

GOLDEN GIRLS NEWS

March 2012

Spring has sprung which means we are all ready to spring onto the ball fields for another year of games. The league officially starts on Saturday, April 7 at Southside. You can get a jump start on Wednesday, April 4 at Meadow Lane with a practice session to loosen up the old muscles and bones. The schedule is posted on our website www.goldengirls.org under the "League Info" tab; schedule for first two dates are:

April 7 (Southside)	9:00 a.m. Azalea vs Red	10:00 a.m. Purple vs Mint
April 11 (Meadow Lane)	6:00 p.m. Mint vs Red	7:00 p.m. Azalea vs Purple

There will be 4 league teams this year. It's very important that you let your managers know when you cannot be there; there is nothing worse than having 7 show up and having to forfeit. Several of our ladies live a good distance away and can get very discouraged driving the distance and then not playing. If the weather looks iffy, always check your e-mail before heading out; a huge effort is made to get the cancellation notices out as early as possible or you can always call your manager. Keep in mind that you must play in at least 7 games during the spring/summer season to be eligible to be nominated for the All Star Game in last August. [Drum roll]... big round of applause for the managers:

Azalea - Gloria Mathers and Marilyn Mallery
Red – Linda "Baz" Baziluik and Courtney Saddler
Mint – Carmen Campbell and Katy Page
Purple – Diane Howard and Bettie Pell

To get the season really rolling, don't forget the Golden Girls Breakfast on Saturday, March 31 9:00 a.m. at the Best Western Hotel in Manassas. Midge promises to have us rolling in the aisles after a delicious buffet breakfast. Don't forget your wallet and checkbook – there will be lots of shopping ops and raffles, too. If you forgot to include your breakfast reservation with your league registration, contact Laura Carver 703-323-6304 to see about squeezing you in.

TOURNAMENT UPDATE - MAY 3-6

The Golden Girls tournament "Virginia is for Softball Lovers" is just waiting for more teams to sign up. A lot of hard work has gone into preparing for this tournament, and there are still opportunities for volunteering your services during the tournament. If you can help in the following ways, please contact Marilyn Mallery mamallery@comcast.net or 571-261-9163 (several have said they will help but haven't stated their preferences and availability - please specify):

Runners: Every day 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. or later. This involves getting the roster cards from the teams playing on the fields and taking them up to the scorekeepers before the games start. Also being available for any errands or questions the playing teams may have.

Registrars: Every morning before the games start. This involves checking in the teams by checking off players' names and IDs against the rosters submitted.

Results Posters: Laura Carver will cover Thursday and Friday but someone is needed for Saturday and Sunday (all day). This involves filling in the games results on the large master schedule posted in a prominent place for all teams to see.

The tournament will be held at the Valley View Softball Complex at 11930 Valley View Drive in Nokesville, VA (about 10 miles from Manassas)... 5 beautiful fields with snack bar and nice bathrooms.

Of course, we need fans and cheerleaders. Bring your neighbors and friends – it will be lot of fun and they will be shocked at the caliber of play!

Our fundraising has been very successful with donations from several very generous sponsors – a complete list will be published after the tournament. All proceeds from the Yard Sale on March 17 will go toward defraying tournament costs and maximizing tournament awards in the form of cash.

Tournament registration closes in mid-April and a complete schedule will be available shortly thereafter when we know how many teams will be playing.

ANOTHER SOFTBALL OPPORTUNITY

Can't get enough softball? NVSS (Northern Virginia Senior Softball) is looking for players for a league that plays Tuesday and Thursday mornings at various fields in Fairfax County. All women over 40 and men over 50 are invited to participate. This is a large league with 3 different levels of play. Several Golden Girls play in this league and can attest that is lots of fun and great exercise. For more information, visit www.nvss.org .

THANK YOU AND KUDOS

Congratulations to Beth Hersey on her induction into the Washington Metropolitan Slow Pitch Softball Hall of Fame on February 25! It was a great celebration with several Golden Girls present.

Big THANK YOU to George Hersey and his helpers (Vernon Duce, Charlie Green, Chris Holmes, and Dave Mallery) for the Winter Conditioning program. An extra special thanks to Colleen Cornwell and Kim Prince for sharing their softball expertise and knowledge with all – so many new techniques and improvements were learned by all.

