

2019 SUN LAKES SPLASH NEWSPAPER ARTICLES



Ken Brenden is poised to throw to first as shortstop Dave Platt looks on.
(Photo by Core Photography, LLC)

January 2019

FALL SOFTBALL LEAGUE SNAPSHOT By Larry Wolfe

With two weeks left in the Fall Season, the Brenden Financial Planning squad, managed by Ken Brenden, was leading the Sun Division with a record of 8-4. In the Lakes Division, Manager Tom Erpelding's Wolfe & Associates team held a slim one-game lead over A-1 Golf Carts. The Wolves sported an 8-4 record while the Golfers were at 7-5.

Based upon a minimum of 24 at bats, Steve Hilby was leading the Sun Division in hitting with a robust .833 average. He was followed by Reyes Gonzales (.825), Jack Martin (.778), Dan Melosi (.762) and Bob Wicks (.762). In the Lakes Division, Dennis Kennedy led the way with a .742 average. Others in the top five were Doug Warwick (.735), Dennis LePore (.710), Bill Gaston (.695) and Tom Lorgan (.684).

We'll cover the final standings and stats for the Fall Season in next month's *Sun Lakes Splash*. In the interim, you can check for updates on the Stats Page of our website: www.sunlakessoftball.com.

We're happy to welcome two brand new advertisers at the Field of Dreams. Christopher & Myranda's Diamond Creations became the first jeweler to join our group of supporters. Their store is located in the Chandler Festival Shopping Center at 2560 W. Chandler Blvd. The Dana Whiting Law Firm is the second new advertising sponsor. They're located at 3185 S. Price Road, just south of Queen Creek Road. Their practice areas include estate planning, estate litigation and probate, business succession planning and charitable deduction planning. In addition, the Buckeye Boys, fans of THE Ohio State University, renewed their banner. Go to the Sponsors Page on our website to read about all of our sponsors and to see how your company or organization can advertise at the Field of Dreams.

Our Winter League opens right after the New Year's holiday. Come on down to the field to watch senior softball at its best!



Billy Kee, shown with some of his many plaques and trophies.

January 2019

GAMER FOR THE AGES By Larry Wolfe

Billy Kee may have passed the “three-quarter century mark,” but he hasn’t lost his zest for the softball diamond. For more than sixty years he’s found the fountain of youth while playing softball. “I don’t feel like I’m 75,” he says. “I can still play with the best of them.” And play with them he does. Billy is the second oldest of the fifty-five players in our Sun Division where most of the “youngsters” are in their fifties and sixties.

Kee retired from APS over 16 years ago, but has never thought of retiring from softball. He started playing senior softball at age 50 when he was first eligible. Over the years he’s played in hundreds of tournaments throughout the southwest and west coast. He’s played on six different world championship squads and has earned numerous individual awards as well. For over thirty years he “owned” and managed his own team that played all over the southwestern United States.

In addition to playing twice a week in our competitive Sun Division, he's a member of a "75 and Over" travel team, the Sun City Sidewinders. That team plays in a two to three day tournament nearly every month, He helped that team win a major tournament in Phoenix just this past November. "It's easy to get on a 75+ team," he said, "because there's not that many of us in that age group!"

"If you can still run pretty well, you'll be in the outfield in senior softball," he said, laughing. "There are lots of guys still playing who've had knee and hip replacements. It's amazing. They just don't give up and many come back from those operations even better than before! Knee replacements are kind of like the Tommy John surgery of senior softball."

Billy himself hasn't had any major operations. He did recently have a painful bone spur, but he played right through that. "I'm lucky I still have all of my own parts," he chuckled. "If I can stay healthy, I'd like to play another ten years. I've already had some 80+ teams asking if I'd play for them when I reach that milestone. Heck yeah, I will!"



January 2019

LADY SLUGGERS READY FOR SEASON

By Larry Wolfe

The Sun Lakes Lady Sluggers have been practicing for the upcoming 2019 season for the past few weeks and are ready to compete in the Valley of the Sun Ladies Senior Softball League. The Sluggers, managed by Terri Finley, play against several other teams throughout the southeast valley.

All home games are played at the Sun Lakes Field of Dreams near the corner of Riggs and Price Roads. The team plays doubleheaders beginning at 12 PM. Home games will be played on the following dates: Wednesday, January 9; Wednesday, January 16; Monday, January 21; Wednesday, January 23; Monday, January 28; Wednesday, January 30; and, Wednesday, February 6. The season continues through the end of February, but the later games are all away games. Additional information is available on the Ladies Team Page of our website:

www.sunlakessoftball.com.

Come out to the field for the home opener on January 9 and cheer for our Lady Sluggers!



Brenden Financial Planning Team: Mascot: Bear; Front, l-r: Dick Bleich, Dave Platt, Kurt Carmichael and Mike Lebet. Back, l-r: Bob Wicks, Bill Corso, Jerry Hester and Manager Ken Brenden.

February 2019

BRENDEN'S PLANNERS CAPTURE SUN DIVISION TITLE

By Larry Wolfe

The Brenden's Financial Planning team, sponsored and managed by Ken Brenden, won the Fall Sun Division championship with a record of 12-6. They finished three games ahead of the Real Estate Rustlers, sponsored by Jim Leckner's Century 21 Agency and managed by Doug Freisen. The Rustlers finished at 9-9. They were followed in the standings by the State Farm Insurance squad at 8-10 (sponsored by Ralph Vasquez's agency and managed by Ron Carmichael and Frank Margiotta's Farmers Insurance team (7-11), managed by Mike Gloyd.

