed of performing on Broadway if he could not have a baseball career.

This is the fastest any skipper has gone from player to Manager of the Year. At 39 years old, just 397 days after finishing his playing career, Vogt became the fifth-youngest Manager of the Year winner.

# Spotlight on Alumni

*Babe Ruth League Graduates are Major League Baseball's Brightest Stars*

## PAT MURPHY



Pat Murphy was named the 2024 National League Manager of the Year for leading the Milwaukee Brewers to an NL Central title, despite significant injury troubles and starting pitching woes. Murphy is a Babe Ruth League graduate from Chandler, Arizona, and the first Brewers manager to win the award. The first-year manager guided the Brewers to a 93-69 record, winning the NL

Central division. The Brewers tied with the Padres for the fourth-best record in the Major Leagues. Murphy spent eight seasons (2016-23) as bench coach with the Brewers before becoming manager. Before joining Milwaukee, Murphy served as interim manager of the Padres in 2015. In addition to his Major League experience, Murphy managed in the Padres farm system, in Class-A Eugene, Triple-A Tucson, and Triple-A El Paso.

Murphy has also had a distinguished career in the college coaching ranks, spending 25 years as a head coach at Maryville College, one year at Claremont-Mudd-Scripps College, six years at the University of Notre Dame, and 14 years at Arizona State University. He went 1,000-457-4 as a college coach and was on pace to become the winningest coach in NCAA history at the time he transitioned into professional coaching.

Murphy attended Florida Atlantic University (FAU) and played college baseball for the Florida Atlantic Owls as a catcher, infielder, and pitcher. He was honored on FAU's 20th Anniversary Team as a pitcher and utility player, and in 2008 was inducted into the school's Baseball Hall of Fame. Murphy signed a professional baseball contract with the San Francisco Giants in 1982 and played four years in the minor leagues for the Giants, San Diego Padres, and two independent teams.



# Babe Ruth League HISTORY



Southern New Jersey State Commissioner, Paul Sobolewski (left), District 6 Commissioner Ken Fagan (Center), and Ron Steinbrunner, Pemberton PAL Commissioner are shown following the meeting which designated Pemberton, New Jersey, as the first area in the country to have a Babe Ruth league in the 9-12 age group.

## ***From the March 1981 BABE RUTH BULLPEN NEWSPAPER***

Pemberton Township, New Jersey, has become the first sanctioned 9-12-year-old Babe Ruth area in the country. Ron Steinbrunner, the Commissioner of the Pemberton PAL 8-12 league for six years, was excited about the event as he received the first charter issued by the National Babe Ruth organization in their new 9-12 division.

"The kids never had any place to go after the season ended," he remarked. "This is the best thing to happen to them. What we are planning for is to develop this year and make the District 6 playoffs, and then compete in the State Tournament."

The charter will enable this age group to compete in Babe Ruth tournaments. Steinbrunner feels that the league will be a big success and that the 9-12 tournament will grow into a huge national World Series.

This was the beginning of the Babe Ruth Bambino Division, now known as Cal Ripken Baseball, a division of Babe Ruth League, Inc.

# Babe Ruth League HISTORY

## **Mildred Ward Calvert County, Maryland Babe Ruth League**



### ***From the January 1971 BABE RUTH BULLPEN NEWSPAPER***

They say baseball is no place for a woman. Don't tell Mrs. Mildred Ward that. She won't buy it. Baseball is an important way of life for Mrs. Ward, one of a select few women serving as President of a Babe Ruth League.

Mrs. Ward, who is employed by the Calvert County, Maryland Hospital, is the League President of the Calvert County Babe Ruth League. "Whether she is at home or at work, there is hardly a time that baseball leaves her mind," says Peter Grover, Vice President of the Calvert County Babe Ruth League.

Few people know the many, often lonely, hours Mrs. Ward spends with baseball. For her, the Calvert County Babe Ruth League Presidency is a year-round job. She has almost single-handedly kept Babe Ruth Baseball alive in Calvert County. And now her long, laborious work hours are finally beginning to bear fruit. Where in the past years, she was lucky to have two managers at a meeting, the last meeting she held had more than 20 interested persons available.

In addition to being League President, the mother of three boys (all graduates of the Babe Ruth program), Mrs. Ward also has acted as League Treasurer, raising most of the money needed to operate the league.

The Bowen, Maryland resident served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Calvert County Babe Ruth League before assuming the presidency. She has faithfully attended all the Maryland State Tournaments over the past nine years and all Maryland State Meetings since becoming President. Mrs. Ward has received very little recognition for all her work. "Of course," Grover said, "this is not her motive. Her interest, at whatever the personal cost must be, has been the welfare of the youth. Despite some devastating odds, she has stuck with it."

Who said baseball's no place for a woman?

# Babe Ruth League HISTORY



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 3, 1963

The annual Babe Ruth League World Series is a significant event on the sports calendar. As the culmination of weeks of spirited competition among thousands of boys from many countries, it does much to inspire physical excellence, good sportsmanship and better understanding among nations. You have my personal congratulations and best wishes.