Thanks to all who helped groom Meadow Lane earlier in the month. We are not charged for field use so this is our way to say thanks to the city of Vienna. A similar event is held in the Fall at Southside.

Thank you, Lynn Smith! Two outstanding hostings – the Holiday party in December and the Yard Sale on March 17. She generously opened her home for both events and kept it all organized and running like clockwork. What a gal!

A heartfelt thanks all the Golden Girls who were so supportive on the death of my mother on March 1. The cards, the notes, the hugs, the remembrances, your presence at the viewing – it was so overwhelming and so typical of the Golden Girls. I am so blessed I found the Golden Girls 19 years ago.... Marilyn Mallery.

NEEDING HUGS

Keep Brenda "Batch" Batchelor in your thoughts and prayers on the death on her father. Her address is 49 Ballard Lane Palm Coast, FL 32137 ... a card or note would help ease the pain of her loss.

LOST AND FOUND REMINDER

Bettie Pell is the "Lost and Found" lady; you'd be amazed at what she collects during the season! Bettie reminds everyone "After Cleanup Day I now have a water bottle in the Lost & Found. That's not a good start! Please put your name on all your equipment and add your phone number to those important expensive items, such as gloves, bats, batting gloves, etc. Before you leave the field, look around to see if you left anything. If you are the last to leave and find something, take the item and call the owner right away... she may not miss it until she go to her next game." If no name, give it to Bettie and she will try and find the owner.

DONNA'S MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Because there's no 50+ or 55+ tournament team this year, our membership is down somewhat. We have 126 members and 27 affiliates, with a few applications still dribbling in.

We welcome seven brand new members: Kim Darnell, Rose Dummer, and Terri Romain, *Red* team; Mary Ann Sarnovsky and Michaele Smith, *Mint* team; Ann Weinheimer, *Azalea* team; and Nancy Harvey, 60+ tournament team. We also have a new affiliate; Brandy Frayer. And we welcome back Denise Brown, *Azalea* team, and Tanya Lee, *Red* team, who joined as new members last fall but didn't get to play because the season was rained out.

The directories are in print, and will be given to the league team or tournament team managers for distribution at the breakfast or at the first game or practice. For those of you who are not on a team and are attending the breakfast, the directories will be on a table in the hall or along a wall inside. Remaining directories will be mailed.

WEBSITE NEWS

Several new items have been added to the website so check it out www.goldengirls.org. Click on the "Misc," tab to see an important video about a new method for CPR. And don't miss the link to the "Golden Boys" which pays great tribute to the Golden Girls after their first challenge game. The 2012 schedule has been posted under the "Team Info" tab. The "Tourney" tab has all the details for the upcoming tournament. Remember the website is there to let the world know what a great organization the Golden Girls is. We have harvested several new members who found our website and were intrigued enough to sign up.

TOURNAMENT TEAMS

60s Travel Team Update by Peg Moyer

The 60s team travelled to Polk County Florida in early February to participate in the Tournament of Champions. We came in first in the 60s division and lost to the Maryland 55s Roadrunners to come in second in the 55s division. Congratulations to the All-Tournament players: Fay DeJoy, Marcia Hiltabidle, Katy Page, Stevie Stephenson, and Dory Wagner. The MVP was to receive a special Miken Ultra II GOLD bat. Miken only made 30 of these bats for this tournament. The team voted to make it a team bat, rather than awarding it to an individual.



Our most recent acquisition was a plaque presented to the team by the Washington Metropolitan Slow Pitch Hall of Fame Commission honoring the team for being champions in 5 major national tournaments in the previous year.

The team plans to enter several tournaments this year in addition to qualifying for the 2013 National Games in Cleveland, Ohio.

As always, there will be a GG Roving Reporter travelling with the team. So.... "stay tuned" (i.e., watch your email) for future reports.