The top ten hitters in the Sun Division (based upon a minimum of 40 plate appearances) were: Reyes Gonzales (.855), Steve Hilby (.798), Bob Wicks (.767),

Dan Melosi (.738), Jack Martin (.718), Tom Chilton (.684), Mike Lebet (.684), Paul Gayer, Kurt Carmichael (.672) and Steve Andrews (.651).

Our Winter Session started in early January and will run through February 15. The regular season will be followed by a double elimination tournament, scheduled for February 19, 21 and 22.

Come out to the field and cheer on our “Boys of Winter.”



The 2019 Lady Sluggers: Front, l-r: Ann Buckley, Suzy Steinmann, Roseanne Kuefner and Cyndy Hilby. Back, l-r: Mary Alka, Mgr. Terry Finley, Billi Jo Maggio, Teresa Dorman, Lynn Casey, Cheryl Loyd, Joan Schmitt and Ann Hegney

February 2019

LADY SLUGGERS SEASON IS UNDERWAY

By Larry Wolfe

Our ladies' senior softball team, the Sun Lakes Sluggers, opened their season in early January. The Sluggers play in the Valley of the Sun League which includes teams from throughout the Valley. The season continues through late February. Due to a scheduling quirk, most of the late season games are away games; however, there are remaining home games on Wednesday, January 30 and Wednesday, February 6 at the Field of Dreams. Doubleheaders are scheduled for both of those dates with the first pitch scheduled for twelve noon. Come out to the field and support our ladies' team.

We'll provide wrap-up coverage of the Sluggers' season in next month's *Splash*. In the meantime, check out our website (www.sunlakessoftball.com) for up-to-date news.



The Wolfe & Associates Pennant Winners: Front, l-r: Dennis Kennedy, Ken Crawford, Ron Pennington, Bill Jacobson and Jeff Jay. Back, l-r: Dominic Colonna, Al Grefsheim, Bob Zawidski, Manager Tom Erpelding, Joe Ruggiero and Jerry Smith.

February 2019

WOLFE'S ACCOUNTANTS CRUISE TO LAKES DIVISION TITLE

By Larry Wolfe

The Wolfe & Associates squad, managed by Tom Erpelding, rolled to an impressive 14-4 record to clinch the Lakes Division Fall title. They outpaced the second place Young Realty Team by five games. The Realtors, managed by Gary Hillabolt, finished at 9-9. The third place A-1 Golf Carts team, managed by Chris Jensen, posted an 8-10 mark while Core's Photographers, managed by Randy Rothenbuehler, finished in the dark room with a 5-13 record. (I was going to include a funny joke about photography here, but I guess none have been developed yet!)

Dave Boone led the division in hitting with a .745 mark. The remaining hitters in the Top Ten were: Bill Gaston (.733), Doug Warwick (.716), Dennis LePore (.704), Dennis Kennedy (.677), Jeff Jay (.663), Gary Alexander (.661), Al Grefsheim (.657), Hoot Gibson (.655) and Randy Rothenbuehler (.636).

The Lakes Division Winter Session started in early January and will run through February 15. The regular season will be followed by a double elimination tournament, scheduled for February 19, 21 and 22.

Check out our website (www.sunlakessoftball.com) for up-to-date news.

April 2019

PONCHOS WIN PALM SPRINGS SOFTBALL TOURNEY

By Larry Wolfe

The Ponchos, our 70+ travel team, recently won the Annual Palm Springs Senior Softball Tournament. And they not only won it, they dominated the tournament, winning all six games they played, including an 18-9 drubbing of the Arizona Rockies in the championship game. The tournament featured teams from Arizona, California and Washington State.

They opened the tournament by crushing the California Crush 21-7 and continued their dominance by averaging over 20 runs per game while allowing an average of only 10 runs per game. Their closest contest was a 17-12 victory in the semi-finals over the Rockies. As a team the Ponchos had an overall batting average of .672 with six players sporting averages of over .700. Bruce Stricklett led the way, hitting a robust .870, with Jim Leckner also exceeding the .800 mark. Bob Henning, Ken Sheffield, Dick Reader and Jerry Hester all topped .700.

Denny Davidson is the Field Manager of the Ponchos while Bill Corso serves as Administration Manager and Evan Hansen as Coach. The sponsor of the team is Ponchos Mexican Restaurant. Ponchos is a family-owned and operated restaurant located at 7202 S. Central Avenue in Phoenix.

The Ponchos have won many tournaments over the years (participating in “ever-increasing” age brackets), including several World Championships. Congratulations, Ponchos...again!



March 2019

Recent action at the Field of Dreams: Batter Brian Jette and Umpire Dave Platt
(Photo by Core Photography, LLC)

SENIOR SOFTBALL CONSPECTUS

By Larry Wolfe

OK, I'm impressed if you know what a "conspectus" is! If you don't, Google it!

At press time, the Winter seasons in both the Sun and Lakes Divisions were nearing their conclusions. In the Sun Division, the State Farm Insurance team, managed by Ron Carmichael, had clinched the title with a sterling record of 15-1. They held a seven game lead over the second place Farmers Insurance squad with only two games remaining. In the Lakes Division, the Young Realty crew, managed by Dave Rinaldo, had also clinched first place with a 12-2 record and a six game lead with four games remaining on their schedule. Four players in each division sported batting averages of over .700. Steve Hilby paced the Sun Division with an impressive .805 mark. Reyes Gonzales (.777), Dan Melosi (.742) and Bob Wicks (.724) joined Steve in the "Over 700 Club." Dave Boone was leading the Lakes Division with a .735 average, followed by Gary Alexander (.709), Doug Warwick (.704) and "Big Al" Grefsheim (.703).