  
John F. Kennedy



# Babe Ruth League HISTORY



MRS. JOHN LINDSAY  
JUNE LOCKHART, TV AND MOVIE STAR  
HONORARY NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

## *June Lockhart Heads Auxiliary*

The Babe Ruth League Ladies' Auxiliary, composed of mothers, sisters, aunts and other interested women, acts as a tie between the family and the local Babe Ruth League.

This group assists the Babe Ruth League to support and promote an understanding of the Babe Ruth League's aims and ideals to the community. It also acts as a stimulant to parents to participate in and aid the local Babe Ruth League.

The Auxiliary program is supervised by the parent Babe Ruth League's elected officers. The Auxiliary works as a committee of the local Babe Ruth League to serve in various capacities when required by the local league.

For further details about the Auxiliary, write to Babe Ruth League Headquarters, Trenton, N. J.

## ***From Home Plate***



## **ROOKIE LEAGUE**

We challenge you to do everything you can to keep baseball and softball SAFE and FUN for our players. Remember that we need you to help us: Take the great game that our pro athletes model daily and make it as action-packed and exciting for our players.

Although the adults who help organize youth baseball and softball have the best intentions, they need to be aware that there is a better way for young children to learn and enjoy the game.

In 1987, Babe Ruth League, in conjunction with Major League Baseball, initiated a program called THE ROOKIE LEAGUE. Designed primarily for ballplayers ages 7-8, this division makes use of a pitching machine to allow for more hittable balls at the plate and more action in the field. Fear of actually being hit by a pitched ball is diminished. It makes the game safer and improves the playing confidence and ability of all participants.

The concept seemed foreign at first, but thousands of young children nationwide have experienced the excitement of hitting strikes, fielding grounders, and throwing out runners because of this innovative program.

And more cities and towns have caught on. It's this simple: Using a pitching machine, a rubber ball that is softer and safer, and a few rule adaptations, games are safer and more enjoyable.

Sold on the concept? Not yet?

Then look at it from the perspective of our younger players. If we looked at the Rookie League through the eyes of a child, we would see and feel:

- The excitement of the prospect of being able to hit and run the bases.
- The constant “alert” feeling on defense because more is happening than a game of catch between the pitcher and catcher.
- Great relief in knowing that some bigger kid on the pitcher’s mound won’t hit us with a very hard ball.
- The greater sense of self-esteem that comes from not being embarrassed while learning important game fundamentals.

You’re almost sold. But it’s hard to change what’s been happening in your area.



When talking about the game for young players, the first issue to address should always be why children choose to play. All surveys with youth sports participants indicate that having fun is the number one objective for playing. And this fun is best had on a playing field that balances competition and success

while reducing fear of injury and failure.

So now you’re really sold. But can you sell the concept to parents... especially the parents of aspiring pitchers?



No problem! With the Rooke League, parents have more fun, too. Families and interested fans are more able to enjoy this kind of action, instead of spending their time ensuring the umpire calls balls and strikes correctly in "live" pitch leagues that are usually dependent on the maturity of the pitcher, who may overpower all the batters or struggle to find the strike zone and walk in a run or two.

Parents will also see more action in the field. They, as well as their children, will be thrilled with more opportunities to catch an outfield fly, a line drive, or stop a hard-hit grounder. Their children will get more exercise, have more stories to tell and probably even sleep more soundly through the night.

Good "baseball" and "softball" is watching a Babe Ruth dig in at the plate, hit the ball, and run as fast as they can to first base, while the kids playing defense try to corral the ball to make the putout. And that's what you get almost every pitch during a Rookie League game!

We knew you'd be sold. For further information, contact Babe Ruth Headquarters. We need you to help us take the great games of baseball and softball and make them SAFE and FUN for all players, with an emphasis on the roukiest of rookies!



INSURANCE

# THE FUN STARTS WITH K&K

From the first practice of the season to the World Series, K&K Insurance has you covered. We understand your insurance needs and have been the official insurance provider for Babe Ruth League, Inc. and their enrolled member leagues since 1988.

Total commitment encompasses everything we do—from competitive coverage to prompt claims resolution, K&K Insurance is here to help when you need us most.

- Accident Medical
- General Liability
- Directors' and Officers' Liability
- Equipment & Contents Insurance
- Crime/Fidelity Coverage - Employee theft

800.736.7358  
kandkinsurance.com



**K&K**  
INSURANCE  
Insuring the world's fun!

## SCORE®Sports Expands Partnership with Babe Ruth League

SCORE®Sports, a leading North American designer and manufacturer of premium sports uniforms, apparel, and equipment, has expanded its partnership as the Official Uniform and Apparel Provider for Babe Ruth Softball to now include Babe Ruth League Baseball. Babe Ruth League graduate Eli Manning played a major role in helping negotiate this multi-year agreement.



