



MEDIA LITTLE LEAGUE INC.

P.O. Box 1752, Media, PA 19063
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NEWSLETTER

Winter/Spring 2001

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 17 50th Anniversary Party**
8:00 PM St. Mary Magdalen
- April 7 Picture Day & Share Drive
Little League Field Complex
- April 21 50th Anniversary Parade
State Street, Media
- June 16 50th Anniversary Closing Event**
Little League Field Complex

President's Message

The beginning of a New Year means many and varied things for all of us. At Media Little League (MLL), the New Year marks the beginning of a new baseball season. The 2001 season is very special for Media Little League because 50 years ago, MLL began.

In 1951, through the inspiration and hard work of a few dedicated individuals, including the late Ray Worrall and Steve Danby, MLL was created and actually started the instruction, guidance and teaching of girls and boys throughout this community in the great game of baseball. As the years and decades passed, so did the transition of many Board Members, managers, coaches, players, snack bar personnel, field personnel, etc. The location of the field moved from the original Hess field to our present location at Springton Lake Middle School. Through the efforts of many individuals such as Fred Dotts and Eric Fuller the League continued to not only survive but to thrive.

From the 1950's into 2000, MLL has constantly and continually improved upon its efforts to provide the best possible environment for the youth of our community to learn and enjoy baseball, and grow and develop into productive citizens. The alumni of players and adult participants over the decades are truly reflective of this accomplishment.

As we begin the 2001 season, the Officers and Board of Directors of Media Little League will commemorate the past 50 years with a year long celebration. The celebration will be for everyone throughout the entire community and hopefully will

provide something for all the great individuals, businesses and organizations that were material in the development and growth of MLL.

This is the first Newsletter published by MLL and we take this opportunity to invite everyone to join us in the celebration of a great heritage of 50 years of Media Little League.

History shapes the future and it is with sincere appreciation we thank all those who have contributed to the creation, development and prosperity that MLL has enjoyed over these 50 years.

I thank the entire Board who volunteer a tremendous amount of time, energy and resources to keep the League moving forward in the fashion it has become accustomed. For all the children, we hope you continue to enjoy yourselves, as that is the most important part of everything.

I thank all of you and we look forward to renewing old acquaintances and making new ones during this commemorative baseball season. Let's play ball!

Charles M. O'Donnell,
President

Alumni Mailing List

As part of Media Little League's 50th Anniversary, we are compiling an alumni mailing list and this newsletter has been sent to MLL graduates dating back to 1995. If you know of any older MLL alumni, have a change of address or wish to be removed from our mailing list, send an email with the appropriate info to stephen.w.butt@lmco.com or mail to Media Little League, Inc., P. O. Box 1752, Media, PA 19063.

Numerous Festivities Planned for 2001 Season

This year we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Media Little League. For over a half-century, we have provided a safe, recreational and educational baseball experience for the girls and boys of our community. Our complex, located on the school grounds of Springton Lake Middle School, has grown over the last 50 years to include five beautiful baseball fields where over 450 children play baseball.

We have many plans in the works to celebrate this significant milestone in the life of the league. Our first event will be a dinner dance on March 17, which will be open to the community. On Opening Day, April 21, we have plans for a parade through Media, followed by a fair and dedication of our renovated and expanded league building. Finally, in the planning stage for our last event of the 50th anniversary celebration is a season closing festival. We are working hard to make this a memorable year for all those involved in the past as well those involved in the present and the future of Media Little League.

Alumni/Parent Party

This party will be held at St. Mary Magdalen on March 17th from 8:00 PM to midnight and will kickoff the 50th Anniversary celebration. It is intended to be an evening for adults (parents, coaches, alumni and friends). The cost of the party is \$40 per person/\$75 per couple. Included in the cost will be appetizers, dinner, dessert, open bar, music by Ed and the Beatlemanics, MLL memorabilia and much more.

There will only be 400 tickets available because of limited seating and tickets are expected to go quickly. Tickets will be sold on a first-come first-served basis. Tickets will be available from MLL Board members or by emailing Ro Mullen at ROAMullen@aol.com.

Season Opening Parade

This event will provide a carnival-like atmosphere for MLL families and alumni. It will include a full parade (bands, floats, fire trucks) down State Street in Media. Little League officials from Williamsport and from District 19, along with coaches and players from MLL and other local Little Leagues will also participate in the parade. The parade will be followed by activities at the Little League Baseball complex which will include activities, food, dedication of the newly rebuilt building, memorabilia from 1951 to the present and other activities for children of all ages, both present Little Leaguers and future Little Leaguers.

Season Closing Festivities

This event is intended to cap the season and 50th Anniversary (replacing the season ending picnic). It will be centered around the Major, American and National League Championship games with concurrent activities for Continental and T-Ball Leagues. Following completion of the Championship games, there will be presentation of regular season trophies and dedication of the Wall of Fame in the new building addition. The evening may conclude

with a fireworks display, (no promises yet), we are still working on obtaining the necessary approvals.