The regular seasons were followed by three-day double elimination tournaments. You'll find wrap-ups for both the regular seasons and tournaments in next month's softball news column.

Our Spring Session is now underway and will continue through mid-April. Come by the Field of Dreams and enjoy our great spring weather by watching senior softball at its best.

Our Lady Sluggers softball team wrapped up their season in late February after the press deadline for this edition of the *Splash*. We'll recap their season in next month's column.

We are pleased to welcome Chandler Air as our newest advertising sponsor at the Field of Dreams. Chandler Air is a full service HVAC installation and A/C repair company serving Chandler, Sun Lakes and the entire SE Valley. Check out their website for more info: www.chandlerair.com. In addition, the Flooring Gallery & More, located at 9666 E. Riggs Road, next to Ace Hardware, renewed their banner. The Flooring Gallery has been a loyal supporter of our program since 2007.

Our annual banquet will be held in the IronOaks Ballroom on Wednesday evening, March 20. Invitations and RSVP cards have been mailed to all current Sun Lakes

Senior Softball Association members. In addition to our regular program, this year's affair will feature entertainment by T.A. Burrows of Act Two Productions. He'll be performing "Rockin' the Classics." Former "retired" members are also invited to attend the banquet and show. If you'd like to join us, call 480-802-2748 for more information. The RSVP deadline is March 11.

We were all saddened to learn of the passing of former Association member Gene Ekholm. Both Gene and his twin brother, Dene, were long time Sun Lakes softball players. Our condolences go out to Gene's wife, Sue, brother Dene and all of Gene's family and friends. A Memorial Service was held in early February with many of his former teammates in attendance. RIP, Gene.



Our Lady Sluggers celebrate a doubleheader sweep. Front row, l-r: Teresa Dorman, Cyndy Hilby, Lynn Casey and Roseanne Kuefner. Middle row, l-r: Mary Alka, Suzy Steinmann, Manager Terry Finley, Sue Rodke, Ann Buckley and Ann Hegney. Back row, l-r: Coach Dan Kuefner, Lynn Tanner and Joan Schmitt. (Missing from photo: Cheryl Loyd, Billi Jo Maggio and Coach Scott Steinmann)

April 2019

LADY SLUGGERS COMPLETE SEASON By Larry Wolfe

Our Lady Sluggers senior softball team completed their 2019 season and is looking forward to another successful season next year. The Sluggers play in the Valley of the Sun Ladies' League

which includes teams throughout the Southeast Valley. The team was managed by Terry Finley with help from coaches Scott Steinmann and Dan Kuefner. Also, thanks to scorer Lynn Tanner and to the volunteer umpires and scoreboard operators from our men's league.

This year's top hitters included Lynn Casey (.617), Suzy Steinmann (.604), Terry Finley (.549), Cheryl Loyd (.509) and Billi Jo Maggio (.500). Way to slug, ladies!

Check out the Ladies Page on our website (www.sunlakessoftball.com) for up-to-date information. The Sluggers will start practice for 2020 season in November. If you're interested in playing, contact Terry Finley.



The Sun Division Champions: Front row, l-r: Kelly Anderson, Mgr. Ron Carmichael, Billy Kee, Tim Loeffler, Dennis Bernaiche and Jack Martin. Standing, l-r: Tom Bersano, Bill Corso, Steve Hilby, Bob Wicks, Rick Oien and Reyes Gonzales (Photo by Core Photography, LLC)

April 2019

STATE FARM CRUISES TO SUN DIVISION TITLE

By Larry Wolfe

The State Farm Insurance team, sponsored by the Ralph Vasquez Agency and managed by Ron Carmichael, cruised to the Winter League championship in the Sun Division, compiling a stellar record of 16-2. They outpaced the second place Farmers Insurance squad by a full eight games with the Farmers finishing with an 8-8 mark. The State Farm team featured three of the top four hitters in the Division. Steve Hilby was at number one with a .802 average, followed by second place Reyes Gonzales at .791 and fourth place Bob Wicks at .724.

Top Ten hitters from other teams were Dan Melosi (.742 at #3) and numbers five through ten as follows: Chuck Hamby (.684), Paul Gayer (.682), Tom Chilton (.680), Mike Lebet (.680), Tom Kasunic (.677) and Tim Loeffler (.669).

Our Spring Session is now well underway and will continue through April 5th. It will be followed by our “year-end” tournament, cookout and awards ceremony. The double-elimination tourney will be held on April 9, 11 and 12 with the cookout and awards ceremony on the 11th.

Thanks to President Dan Schneider of Aluma-Line, Inc. for renewing their advertising banner at the Field of Dreams. Aluma-Line has been an advertising sponsor since 2003. They provide a wide range of awnings, window treatments and fabric solutions. Learn more about them at www.alumaline.com.