Though Manning is best known for his achievements as an NFL quarterback, the football star was once a youth Babe Ruth Baseball participant. His photo still hangs on the wall at Babe Ruth League Headquarters.

Additionally, Manning as a partner in the private equity firm Brand Velocity Group, is an investor in Score. *(In 2022, the uniform manufacturer was purchased by Brand Velocity Group.)*

"I have a lot of fond memories of playing Babe Ruth League baseball as a kid," said Manning. "My brothers and I competed in everything growing up, and we especially cherished our time on the baseball field and being a part of the Babe Ruth community. Now, through my involvement with SCORE®, it's great to see things come full circle. I can't wait to see the impact that SCORE® and Babe Ruth League can make on the next generation of athletes in communities nationwide."

"We welcome SCORE® Sports as our official baseball and softball uniform and apparel provider. Their commitment to quality and innovation will greatly benefit our players and teams," said Rob Connor, Vice President of Operations for Babe Ruth League. "We look forward to a fruitful partnership that enhances the Babe Ruth League experience."

Joe Flannery, CEO of SCORE® Sports, expressed his enthusiasm: "Partnering with Babe Ruth League Baseball is a significant milestone for SCORE® Sports. We are committed to supporting the next generation of all athletes with the highest quality uniforms and apparel. This collaboration reflects our shared values and dedication to youth sports."

Babe Ruth League Baseball, a cornerstone of youth baseball with a storied history of over 70 years, serves nearly one million players nationwide. This partnership brings together SCORE® Sports' expertise in high-quality sportswear with Babe Ruth League's esteemed legacy in youth baseball. For Babe Ruth League, this strategic expansion creates a connected uniform and apparel offering for both softball and baseball organizations nationwide.



# Engage Your Alumni, It Will Benefit Everyone Involved

Courtesy of  **sportsengine** 

We smile ear to ear as we scan a scrapbook made by our mom that includes our youth athletic achievements.

We enjoy our personal trip down memory lane, as do thousands of other former youth athletes around the country who also reminisce about the “good old days”. Those recollections never leave us, but with the passing of each year the alumni audience gets smaller, and details of the past begin to wane. It happens to all of us. Sad. But it is even sadder when community members no longer remember the teams or the names of the players who first played in the league’s first tournament.

Sure, towns change. Main streets in rural communities are a mere shadow of what they once were. Local mom and pop stores have fallen victim to larger chains.. However, for the most part, youth athletics usually remain the one constant in our communities. To many, athletics provide an identity, they are the glue that holds a town together. That has been the case for decades, and when it comes to youth athletics, the alumni of years gone by have remained in their communities. Today their children and grandchildren play ball for their local Babe Ruth League.

In these communities, familiar names are still mentioned by coaches. The tournament appearances, championships, and record-setting performances connected to these families are many. And they deserve to be acknowledged, appreciated, and celebrated.

Today, more than ever, it is important for coaches to reconnect with athletic alumni and celebrate their legacy. Recognizing past accomplishments of graduates in various media platforms does more than just promote goodwill, it creates and cultivates connections to the teams and players of the past. All it takes is time, and a little work, coaches. Today’s social media makes it much easier to connect with people.

Today’s youth coaches could go a long way to get support for their programs by reaching out to alumni. Do your homework. Find out who was on the teams that participated in your league, those that went to tournaments, and those who won championships. Have a dinner or banquet to recognize them.

Share stories at practice about alumni. Celebrate the history of your program and the legacy and tradition the alumni have helped create. Have alumni share their experiences in person with athletes playing the same game at the same ballfield. Allow them to share their thoughts and ideas. Make the alumni feel appreciated and valued. There is nothing to lose and absolutely everything to gain. Most likely many alumni will become among your biggest cheerleaders and supporters. They will donate to your program. They will volunteer their time. They will cheer you on. It takes planning. It takes making connections. It takes time. So, reach out to your alumni, connect with them, and give them a call. They can’t wait to answer the phone.

## Preparing for the Next Chapter - Life After Sports



Regardless of whether sports is a presence in your life after participating in Babe Ruth League, high school, or college, as a member of the athletic community the lessons you learned in sports will inevitably translate into various realms of life in the “real world.” And with today’s workforce, the values and skills of being an athlete are more relevant now than ever.

### **Life skills learned in athletics that will help you after sports include:**

- One acquired talent that stands out when an athlete applies for a job is the ability to rely on and support teammates (coworkers).
- When it comes to diligence, time management, communication abilities, and commitment, athletes have an advantage.
- Down time isn’t something an athlete is too familiar with. Other people need to find the motivation to keep going but for athletes it’s not much of a problem.
- Athletes excel in whatever industry they choose to pursue simply because they are used to not being satisfied with mediocre.
- Constantly trying to achieve your best is something that employers admire. Your skills as an athlete can be applied to every industry out there.
- The transition from athlete to employee can be challenging. It’s not necessarily an easy transition for all people but it’s also not necessarily hard. Athletics play an important role in self-identity and shaping personality.
- The everyday routine of being with your co-workers and meeting your work goals and deadlines will remind you of being an athlete. It is almost the same as your game practice routines, and having a goal or drive to win.
- Teamwork is arguably the most important takeaway from being an athlete. Every person who participated in sports agrees that the lessons learned from working together and the ability to communicate to a group are the most applicable to the professional world.