Safety Program

By Dr. Tony Antonello – Safety Officer

Media Little League puts strong emphasis on safety for all its participants. As our league Safety Officer I prepared and submitted a Safety Program that was approved by Little League Headquarters in Williamsport. Our program gives attention to all activities, including non-baseball functions such as picnics and fundraisers. We try to consider ways to avoid hazards in all areas of the facility. We ensure that proper first-aid materials are available and educate our members on correct first-aid procedures in the event of an accident. We follow-up with the families of the injured and help fill out Little League insurance papers, if necessary.

Some recent examples of our focus on safety are evident at our facility:

- A protective cap was installed on the top edge of the outfield fences
- New signs were installed at the entrance to the complex to slow traffic and warn to watch for children
- New protective fencing was installed at the National League Field
- Breakaway bases have been installed at all fields to prevent sliding injuries.

In the area of education, our coaches have had talks presented to them on first-aid by a community health nurse from Riddle Hospital and on injury prevention by a Phillies team physician! We have also been fortunate to have Upper Providence police talk to parents and players at player evaluations about motor vehicle safety, bicycle safety and child abuse prevention.

This year we plan to publish a League Safety Manual and distribute it to all teams. Also, watch for information on various first-aid topics on our bulletin board and website. The Safety Code and other protocols to prevent hazards will be posted around the facility. Please take time to read them.

If you notice potentially hazardous conditions in any facet of our activities or if you have suggestions or ideas please call the Safety Officer, Tony Antonello, 610-565-6780.

Gold, Silver, Bronze Patrons

Also as part of the 50th anniversary celebration, MLL has established a patron program for our corporate partners. The patron levels are as follows:

Gold Patron	\$2,500
Silver Patron	\$1,000
Bronze	\$500

New Building

You may have wondered as you drove by the Little League Complex this past fall, "What's going on?" Is MLL really tearing down the building? Actually, we are constructing a new building.

The new building has been in the planning stages for a number of years and is finally coming to fruition. Construction began in mid-September with the demolition of the roof of the building. The goal is to have the facility substantially complete for the 2001 baseball season.

The first floor of the building will be modernized and a second floor added. The second floor will be a large conference room to be used for meetings and instructional activities. In addition to the meeting area, the second floor will contain a trophy case and a library of baseball instructional books and videotapes.

A lot of the time and material necessary to construct the new building has been donated. Without the generosity of members of our community the completion of the new building will not be possible. We would like to acknowledge the following companies and individuals for their generous donations to date.

A.E. Germani

Chuck Battaglia

Community Services (Walt Amler)

Danby Lumber

Fanelli Construction (Bob Fanelli)

Fizzano Brothers

J.P. Mascaro

Scott Kotcamp

KV Construction

Marinelli Brothers

Steve McCoy

Meenan Oil Co.

O'Rourke Steel

Rabena Brothers Builders (Joe Rabena)

Relief Rentals

T.N. Ward Construction Co. (David Panichi)

Vasoli Electric Local 645 (Kevin Hassett)

Williamson Free Trade School

There is still a lot to be done. We appreciate any additional assistance anyone can provide with financial, material and service donations. If you are able to help, please call Scott Kotcamp at (610) 566-0702.

Equipment

By Steve Butt – Equipment Manager

Trivia question:

How many baseballs does Media Little League use in a season (see answer at end of article)?

With about 450 children playing baseball on about 35 teams in 5 levels (plus 4 or more tournament teams), the MLL equipment budget is a major part of the league's operation. Each year we outfit each player and supply our teams with equipment. The MLL equipment managers, Bill Haines & Steve Butt, are also responsible for keeping our pitching machines in order and providing the facilities folks with bases, home plates and other field supplies. We make every effort to balance the quality of our equipment and uniforms (note the upgrades in hats last year) against our budget. If you have any questions or suggestions about our equipment/uniforms, please don't hesitate to contact our equipment crew.

Trivia answer:

The Media Little League goes through about 1,000 baseballs every year.

Ad Book

To help defray the cost of the 50th anniversary celebration we are producing a commemorative 50th anniversary program/ad book. We are asking our community members to help with this fundraising effort by placing an ad in this book. Over 1,000 families will receive a copy of this book.

The cost of the ads is as follows:

Full Page	\$200
Half Page	\$100
Quarter Page	\$60
Business Card	\$35
Sponsor Square	\$20

Please contact Suzanne Manness at 610-565-1771 for additional information or to place an ad.

Website

Check out and bookmark the Media Little League website at <http://www.angelfire.com/pa/medialittleleague>. It's your year round, on-line source of Media Little League information.