The Sun Division champs: Back, l-r: Jim Leckner, Bill Corso, Steve Hilby, Paul Gayer and Mike Otman. Kneeling, l-r: Mgr. Mike Gloyd, Dick Bleich, Larry Kaufmann, Tom Kasunic and Tim Loeffler.
(Courtesy of Core Photography)

May 2019

CENTURY 21 REAL ESTATE RUSTLERS WIN SUN DIVISION By Larry Wolfe

The Real Estate Rustlers, sponsored by Jim Leckner's Century 21 agency and managed by Mike Gloyd, won the Spring Sun Division Senior Softball title with a record of 13-5. They beat out the second place State Farm Insurance squad, sponsored by the Ralph Vasquez Agency and managed by Ron Carmichael, by two games. Brenden's Financial Planning team finished third with Farmer's Insurance, sponsored by Frank Margiotta's agency, in fourth place.

Reyes Gonzales won his fourth consecutive batting title, finishing with a robust .817 mark. Steve Hilby finished second at .787, followed by Dan Melosi (.737), Paul Gayer (.724), and Bob Wicks (.719).

The regular season was followed by a three-day double elimination tournament. A recap of that tourney will be covered in next month's edition of this newspaper.



2019 Spirit Award winners, Gary Hillabolt (left) and Larry Wolfe (right), receive their awards from President Sam Giordano.

May 2019

SOFTBALL BANQUET RECAP

The annual Sun Lakes Senior Softball Association banquet was recently held in the Oakwood Ballroom. Nearly 140 members, guests and sponsors were in attendance.

After a very happy “Happy Hour,” dinner was served. Many of the attendees praised the entrees as being the best banquet food ever served in Sun Lakes. Many thanks to Ashley Mills, Catering & Banquets Director, Joleen Johnson and the entire IronOaks banquet staff for a job well done.

After dinner President Sam Giordano gave a brief “State of the Association” address and introduced current Officers and Directors and other significant contributors to the success of our Association and our league. He thanked our

“field maintenance team,” Ken Brenden and Dave Rinaldo, for their many hours spent getting our field ready for play, usually five times per week. He also thanked our team sponsors and advertising sponsors as well as Banquet Coordinator, Pat Wolfe.

Since 2010, one or more Association members have been named winners of the annual Spirit of Sun Lakes Softball Award each year. The award is presented to those who go “above and beyond” in support of our Association. This year’s winners were Gary Hillbolt and Larry Wolfe.

Following the formal program, Mike Core and Doug Freisen entertained the crowd with a humorous slide show presentation showing the many faults and foibles of playing senior softball. They were followed by entertainer, T. A. Burrows, who performed “Rockin’ the Classics.” A great time was had by all.



The Lakes Division champs: Back, l-r: Evan Hansen, Bill Maxwell, Dom Colonna, Mgr. Bill Jacobson and Dave Boone. Kneeling, l-r: Ernie Flores, Gordon Beraud and Jeff Jay. Missing from photo: Al Grefsheim, Chris Jensen, Dennis Kennedy and Dennis LePore.
(Courtesy of Core Photography)

May 2019

YOUNG REALTY TEAM TOP LAKES DIVISION By Larry Wolfe

The Young Realty team swept a doubleheader from Core Photography on the final day of the season to top the Lakes Division for the Spring League championship. That sweep allowed the Youngsters to edge Wolfe & Associates by one game. The Young Realty team finished with a 10-4 record while the Wolves completed a 9-5 campaign. Young Realty is sponsored by Susan & Terry Young and was managed by Bill Jacobson. The Core Photographers edged the A-1 Golf Carts squad to finish third.

Gary Alexander won the Lakes Division batting title, hitting .733. Al Grefsheim finished a close second at .729. Dennis Kennedy (.707), Doug Warwick (.706) and Jim Entwistle (.692) rounded out the top five.

Following the regular season, a three-day double elimination tournament was held. Results of that tournament will be recapped in next month's *Splash*.



The triumphant Sun Division tournament champs: Back, l-r: Jim Leckner, Bill Corso, Steve Hilby, Kelly Anderson, Mike Otman and Tim Loeffler. Kneeling, l-r: Manager Mike Gloyd, Dick Bleich, Larry Kaufmann and Tom Kasunic. (Courtesy of Core Photography)

June 2019

HILBY'S WALK-OFF HR CLINCHES TOURNEY WIN By Larry Wolfe

With two outs in the bottom of the seventh and final inning, Steve Hilby bashed a long homerun to centerfield, clinching an exciting 18-16 win for the Century 21 Real Estate Rustlers.

Here's how we arrived at that championship moment. The three-day double elimination tournament began with the Rustlers, managed by Mike Gloyd and sponsored by the Jim Leckner Agency, losing a heartbreaker, 18-17, to the upstart Farmers Insurance squad. The Farmers had finished last in the Sun Division Spring League, but surprised the top-seeded Rustlers in the opener. The Farmers were managed by Doug Friesen and sponsored by the Frank Margiotta Agency. Dan Melosi and Kelly Anderson led the Farmers well-balanced attack with four hits each. Melosi almost hit for the cycle, banging out a double, triple and homer and reaching base on an error. Steve Hilby was five for five with a double and homerun for the Rustlers.

In game two, the State Farm Insurance team, managed by Ron Carmichael and sponsored by the Ralph Vasquez Agency, trounced Manager Ken Brenden's Financial Planners 20-7. Reyes Gonzales led the way for the Insurers with four hits including two long balls. Dean Messier and Chuck Hamby also had four hits each. Don Scoggins paced the Brenden squad with three hits. The Insurers out-hit the Planners 29-13 to dominate the game.