As a previous athlete, when you seek a job, highlight to the hiring manager your ability to work collaboratively, demonstrate leadership, effectively manage your time, and focus on what is important. Emphasize your enjoyment of competition and your capability to perform under pressure. Highlighting these characteristics and behaviors will significantly contribute to instilling confidence in the hiring manager regarding your commitment and appreciation for the importance of hard work.

## Things to Ponder

### **Being Busy Does Not Equal Being Productive**

Look at everyone around you. They all seem so busy—running from meeting to meeting and firing off emails. Yet how many of them are really producing, really succeeding at a high level? Success doesn't come from movement and activity. It comes from focus—from ensuring that your time is used efficiently and productively. You get the same number of hours in the day as everyone else. Use yours wisely. After all, you are the product of your output, not your effort. Make certain your efforts are dedicated to tasks that get results.

### **You Are Living the Life You Have Created**

You are not a victim of circumstance. No one can force you to make decisions and take actions that run contrary to your values and aspirations. The circumstances you are living in today are your own—you created them. Likewise, your future is entirely up to you. If you're feeling stuck, it's probably because you are afraid to take the risks necessary to achieve your goals and live your dreams. When it's time to take action, remember that it's always better to be at the bottom of the ladder you want to climb than at the top of one you don't.

### **Great Success is Often Preceded by Failure**

You will never experience true success until you embrace failure. Your mistakes pave the way for you to succeed by revealing when you're on the wrong path. The biggest breakthroughs typically come when you're feeling the most frustrated and the most stuck. It is this frustration that forces you to think and act differently and see the solution that you've been missing. Success takes patience and the ability to maintain a good attitude while suffering for what you believe in.





# Safety Checklist for Youth Sports



Courtesy of SportsEngine and NCSI (The National Center for Safety Initiatives)



Safety in youth sports is not something to take lightly. How do you know where to get started? Understanding the different aspects of safety or risk management can be overwhelming. The suggested checklist below includes communication, educational, and screening action items to ensure you do everything possible to keep your athletes safe.

## Communication:

- **Emergency Contact Information:** Ensure coaches and staff members collect and maintain emergency contact information for each athlete.
- **Parental Consent Forms:** Parents should sign a consent form that outlines the risks associated with youth sports and acknowledges their agreement to allow their child to participate.
- **Mental health communication:** Creating a safe space to discuss mental health challenges is essential. Athletes and parents should know who to communicate with about mental health.
- **Communication protocol:** An established communication protocol should outline how coaches and staff will communicate with athletes, parents, and the organization if any abuse or incidents happen.
- **Safe Sport Reporting:** Athletes and parents should be informed of the safe sport reporting process and encouraged to report any concerns or incidents.

## Educational:

- **First Aid and CPR Training:** Coaches and staff members should receive first aid and CPR training to handle any medical emergencies that may arise during practices or games.
- **Abuse Prevention Training:** Coaches and staff members must receive abuse prevention training to identify, prevent, and report any form of abuse or misconduct.
- **Concussion Awareness Training:** Coaches and staff members should receive training on concussion awareness, including signs and symptoms, prevention, and management.
- **Mental Health Training:** This is an emerging training area that is increasingly important. Coaches and staff members should receive training on mental health and what to do in a mental health situation.

- Diversity, equity and inclusion training: All leaders, parents, and athletes should participate in this training to create and build an inclusive environment.
- Injury Prevention Training: Coaches and staff members should receive training on injury prevention, including proper warm-up and cool-down techniques, hydration, and equipment safety.

## **Screening:**

- Reference Checks: Coaches and staff members should provide references that can verify their experience, qualifications, and character.
- Background Checks: Coaches, staff, and volunteers must undergo nationwide background checks to ensure they do not have a history of violence or abuse.
- Motor Vehicle Registry checks: If anyone is driving a vehicle to transport players, make sure they are safe drivers.
- Educational screening: This screening confirms that all coaches and staff have the proper education and have been truthful about their related experiences.
- Social media screening: Use social media screening to uncover potential red flags by searching web results and all social media networks.

By checking off each action item on this list, you will be doing the most important thing for your athletes: creating a safe and inclusive space for play and competition.

SportsEngine and the National Center for Safety Initiatives know how important this is and have the checks and training to help protect your athletes.

Per Babe Ruth League, Inc. Rules and Regulations, all rostered managers and coaches are required to complete coaching education, nationwide background checks, and abuse prevention training in accordance with the Safe Sport Act.



