



January 2015

SOFTBALL PLAYER PROFILE: RICK EBEL
-Larry Wolfe

After Rick Ebel told me what he and Debbie do for fun in their “spare time,” I thought, “What spare time?!” Besides playing softball, the Ebels participate in the Sun Lakes Country Club’s Bocce Ball and Pickleball Leagues. In fact, Rick was instrumental in the formation of the SLCC’s Pickleball Club. They play water volleyball four times per week and enjoy card games like euchre and “hand in foot” with friends. They’re also golfers with Debbie being “really good” and according to Rick, he being “not so very good!” Rick also finds time to play racquetball twice per week. “Twenty years ago I couldn’t imagine doing all these things after retirement,” he said. “I thought people our age just took it easy!”

A native of Trenton, Michigan, Rick graduated from Allen Park High where he was on the Jaguars’ baseball and swim teams and also played the violin. Upon graduation, he went right to work buying a truck and forming what would become a successful trucking company with seven

trucks doing business in southern Wayne County. After five years in the trucking business, he “shifted gears” and got into the service station business, eventually owning one Sunoco and three Mobil stations. Five years later he decided the small margins in the gas station business weren’t worth all the headaches involved, so he sold the businesses and went to work for the City of Trenton as a mechanic. He later worked in the city’s recreation department driving Zamboni ice resurfacers in the winter and working on baseball fields in the summers.

While working for the city he started a part time home improvement company focusing on kitchen and bath remodeling and window replacements. After about ten years he left his job with the city and concentrated on his home improvement company, growing the business and ultimately employing twenty-seven people. He later closed the remodeling portion of the business and focused on window installations and replacements.

In 1989 Rick ran for mayor and barely lost the election; however, in 1991 he was elected to the Trenton City Council, serving four years. His major accomplishment in politics was converting the city’s ambulance service from a “pick up and carry” mode to a full Advanced Life Support System. He’s proud that many lives have been saved due to the advanced training received by the first responders.

Rick and Deb had been snowbirds since 1992 but have now sold their place in Michigan. They still have a “For Sale” sign on an apartment building they own, but otherwise are close to being full-time Sun Lakers. They still “get out of town” in the summers, traveling throughout the USA in their Country Coach motorhome. Last year they covered Maine to Key West!

Deb has “retired” from the ladies’ softball team, but Rick is a sweet-swinging lefty who’s adept in the outfield and at third base. It’s amazing he has time for softball!