On day two, the Rustlers eliminated Brenden Financial with a hard fought 15-12 win. The Planners made a close game of it by tallying six runs in their final at bat, but came up three runs short. Paul Gayer and Larry Kaufmann led the way for the Rustlers with three hits apiece while Tom Schneider had four hits for the losing team. The Farmers then beat the State Farm Insurers 21-17 in the nightcap. Rick Oien had five base knocks for the winners with Dan Melosi and Tom Chilton adding three each. Reyes Gonzales and Randy Neumann had four safeties each for the Insurers.

The Rustlers then sent the Insurers home by eking out a 12-11 triumph with Paul Gayer and Larry Kaufmann again pacing the Rustlers' attack with three hits each. Chuck Schaan and Kelly Anderson had three hits each for the vanquished Insurers. That led us to the championship game, a rematch between the parvenu Farmers and the regular season champion Rustlers. The Farmers made a real game of it, but, as was stated in the first paragraph, were outdone by Mr. Hilby's climatic homerun. The Farmers slowly faded into the "cornfield" that is the Field of Dreams, as the Rustlers mobbed "Homerun" Hilby in celebration! ...A great climax to a great season and tournament.



Lakes Division award winners Ernie Flores and Gary Alexander.
(Courtesy of Core Photography)



Sun Division award winners Dave Platt, Dean Messier and Ken Brenden.
(Courtesy of Core Photography)

SOFTBALL ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS

By Larry Wolfe

The Sun Lakes Senior Softball Association Annual Awards were presented at the recent year-end Divisional Tournaments. (See two separate articles in this edition covering the tournament results.)

In the Sun Division the award winners were:

- Top Five Batting Averages: Reyes Gonzales, Steve Hilby, Dan Melosi, Paul Gayer and Bob Wicks
- Rookie-of-the-Year: Dave Platt
- Most Improved Player: Dean Messier
- Sportsman-of-the-Year: Ken Brenden

In the Lakes Division, the award winners were:

- Top Five Batting averages: Gary Alexander, Al Grefsheim, Dennis Kennedy, Doug Warwick and Jim Entwistle
- Rookie-of-the-Year: Ernie Flores
- Most Improved Player: Gary Alexander
- Sportsman-of-the-Year: Doug Warwick

Well done, gentlemen.

Our annual “Stats Review” article will be in next month’s *Splash*. If you’re not up-to-date on the latest baseball/softball advanced statistics, don’t fret. We’ll be covering good ol’ traditional stats like doubles, triples and homers, not PEVA (Performance Evaluation Value), BABIP (Batting Average on Balls in Play), WRC+ (Weighted Runs Created Plus) or WAR (Wins Above Replacement). That’s because I don’t know how to calculate them or what they really mean!

Our Summer League is now underway and will continue through September 19th. This is the third year we’ve had a summer program. There are five teams in the league. This year’s managers and team sponsors are Ken Brenden (Brenden Financial Planning), Gary Hillabolt (Farmers Insurance: Frank Margiotta Agency), Jim Leckner (Century 21 Real Estate Rustlers), Rick Oien (Core Photography) and Dave Platt (State Farm Insurance: Ralph Vasquez Agency).

Look no farther for a player profile article this month. The author is running out of victims, but has one lined up for next month!



The Lakes Division tournament champs: Back, l-r: Manager Tom Erpelding, Hoot Gibson, Randy Rothenbuehler, Tom Lorgan, Doug Warwick and Tom Koshar. Front, l-r: Larry Maggard, Dennis Colbert, Dennis Kennedy, Jesse Washington and Gary Alexander.

(Courtesy of Cyndy's Surveillance Services)

June 2019

WOLFE & ASSOCIATES CRUISE TO TOURNEY WIN

By Larry Wolfe

A double elimination three-day season-ending tournament was held in April with the Wolfe & Associates team, managed by Tom Erpelding, cruising to the Lakes Division Senior Softball Championship by sweeping three games by an accumulative score of 50-15!

Here's how the tournament unfolded. In the opener, the Wolves warmed up by besting the Core Photographers squad, managed by Bill McCoy, by a 9-5 score. Trailing 5-4, the Wolves posted a five spot in their last at bat to pull out the win. Tom Lorgan paced the way with four hits for the winners. He was supported by Manager Erpelding and Division batting champ, Gary Alexander, who each stroked three singles. Frank Rouse had a perfect four for four day for the Photographers.

Rookie Manager Bill Jacobson's Young Realty team then topped Manager Gary Hillabolt's A-1 Golf Carts boys 16-11. The Young Realtors were the top seed in the tournament after winning the Spring League pennant. Seven different players banged out three hits each for the winners. Joe Commisto and Jim Entwistle each had four hits in the losing cause.

On the second day of the tournament, the Wolves got into high gear, crushing the Young Realtors 20-8. Dennis Colbert and Hoot Gibson led the way with perfect four for four games. The A-1 Golfers then eliminated Core Photography, winning 27-19. Mike Torreano bashed out five hits for winners and was ably supported by Terry Zeltinger, Joe Commisto, Gary Hillabolt and Gordon Beraud who each had four hits. The overall team on-base percentage for the game was an astounding .736! Frank Rouse, Bill McCoy, Randy Rothenbuehler and Tom Koshar had four hits each for the Photographers.

On Championship Friday, the Young Realtors eliminated the A-1 Golfers 15-11, earning a chance to redeem themselves against the Wolves in the championship game. Doug Warwick led the Realtors with four hits.

The Wolves jumped out to an early 5-1 lead and continued to pile it on, winning the contest by a score of 21-2. Four players had four hits each for the winners: Manager Erpelding, Doug Warwick, Jesse Washington and Dennis Kennedy. The Realtors managed only eight safeties as a team, compared to thirty-one by the winners. This game was definitely not a "nail biter!" Congratulations to the Wolfe & Associates championship squad.