Sandston Youth (Virginia) Babe Ruth League participants—Gage, River, Alton & Mason— enjoy participating in several different sports. Babe Ruth League, Inc. believes that players should participate in multiple sports, as it can provide a well-rounded athletic development, improve overall fitness, prevent overuse injuries, and potentially enhance performance in baseball by developing different skill sets and athleticism. Playing multiple sports encourages a broader understanding of teamwork, sportsmanship, and game strategy, which can benefit a player in any sport they choose to focus on. In addition, switching between sports can provide mental stimulation, reduce burnout, and improve focus and adaptability in different situations.





Daryl Spears of Columbus, Kansas, retired this past Fall after 50 years of volunteer service for Babe Ruth League, Inc.

For most of his Babe Ruth career, he served as Kansas Babe Ruth Leagues District 5 Commissioner for Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth Baseball.

Because of Daryl's devotion to Babe Ruth League, many youngsters have had memorable and life-changing experiences. And with the solid foundation he has set, many more kids will be able to enjoy the great games of baseball and softball.





**Darren Mooney Presented with Prestigious Lefty Gomez Award**

*Pictured above at Babe Ruth Headquarters are (l-r) BRL VP Rob Connor, BRL Softball Commissioner Daniela Bottoni, Southern NJ Softball State Commissioner Darren Mooney, and Board Member/Middle Atlantic Regional Commissioner Ralph Errico.*

Darren Mooney was recognized with the prestigious 2024 Lefty Gomez Regional Volunteer of the Year Award for his outstanding dedication to youth sports. As the Southern New Jersey Babe Ruth Softball State Commissioner, former District Commissioner for both SNJ Babe Ruth Softball and Bambino Baseball, and President of the Waretown Thunder Babe Ruth Softball Club, Darren has truly made a lasting impact in the community.

With over 30 years of coaching and inspiring young athletes in both baseball and softball, we thank Darren for his tireless commitment to youth sports and Babe Ruth League!



## GET THE LOOK

The teams that participate in the Babe Ruth League World Series get to wear some of the most awesome uniforms in all of youth baseball and softball, thanks to SCORE® Sports.

And, all local league and tournament teams can **GET THE LOOK** as SCORE® Sports is proud to be the official provider of uniforms and apparel for all divisions of Babe Ruth League, Inc. All uniforms include your logo and player numbers. Choose from stock uniforms or go full custom and work directly with their design team.

Celebrating 50 years in business in 2025, SCORE® Sports is more than a Uniform company. They are your partner. They will always strive to provide unmatched personal attention, with a passion to improve the communities in which their customers live, work, and play. You are their number one priority.



# Let's Have a Catch

## Breaking in your Glove – The Rawlings Way

It can be frustrating – and a little scary – to break in a new glove.

You're eager to show off the new leather, but if you rush the process, you might pay the price. Breaking your glove in incorrectly can result in a loss of durability, an awkward feel on your hand, or missed potential for a high-performing glove that brings out the best in your game. That's why it's important to get it right.

Breaking in a glove the right way takes a little patience. However, if you understand the process and get the results you're looking for - breaking in a glove can be a rewarding and even an enjoyable experience.

Here's what you're going to do:

### 1. Work the Padding

When breaking in a glove, you're loosening the leather, laces, and padding so they can move and bend more easily. With that in mind, you want to focus on the places where your glove is stiff. In most patterns, that will mean the two "hinges" near the heel of your glove. Using both hands, grab the heel of your glove by each side and alternate twisting the thumb and pinky down and in. When you pull the pinky down, the top of the finger should touch the bottom of the thumb, and vice versa.

This technique helps ease the tension of the fibers inside the glove padding, creating a more flexible fit.



## **2. Soften the Leather**

After you've loosened the padding, you want to focus on the leather. Premium leather can feel stiffer because of its fuller, tighter grain. Choose the right oil or conditioner such as lanolin-based products or mink oil. Avoid petroleum-based oils, which can break down the leather.

A light touch is key here. Apply a dime-sized amount of oil to a clean, soft cloth or sponge. Do not saturate the glove with oil, and make sure that the leather is still offering resistance when you try to push and pull on it. Too much oil can make the glove heavy and weaken the leather over time.

Let the glove rest. Place the glove in a cool, dry area and allow it to sit overnight so the oil fully absorbs into the leather. Avoid direct sunlight or heat, as it can dry out the glove.

**NOTE:** This step is where some "shortcuts" are introduced. We do not recommend steaming, boiling, baking, or heating your glove. Nor do we recommend using other "oily" products like petroleum jelly to soften the leather. These techniques can damage your glove and impact your warranty.

## **3. Begin Forming the Pocket**

This is where you can start to have some fun with your break-in. You can shape your pocket based on position, style, or other personal preferences. To start, place a baseball in the pocket of the glove and fold it closed. Secure your glove with rubber bands and let it rest in a cool, dry place for a day or so. This will help your glove conform to the shape of a baseball more easily.

