



## **SOFTBALL PLAYER PROFILE: TED MILES**

**-by Larry Wolfe**

**A native of St. Helens, Oregon, Ted Miles graduated from St. Helens High in 1969 and played baseball for the Lions. Given his low draft number (remember those?), he elected to join the Air Force and served four years during the Vietnam War, spending time in Honolulu and Thailand. To some, the Honolulu assignment may sound like easy duty, but Ted recalls it as a life-changing experience that molded his character and personality. It was there that Ted was assigned to a transport outfit that dealt with wounded returning soldiers and the coffins of the many servicemen who sacrificed it all. That experience taught him to appreciate every day like it was his last.**

**After being discharged, Ted attended Portland State University where he studied Health Education and Sports Medicine. After college, he rejoined the Air Force, went to flight school and then spent three additional years in the Reserves. While in flight school he experienced two “on board” aircraft fires while over the Pacific. A little too much excitement.... But maybe that led to his long 27-year career as a fireman back in Portland? Interestingly, Ted did have another rather short career as a school teacher. (Is one day a career?) His goal at the time was to become a professional athletic trainer and he was told getting experience in health education would help, but after that one day, he decided to control fires instead of high school kids!**

**Ted and his lovely wife, Joanne, have owned a home in Sun Lakes since 1995, but they didn’t retire until 2006. It was then that Ted started playing in the Sun Lakes Softball League. Even though Ted had not touched a baseball or softball since high**

**school, he went on to become the Rookie-of-the-Year and has become one of the league's top players. Ted's mastery of the game was probably influenced by his overall athleticism. He also enjoys tennis, hiking, bicycling, rollerblading and weightlifting and attends yoga classes three times per week. Talk about busy!**

**If that's not enough, Ted and Joanne are puppy trainers for the Guide Dogs for the Blind organization. That association led to them becoming camp counselors this summer for the blind, visually-impaired and multi-disabled at Camp Bloomfield in the Santa Monica Mountains. That camp is run by the Junior Blind of America. Its camp staffers go through a week-long training session during which they learn special communications skills and even do camp-related activities blindfolded to better understand what their campers will be experiencing. The camp provides an environment where the campers can participate and succeed, learn teamwork, develop decision-making skills, gain independence and return to the sighted world with a greater sense of confidence in their own abilities. Ted said that though he and Joanne were "the teachers," it was they who learned to appreciate what can be accomplished, given the opportunity. And we should thank people like Ted and Joanne who help give them that opportunity.**