Summer play action: Gary Brinkman is ready to hit as Umpire Kim Whitney and Catcher TJ Tjernlund look on.

July 2019

SIZZLIN' SUMMER SOFTBALL IS UNDERWAY By Larry Wolfe

The temps are heating up and so is our Summer Softball League. This is the third year we've had an organized summer season. Previously, we just had a recreational program with batting practice and pick-up games. We still have rec programs on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, but play league games on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The Summer League started on May 21st and will continue all the way through September 19th. The League consists of five teams; this summer's team sponsors and managers are Brenden Financial Planning (Ken Brenden, Manager), Jim Leckner's Century 21 Real Estate Agency (Jim Leckner), Core Photography (Rick

Oien), Frank Margiotta's Farmers Insurance Agency (Gary Hillbolt) and Ralph Vasquez' State Farm Insurance Agency (Dave Platt). Check our website (www.sunlakessoftball.com) for schedules and up-to-date standings.

Thanks to Gary Hillbolt (Summer League Coordinator), Dennis LePore (Umpires & Scorers Coordinator), Dave Rinaldo (Recreational Program Coordinator), Ken Brenden and Dave Rinaldo (Field Preparation & Maintenance) and all the volunteer umps, scorers and scoreboard operators for helping make our summer program a success.

TOPPS 31 HENRY LOUIS AARON *outfield MILWAUKEE BRAVES*
 Height: 6' 1" Weight: 170 Bats: Right Throws: Right
 Home: Mobile, Alabama Born: February 5, 1934

HANK WON TOP HONORS IN EVERY MINOR LEAGUE HE'S PLAYED IN.

LAST SEASON HE WAS THE LEADING BRAVE HITTER

AS A FRESHMAN IN '54, HE HIT A HOMER IN EVERY N.L. PARK.

| MAJOR LEAGUE BATTING RECORD | | | | | | | | | | FIELDING | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------|------|------|----|----|------|--------|--------|----------|---------|--------|--------|
| | Games | At Bat | Runs | Hits | 2b | 3b | H.R. | R.B.I. | B.Avg. | P.O. | Assists | Errors | F.Avg. |
| Year | 153 | 602 | 105 | 189 | 37 | 9 | 27 | 105 | .314 | 340 | 93 | 15 | .967 |
| Life | 275 | 1070 | 163 | 320 | 64 | 15 | 40 | 174 | .299 | 563 | 98 | 22 | .968 |

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The "back side" of a 1956 Topps Hank Aaron baseball card. See the stats!

July 2019

STATS, STATS & MORE STATS
 By Larry Wolfe

To paraphrase journalist and TV commentator Harry Reasoner, “Statistics are to baseball (and softball) what a flaky crust is to Mom’s apple pie.”

Added journalist Robert S. Wieder, “Baseball fans are like junkies and their drug is the statistic.”

Interest in baseball statistics (or stats) can be traced back to at least 1859 when sportswriter and historian Henry Chadwick invented the box score. His first box score was for a game between the Brooklyn Stars and the Brooklyn Excelsiors and tracked only five stats: runs, hits, putouts, assists and errors. Compare that to today’s box scores by BaseballReference.com that has 17 columns of stats for each batter and 25 columns for each pitcher!

How do baseball fans get hooked on statistics? I can tell you how I did. I blame it on the back side of baseball cards that included various statistics of the player pictured on the front side. As a kid, I virtually memorized all the stats on every card I got. That led to buying baseball books and magazines as well as the venerable weekly publication, *The Sporting News*, that printed every box score from every major league game every week during the season. (Our local paper only covered our “local team,” the Cincinnati Reds.) Later I started purchasing the huge *Macmillan Baseball Encyclopedia*. First published in 1969, there would ultimately be 10 editions, ending in 1996. My last one was the eighth edition purchased in 1990 for \$49.95 plus tax, included stats from every player who ever played the game to that point in time, had 2781 pages and weighed in at over five pounds! Now all those stats and more can be found on my 6 ounce iPhone XS!

I guess that’s a rather long introduction to our annual stats article for the Sun Lakes Senior Softball Association, so here are this year’s leaders in various statistics in both our Lakes and Sun Divisions with the Lakes leader listed first: At Bats (Tom Erpelding, 273 & Rick Oien, 300), Runs Scored (Tom Erpelding, 120 & Steve Hilby 144), Walks (Tom Erpelding, 23 & Rick Oien, 28), Singles (Jeff Jay, 131 & Rick Oien, 127), Doubles (Doug Warwick, 28 & Steve Hilby, 41), Triples (Dan Bradfield, 11 & Chuck Schaan, 11), Home Runs (Al Grefsheim, 10 & Tom Chilton, 46), Batting Average (Gary Alexander, .726 & Reyes Gonzales, .814), Slugging Percentage (Doug Warwick, .901 & Bob Wicks, 1.366), Sacrifice Flies (Gary Hillabolt, 12 & Bill Corso, 12) and Total Times On Base (Tom Erpelding, 181 &

Steve Hilby, 227). No new all-time records were set this past year, but Bill Corso and Gary Hillabolt's 12 sac flies tied the record set in 2017/2018 by Rick Ebel.

Special thank yous to our head scorekeeper, Cyndy Hilby, and statistician TJ Tjernlund. We couldn't "track the stats" without them. Enjoy your summer. Why not sit down and relax with a good book.....like the *Baseball Encyclopedia*!