From there, you can begin adjusting the shape of your pocket by playing "hand catch," or throwing a baseball into the pocket and closing it in the form that feels most comfortable to you. If you want a wider, shallower pocket, this is also where you can begin lightly bending the thumb and pinky of your glove to form a flare.

#### **4. Play Catch (Over and Over)**

This is the fun part. The best way to get your glove in playing shape is to play with it. As soon as you can close your glove easily enough to play catch, you should get a partner and start throwing as much as you can. As you play catch, the oils from your hands will continue softening and loosening the inner lining and padding. The impact of the ball will continue shaping the pocket, and the opening and closing of your glove will loosen the leather in all the right spots.

#### **5. Maintain Your Glove**

If you take care of your glove, it'll take care of you. Keep your glove in perfect break-in form by inspecting the laces every six months and replacing them as needed. Always store your glove in a cool, dry place with a ball in the pocket when not in use. After every season or so, apply a light treatment of glove oil to maintain the quality of the leather and prevent brittleness.

#### **The Best Way to Break In Your Glove**

One of the beautiful things about baseball is that it's a sport that moves at its own pace. Nobody knows exactly how long an at-bat, inning, or game is going to last, which makes it like a personal surprise every time you hit the field.

Rawlings does offer Glove Break In Kits.

***Rawlings is the official glove and helmet provider for Babe Ruth League. In addition, they are also an official baseball provider for local league play and are the only official tournament baseball for Cal Ripken Baseball and Babe Ruth Baseball.***







# HEART

## FAMILIES ARE THE HEART OF BABE RUTH LEAGUE

The Babe Ruth League program is a legacy that many families have been proud to pass on, generation after generation. They have shared their passion for the game, creating family traditions and priceless memories. And with this shared legacy, Babe Ruth families expose their children to valuable life lessons and the nourishment and support needed for healthy and positive growth.

Many of you can attest to a special love and pride for the Babe Ruth program. And for plenty of you, involvement with the Babe Ruth League program has probably been amongst one of the best learning experiences of your life, helping you understand the critical needs of communities and the tangible ways in which children's lives can be improved from a wholesome baseball or softball experience.

The main goal of the Babe Ruth League Alumni Association is to make sure the program is available for generations to come, as well as to help the Babe Ruth League membership.

Over the years, hundreds of Babe Ruth League participants have gone to college with the assistance of a Babe Ruth League Alumni scholarship – we have been proud to invest in their education and expand their options for a successful tomorrow. The Babe Ruth League Alumni has provided financial support to leagues that have suffered catastrophic loss from hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, arson, vandalism and other criminal activity. We have been there for players and leagues who could not afford to play the game.

In order to continue to be there for our membership, we need your support.

Share the Bragging Rights! Share your experience in the Babe Ruth League program on social media. In addition, we want to hear all brags, humble or not, so please keep us posted. If you are taking the world by storm (and we know you are), don't keep it to yourself. Send the good news to Theresa Cleary via email at [theresa@baberruthleague.org](mailto:theresa@baberruthleague.org).

Come Back! Give back to your local league by volunteering. After all, who else is going to show the current participants how to make the most out of their experience?

Word of Mouth – Give Them Something to Talk About! To encourage a conversation, wear one of your Babe Ruth shirts to work on “casual days” or to a special event you are attending. When a conversation is sparked, recommend Babe Ruth League as an enjoyable and educational outlet for their kids, grandkids, nieces, and nephews. Friends and co-workers don't just trust their friends' recommendations, they often act on them.

Support the Alumni with a financial contribution. Whether you give a little or a lot, every donation is just as important and appreciated by the Alumni Association. You see, SMALL donations add up to BIG differences in the life of a child.

Please feel free to visit <https://www.baberruthleague.org/alumni> to make an online donation or mail a check payable to the Babe Ruth League Alumni Association, 1670 Whitehorse-Mercerville Road, Hamilton, NJ 08619.



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There is more to the Babe Ruth League tournament trail than wins, defeats, and the awards that await the champions. In addition to providing a range of social and cultural events, emphasis is placed on fostering life lessons and unforgettable moments. Last summer, Babe Ruth League was proud to welcome champions from around the globe to its Center Stage—***the Babe Ruth League World Series***. We hope to see you this summer along the trail!



# *In Loving Memory*

During 2024-2025, we experienced loss in every corner of the Babe Ruth League world. The icons who have passed had a depth of talent and dedication second to none.

**CHARLES DE CHRISTOPHER** passed away on January 30, 2025, at the age of 57. A devoted husband, father, grandfather, and friend, he was a man who lived with passion—especially when it came to his family, baseball, and Philadelphia sports.



Charles was a lifelong Phillies and Eagles fan, cheering for his teams through every season's highs and lows. But his love for baseball extended beyond just being a fan—he dedicated over a decade to the Cherry Hill National Babe Ruth League, first as a coach and later as the organization's League President. He poured his heart into helping young athletes grow, both on and off the field, leaving an impact on countless families in the community.