THE GOLDEN GIRLS VISIT AFRICA

A group of 34 intrepid adventurers left Dulles airport in mid-February for a two week holiday in South Africa and Zambia. The entire group was composed of Golden Girls members, their spouses, friends, and relatives to include: Dave and Marilyn Mallery, Nancy Williams, Janet Weeks, Marie Phipps, Carmen Campbell and her daughter Renee, Pat Blackmon, Vera Mitchell, Betsy and Vernon Duce, Carol Ferson, Diane Smith, Shirley Thompson's daughter Liane, Teresa Hone, Donna Turgeon, Laura Carver, Stacy Colby, Legs Pessagano, and Bev Raudenbush. What a fun group – South Africa and Zambia will never be the same!

Pat, Vera, Janet and her sister left 4 days ahead of the rest of the group to do a little exploring on their own, and the rest left Dulles on 18 February on a direct flight to Johannesburg with a refueling stop in Senegal. As soon as the group landed, we boarded another plane to Capetown arriving about 20 hours after we left – talk about a long day. The next day we were off and running on a tour of the southern peninsula of South Africa experiencing such things as the Cape of Good Hope, a large colony of penguins, a traditional Africa cuisine lunch, fantastic botanical garden, magnificent beaches, majestic scenery, and a taste of Capetown. After a good night's sleep, we departed the next morning for a tour of the beautiful wine country with stops at two very lovely wineries for tours and samples. Interspersed were visits to the prison where Nelson Mandela was released, the quaint city of Stellenbosch, and lunch at an excellent seafood restaurant...again a very full day. Our last day in Capetown was "traveller's choice" – most opted for a city open air bus tour and/or a tour of Robben Island (Nelson Mandela's prison home for 23 years). Bright and early the next morning we flew back to Johannesburg for the second segment of our journey.

A bus ride north and west on our way to the Kruger National Park area took us through a panoramic feast through the mountains with stops along the way to see God's Window (which was unfortunately fogged in), the "pot holes" created by the confluence of two rivers, Blyde's Canyon, and into Pilgrim's Rest which was our lodging for the night. This National Heritage Site is an old gold mining town with lots of atmosphere and shopping ops. The next morning we boarded our bus and arrived a few hours later at Thornybush, our 5 star lodge in a private game park adjacent to Kruger. What a magnificent experience we had there! The food, the rooms (more like cottages), the drivers, the staff, the atmosphere – everything was top notch. We had an evening and morning game safari every day and got up close and personal with all kinds of wildlife – cape buffalo, giraffes, lions, rhinos, nyalas, elephants, zebras, impalas, cheetahs, leopards, wildebeests, hippos, kudus, jackals, and birds too numerous to list. The vehicles were modified Toyota Landcruisers with three tier theatre seats; the guides and drivers were amazing. The lodge gave us two surprise dinners – one in a boma (round fenced arena) and one in the bush at night – both with amazing fire grills and luscious buffets. It brought tears to everyone's eyes to say goodbye to Thornybush.

An uneventful bus ride back to Johannesburg for an overnight there was followed by a plane ride to Livingstone, Zambia the next morning. We were then transported to the Zambezi Sun Lodge at the edge of Victoria Falls. After getting settled in our rooms, we were taken a ride down to Zambezi River aboard the *African Queen* featuring an open bar and snacks, glimpses of baboons and hippos along the shores, and culminating in a glorious sunset. The next morning we were issued rain slickers for an up close tour of Victoria Falls, the largest waterfall in the world. Despite the rainwear, we got soaked from the mist which formed active rain clouds for the path along the cliff, but what a sight it was! The rest of the time was "free time" to indulge in whatever activities tickled your fancy such as visiting a local native village, flying in an ultra-light plane, riding an elephant, petting lions and cheetahs, riding Segways, indulging in high tea at a sister hotel, lounging around the pool, and a host of other activities. And did I mention shopping at a local craft market?

It was hard to board the plane back to Dulles on March 2. Nobody wanted to leave such lovely countries and peoples. And who was going to fix us the huge buffet breakfasts we had become accustomed to? I'm sure I can say for the entire group that it was a trip of a lifetime and several have expressed a desire to revisit in a few years. In the meantime, we

are looking forward to travelling again in 2013 – probably to the Galapagos Islands combined with some other country (TBD)....watch for more on this in the coming months and perhaps you can join in.

Can you spot the Golden Girls in these pictures?