August 2019

SUMMER SOFTBALL'S HEATING UP

By Larry Wolfe

At press time, the Brenden Financial Planning team, managed by Ken Brenden, and the Core Photography squad, managed by Rick Oien, were tied for the top spot in the standings in our Summer League with identical 9-5 won-lost records.

Brenden's Tom Stephens was leading the league in batting average with an incredible .867 average, going 39 for 45. Jon Hendrikse (.828), Tom Bersano (.781), Kim Whitney (.774), Dick Bleich (.750), Reyes Gonzales (.750), Kim Van Nausdle (.737), Ron Carmichael (.711), Larry Kaufmann (.705) and Tim Loeffler rounded out the top ten. In the power department, Tom Kasunic was the league leader with 20 homeruns. Those 20 long balls were hit in only 59 at bats, a better than 1 in 3 ratio!! Tom Stephens was a distant second with 8 taters, followed by Tom Bersano and Kurt Carmichael with 5 each.

Summer play continues through September 19th. Check the Stats Page on our website (www.sunlakessoftball.com) for up-to-date standings and batting statistics. Thanks to our Summer Stats Man, Jim Entwistle, for all his work in calculating the statistics.

We are pleased to welcome a new banner advertising sponsor, Auto House, and owner/operator Bob "Soup" Campbell. There's a link to their website on the Sponsors Page of our website. If you'd like to advertise your company or organization on a banner at the Field of Dreams, see information on that same Sponsors Page.

Question: Why couldn't Cinderella play for our Lady Sluggers softball team?
Answer: Because she ran away from the Ball!

Sunny summer softball. Jack Martin (left) asks Mike Gloyd, "Do you see the ball?"
Gloyd: "No, just the sun! Duck!" (Photo by Core Photography)



First baseman Dean Messier awaits a throw while first base coach “Hoot” Gibson looks on. (Photo by Core Photography)

September 2019

CORE PHOTOGRAPHY LEADS SUMMER LEAGUE By Larry Wolfe

At press time, the Core Photography squad had “flashed” to a three-game lead over the second place Brenden Financial Planning team in the Senior Softball Summer League. A month ago, those two teams were tied atop the standings with identical 9-5 records, but the Photographers, managed by Rick Oien, had won eight of their last ten games to take the lead. They sported a 17-7 record while Manager Ken Brenden’s Planners were at 14-10. Summer play continues through September 19th.

The chase for the batting title looks like it’ll go down to the wire with Tom Bersano currently holding a slim four-point lead over Jon Hendrikse (.790 vs. .786). Other top ten batters were Tom Stephens (.759), Tim Loeffler (.742), Mark

McKinnon (.731), Rick Oien (.712), John Castro, Bobby Farmer and Kim Whitney (all at .700) and Dean Messier (.698). Tom Kasunic had a big lead in the Home Run Department with 27 versus 13 for Tom Bersano and Tom Stephens. Mark McKinnon (12) and Dean Messier (11) also were in double-digits. Check the Stats Page on our website (www.sunlakessoftball.com) for up-to-date standings and batting statistics.

We'll be starting our Fall League in late October with an expected four teams playing in each of two divisions. We also have a Fall recreational program on Mondays and Saturdays. All games are played at the Field of Dreams near the corner of Riggs and Price Roads. Check the website for additional info.

Question: When is it hottest down at the Field of Dreams?

Answer: When all the fans have left!



Summer league players try to keep cool in the dugout. Front to back: Reggie Reese, TJ Tjernlund and Kurt Carmichael.
(Courtesy of Strike A Pose PhotoShop)

October 2019

CORE PHOTOGRAPHY CLINGS TO SUMMER LEAGUE LEAD

By Larry Wolfe

At press time, with two weeks left in the summer league softball season, the Core Photography team clung to a slim one game lead over the Brenden Financial Planning squad. The Photographers sported a 20-12 record with the Planners close behind at 19-13. None of the other three teams were within striking distance of first place.

The chase for the batting title was also too close to call. Mike Lebet was leading the league with a .800 average, closely followed by Jon Hendrikse at .792. The remainder of the top ten was: Tom Stephens (.772), Tom Bersano (.771), John Castro (.714), Kim Whitney (.712), Rick Oien (.710), Bobby Farmer (.684), Tom Kasunic (.680) and Larry Kaufmann (.679). Tom Kasunic had a huge lead in homeruns with 29, fifteen more than second place Tom Stephens' 14. Others with double digit long balls included Tom Bersano (13) and Dean Messier, Mark McKinnon and Tom Chilton (all with 12 taters).

Check our website (www.sunlakessoftball.com) and next month's *Splash* for final standings and stats for our summer season.

Our Fall League, to be comprised of eight teams, will begin play in late October. Go to the website for sign up instructions and other information.

It'll be nice to transition from the hot summer league temps to more moderate fall temperatures. Do you know what our summer league players do when they feel overheated? Answer: They try to get nearer to our fans!



Pitcher Ron Pennington lets loose of a pitch as shortstop Doug Friesen looks on at the Field of Dreams. (Courtesy of Perfect Pitch Photos)

November 2019

FALL SOFTBALL IS HERE

By Larry Wolfe

The season opens for our Fall Senior Softball Season took place on October 29 at the Field of Dreams. We have two divisions with four teams in each division. We welcome a new team sponsor this year, Spooner Physical Therapy. Our seven returning team sponsors are A-1 Golf Carts, Brenden Financial Planning, Core Photography, Farmers Insurance (Frank Margiotta's Agency), Jim Leckner's Real Estate Rustlers, Wolfe & Associates Accounting Services and the Young Realty Team.