Charles will be deeply missed but never forgotten—his spirit will live on in every crack of the bat, every child who takes the field, every moment spent with family, and every cheer for the Phillies and Eagles.

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of **Robert R. "Bob" Dickson** of Alexandria, Indiana, age 90, on January 31, 2025, following a sudden illness. Bob was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and friend whose warm spirit touched the lives of so many. On May 28, 1967, Bob married the love of his life, Marge (Pollitt) Dickson, sharing a beautiful partnership that lasted for 57 wonderful years. They were the proud parents of daughter Patricia and son James, and devoted grandparents to Andrew and Stella Dickson, Madi Niswonger, and David Novak.



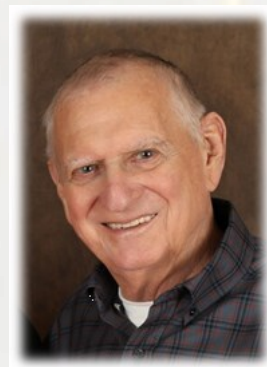
Bob proudly served in the United States Army. His commitment to service extended into his career and community involvement. Bob dedicated many years to the Alexandria-Monroe School Corporation as a teacher, Athletic Director, and coach, inspiring countless young athletes through his passion for sports. His love for writing was evident in his tenure as a sportswriter for the Alexandria Times-Tribune, where his column, "Dixie Quotes," became a staple in the community from 1958 to 1967 and from 1993 to 2009.

In the world of youth baseball, Bob's impact was profound. He dedicated over 60 years to Babe Ruth League, Inc. as a local League President, District, Area, and Assistant Regional Commissioner. He was elected to the Babe Ruth League International Board of Directors in 1981 where he served as Ohio Valley Regional Commissioner for 27 years, and then as an At-Large Member. He chaired several Board Committees, including the Rules, Constitution & By-Laws, Finance, Planning, Audit, and Executive Committees. In addition, he volunteered to work on many Babe Ruth World Series Task Forces and as a World Series Director.



Bob was inducted into the International Babe Ruth League Hall of Fame in 2011. Other accolades included earning the honorary title of the Sagamore of the Wabash and Kentucky Colonel for his distinguished service, and most recently, being honored as the first-ever Board Member Emeritus in Babe Ruth history, as a testimony to his unwavering dedication and passionate leadership. Though he has stepped off the field, Bob leaves an admirable legacy that will live on in every volunteer and child involved with the Babe Ruth League program.

**Bob Kuhta**, 84, passed away on January 12, 2024, in Kennewick, Washington. He was born in Iron Mountain, Michigan, lived in Salt Lake City, Utah, and then moved to Palo Alto, California when he was twelve. Bob graduated from Palo Alto High School and played two years of baseball for Menlo College, transferring to Washington State University in 1959 where he met the love of his life, Karen Jo Miller. Bob and Karen, parents to three sons, were longtime residents of Prosser, Washington, before moving to Richland, Washington in 2014.



Bob started his career with Guy F. Atkinson Construction before joining the Benton County Washington planning department as an Engineer/Planner. In the 1980s, he went to work on the Hanford Reservation as an Engineering Manager at N-Reactor and K-East/K-West. In retirement Bob certified as an agent for Medicare insurance policies, helping numerous friends and neighbors navigate their choices for over a decade.

In addition to his love for Karen, Bob's second great passion was Babe Ruth Baseball. He was a volunteer coach and umpire, and served as League President, District, State and Assistant Regional commissioner for Babe Ruth League for over 30 years. In recognition for his years of dedicated service to Babe Ruth League, Bob was inducted into the South Washington Babe Ruth League Hall of Fame in 2000, and the Pacific Northwest Babe Ruth League Roll of Honor in 2012.

**Terry L. McCollough**, 76, of Lake Jackson, Texas, passed away on February 20, 2024, after a long battle with Multiple Sclerosis.

Terry was born in Elkhart, Indiana. He played basketball like most boys in the Hoosier State of Indiana. Terry attended Hiram Scott College in Scotts Bluff, Nebraska. He met and married Joann (Jody) Wilson on February 12, 1970. He earned a degree in education but started a career in construction.



Terry and Jody moved to Lake Jackson in 1977. In 1985, Terry began his career with BASF as a Project Manager until he retired in 2011.

In his spare time, when he wasn't coaching his son Matthew in sports, Terry enjoyed playing tennis and golf.

Terry was involved with Babe Ruth League for 30 years and served as East Texas State Commissioner for 25 years. He was inducted into the Babe Ruth Hall of Fame for the Southwest Region in 2013. Terry was proud to have his son and grandson continue on his Babe Ruth legacy.

# *In Loving Memory*



**John Villella** of Ewing, New Jersey, passed away on February 6, 2025. Villella started in the Babe Ruth Program in the early '70s, serving as a coach. In 1989 he was elected Southern New Jersey District 1 Commissioner and held that post for nearly 35 years.