This season's team managers in the Lakes Division are Tom Erpelding, Gary Hillabolt, Bill Jacobson and Bill McCoy. The Sun Division managers are Ken Brenden, Ron Carmichael, Doug Friesen and Mike Gloyd.

The fall session runs through December 20th with each team playing an 18-game schedule. Games are played on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. We also have a recreational program with batting and fielding practice on Mondays and pick-up games on Saturdays.

If you're interested in becoming a member of our softball association, just come by the field and ask to speak to a Board member. Additional information is also available on our website, www.sunlakessoftball.com.

We have two new advertising sponsors. We welcome Russell Meldrum, MD, of South Valley Orthopedics. Dr. Meldrum specializes in adult reconstruction with special interests in hip and knee replacement and arthritis. We also welcome Dr. Sean Wolfort of Plastic & Peripheral Nerve Surgery. Dr. Wolfort provides a full spectrum of reconstructive and cosmetic surgery services including the latest microvascular techniques. Also, thanks to Wolfe & Associates for renewing their advertising banner. Go to the Sponsors Page on our website to learn more about all of our team and advertising sponsors. And remember to SOS: Support Our Sponsors!



Tom Kasunic shows his homerun swing. (Courtesy of Core Photography)

November 2019

SUMMER SOFTBALL WRAP-UP

By Larry Wolfe

The summer softball season wrapped up in late September with the Core Photography team, managed by Rick Oien, and the Brenden Financial Planning squad, managed by Ken Brenden, finishing their seasons in a virtual tie. The Photographers finished with a record of 21-13 while the Planners were 22-14. Due to an “unbalanced schedule,” the Planners were zero games back, but had a slightly lower winning percentage. The Farmers Insurance team, sponsored by the Frank Margiotta Agency and managed by Gary Hillabolt, finished third with a 17-17 record.

Jon Hendrikse won the batting title with a robust .807 average. The other members of the top ten were: Mike Lebet (.787), Tom Bersano (.771), Tom Stephens (.757), Rick Oien (.697), Larry Kaufmann (.692), John Castro (.690), Kim Whitney (.690), Tom Kasunic (.686) and Tim Loeffler (.670).

League leaders in other key offensive categories were: At Bats, Jeff Jay (146); Singles, Doug Friesen (64); Doubles, Tom Stephens (16); Triples, Jon Hendriske (6); Homeruns, Tom Kasunic (31); Walks, Tim Loeffler (23); Total Times Reaching Base, Tom Kasunic (94); Sacrifice Flies, Bill Corso (7); and, Slugging Percentage, Tom Kasunic (1.512).

Slugger Tom Kasunic had a remarkable season at the plate. Not only did he lead the league in Homeruns, times on base and slugging percentage, but his homerun rate was other-worldly. Excluding his 16 walks, he was at bat 121 times with those 31 homers. That's more than a homerun for every four at bats! Congratulations, Tom, and to all of our league leaders!

Big thank-yous go out to Summer League Coordinator Gary Hillabolt, Umpire & Scorers Coordinator Dennis LePore and to all of our volunteer managers, umpires, scorers and the field prep team.



First base coach Ed Sowney, base runner Joe Commisto and infielders Vern Rogers and Ronnie Pennington are shown in recent Fall League action. (Courtesy of Flawless Fotos)

December 2019

FALL SOFTBALL SEASON SHORT HOPS

By Larry Wolfe

The Fall Softball Season is underway. At press time, we were one-third of the way through our 18-games per team schedule. We have two divisions with four teams in each of the Sun and Lakes Divisions.

In the Sun Division, the Brenden Financial Planning team and Jim Leckner's Real Estate Agency squad were tied for first place with 4-2 records. Mike Lebet was the early batting leader with a robust .944 average, going 21 for 23. Other top hitters were Bob Wicks (.913), Dave Waibel (.824), Dave Platt (.786) and Jerry Hester, Steve Hilby, Mike Otman and Chuck Schaan (all at .760).

In the Lakes Division, the Wolfe & Associates and Young Realty teams were also tied at 4-2. Tom Lorgan was the early batting leader with a robust .906 average.

He was followed by Vern Rogers (.880), Doug Warwick (.846), Dennis LePore (.833) and Jesse Washington (.778).

The Fall Season continues through December 20th. After a holiday break, the Winter Season will kick off on January 2nd. All games are played at the Field of Dreams, located near the corner of Riggs & Price Roads. League games are played on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings with recreational programs on Mondays and Saturdays. Come by the field and cheer on the “Boys of Autumn!”

The following four long term supporters of Sun Lakes Senior Softball recently renewed their advertising banners at the Field of Dreams:

Sun Devil Auto, located at 9716 E. Riggs Rd., has advertised at the field since 2000; 360 Physical Therapy, located at 25229 S. Sun Lakes Blvd., a supporter since 2004; Netzel Financial Planning, located at 10450 E. Riggs Road, an advertiser since 2007; and,

Debbie Wiltse’s State Farm Insurance Agency, located at 4980 S. Alma School Road, Ste. A6, near the local Safeway, also a supporter since 2007.

Go to the Sponsors Page on our website (www.sunlakessofball.com) to learn more about these companies and all of our other advertisers and team sponsors. Thanks to all!