The organization, guidance, and management of youth baseball have undergone numerous transformations throughout the years. Nevertheless, one unwavering element was John Villella's position as the District One Commissioner. Leagues evolved, League Presidents shifted, and even the rules and regulations were modified. Yet through Villella's guidance, baseball in District One maintained a level of excellence that surpassed everything else.

Whether it was a League President, a State Commissioner, a Regional Commissioner, or Babe Ruth League Headquarters, they knew they could call on Villella for help and support.

Under Villella's guidance, District One saw baseball grow each year. Villella was committed to the leagues and the players in District One. His experience as a Babe Ruth parent, coach, and league administrator made it personal for him. Babe Ruth Headquarters had deep respect for Villella and his team because of their years of dedicated and tireless work.

In 1997, Villella was named the *Lefty Gomez Volunteer of the Year*, one of the highest honors for a Babe Ruth League volunteer.

Villella was invited to participate in the 2004 Babe Ruth League International Board of Directors Meeting to speak about being a successful District Commissioner.

Villella was an individual who liked to shun the spotlight and deflect credit to others. He was the epitome of the perfect Babe Ruth volunteer. He genuinely cared about the children's interests and generously donated his time and resources to ensure every child had an enjoyable, educational, and competitive experience. Villella gave the players the perseverance and perseverance abilities they needed to win the game of life.



**Gord Welbourne** of Surrey, British Columbia, passed away on December 27, 2024. He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle, coach, mentor, and dear friend to so many.

He was inducted into the prestigious Babe Ruth League, Inc. Hall of Fame in 2012.

Gord and his wife, Carol, raised their son and two daughters in Coquitlam, British Columbia. When Gord retired from the Workers' Compensation Board (aka Worksafe BC) after a 35-year career, they made Surrey their home, where they lived until three years ago when they moved to The Wexford in Tsawwassen.



An avid fisherman most of his life, Gord was also an athlete and known in his youth as "Bones" to his teammates. Over many decades, he played and coached soccer, softball, and baseball.

Gord began his affiliation with the Babe Ruth program in 1968, serving at the local league level as a manager, coach, umpire-in-chief, and League President. After leaving the local league level, he went on to serve as British Columbia Babe Ruth Assistant Provincial Commissioner and then as Provincial Commissioner. Gord was elected Pacific Northwest Regional Commissioner in 2001, which included a role as a Board Member of Babe Ruth League, Inc.

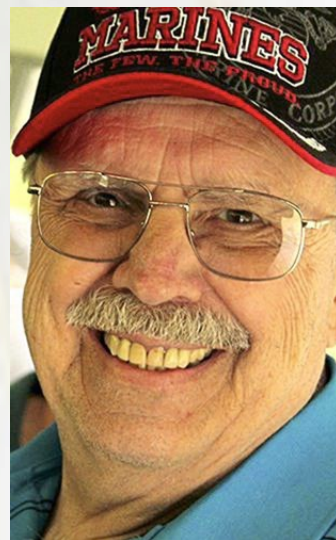
He was presented with the Provincial Babe Ruth Roll of Honor and later was inducted into the Coquitlam Sports Hall of Fame

**Ronald George Zimmerman**, 74, of Drums, Pennsylvania passed on January 13, 2025, at his residence in following a three-year illness.

Ron was a graduate of Hazleton Area High School class of 1968, where he lettered in the wrestling program. He was also a graduate of DeVry Computer Education Institute, Philadelphia; class of 1969.

Ron entered the United States Marine Corps in September of 1969. After graduating from boot camp and from the Electronics A School, Jacksonville, Florida; he served on numerous Marine Corps and Naval Air Stations within the United States, including Hawaii, and in the Asian Theater of Operations which included Japan, Okinawa, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, South Viet Nam, along with a few locations that "he wasn't there." Eventually, he served in all three Marine Air Wings Groups and all four Marine Divisions, during eight-plus years of active-duty service.

Ron transferred to Marine Reserve Motor Transport Unit WTS 47, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, and served an additional 15 years with the unit as a Motor Transport Maintenance Chief, Senior Military Instructor, and NBC Advanced Warfare Specialist, retiring as a Master Sergeant E-8 in 1990. He was awarded numerous medals for his service.



Ronald was employed by PPL as a Transformer Repair Technician from 1978 to 1984, and a Fire Protection Specialist from 1984 until his retirement in 2009. He also served as a Certified Red Cross First Aid Instructor in CPR for the company.

Ron spent 30+ years coaching for the Valley Babe Ruth League. His teams captured numerous Division, League, and District Titles. He also served as Valley Babe Ruth League President for 14 years, Pennsylvania Assistant District 4 Commissioner for six years, and was elected the Pennsylvania State Commissioner in 1998, serving in this capacity until 2019. Ron was a member of the Babe Ruth Alumni Association and was inducted into the Pennsylvania Babe Ruth Hall of Fame in 2007.



*There's*

*No Place Like*

*Home*