Here's what you'll find there:

- Event schedules
- League and team schedules
- Team rosters (with links to many team sponsors)
- Game results, game summaries and standings

We had over 1,600 hits on the website in 2000 and hope to improve on that this year. If you have any suggestions on improvements, please email stephen.w.butt@lmco.com.

A New Snack Bar in the Future

By Suzanne Manness

If you happen to be at or passing the baseball fields, look at the construction now underway. The new building will house a brand new expanded snack bar. This expansion will allow us to change our menu for the first time in a long time. This year there will be no shouts, "Where are the meatball sandwiches?" We will finally be able to accommodate the many requests we've had for a change in menu because we will have a larger space and new cooking equipment.

We hope to have the following choices this year. For those early Saturday morning games, in addition to those yummy Krispy Kreme doughnuts, we plan to have breakfast sandwiches: fried egg and cheese or fried egg, cheese and sausage. On Wednesday and Friday nights, we plan to offer hot meatball sandwiches. Saturday afternoon we will have cheese steaks available. Every day we will have chicken nuggets and cheese fries available. Of course we will still offer, on a daily basis, our tasty hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, french fries, candy, coffee, cappuccino, slush puppies, sodas, water, Gatorade, hot chocolate and PowerAde. We are open to suggestions for other changes that would make our snack bar the best Little League snack bar. You can email your suggestion to me at sman907@aol.com.

Of course we can't make all these great changes without help from our membership. We are once again looking for volunteers, people who will commit one evening a week to oversee the snack bar. Snack bar openers start at 5 PM and stay until 7:15 PM. Openers are responsible for getting the snack bar open and ready for business and for putting the team volunteers to work. Snack bar closers come in at 7:15 PM and stay until the last game is over. The closer is responsible for closing up the snack bar for the evening. These are not difficult jobs, but they are extremely important ones. We can only run this snack bar if we have the volunteers to do so! If you would like to volunteer for one of these jobs, please call me at 610-565-1771, or email me at the address above.

The snack bar is one of the most important revenue-generating vehicles that the league has. All the money we make in the snack bar goes back into making the league a better place for your child to play ball. We can only have a successful season with the cooperation of everyone in the league: Remember to eat at the snack bar and volunteer your time to help in the snack bar.

See you in the spring!

Got an old, but usable refrigerator? If you would like to get rid of your old refrigerator, we can use it in the snack bar. Please get in touch with the league and we will arrange for pickup.

Umpires

We request your help!

Media Little League is one of only a few remaining Little League programs in the Delaware Valley that utilizes an all volunteer staff to umpire games at the National, American and Major League levels. We are proud of this accomplishment and wish to continue in the future with all volunteer umpires. There are about 150 games scheduled in the regular season at the National, American and Major league levels. We schedule and utilize both a plate and base umpire for all games. This leaves approximately 300 umpiring slots to fill. We are always in need of additional umpiring volunteers.

If you are interested in umpiring but have no umpiring experience, we will instruct you in the fundamentals of umpiring and the rules of Little League baseball. If you have umpiring experience but have not umpired in a few years, we will gladly refresh your umpiring memory. Umpiring clinics are held prior to the start of the season at the Little League complex. We also supply all the necessary equipment, shirts, face masks, chest protectors and shin guards. All of our new umpires start working on the bases in the National League (the first competitive league for the children) and will work with experienced umpires until they are comfortable and ready to work behind the plate. Even if you only want to do bases and not progress to behind the plate, we can use your help.

For those not interested in umpiring, please remember that we all make mistakes, even umpires who are being paid to umpire. Be respectful of the umpires, set an example for our children, and remember that all of our umpires are volunteers and we need their help. We don't want to lose any umpires due to conduct by managers, coaches or spectators. If you notice any problems with umpires, managers, coaches or spectators, please report the problem in confidence to the commissioner of the appropriate league.

Media Little League would like to recognize our first Gold Patron.

MEDIA ROTARY FOUNDATION

**A sincere Thank You from
Media Little League**

Media Little League is now able to be a recipient of your financial donation through the United Way by specifically designating donations as follows:

**United Way Donor Choice Code No. 04445
Media Little League
P. O. Box #1752
Media, PA 19063**

Player Development

By Mark Hill – Tournament Director

In 1994, Media Little League realized that to better be able to teach little leaguers everything from the fundamentals to the finer points of the game, we needed to bring in knowledgeable baseball instructors to help "teach the teachers". The board position "Director of Baseball" was established to administer the program from the ground floor up.

MLL began to develop a successful working relationship with Mike Bucci, a former professional ballplayer and coach. The instruction provided by Mr. Bucci to coaches in MLL was divided, in terms of its instructional focus, between the lower (Tee-ball, Continental, and National) leagues, and the upper (American and Major) leagues. The early years of the program focused on fundamentals, with the primary focus being on teaching our youth how to throw correctly and strongly. It was, at first, surprising how few of our well-intended volunteer coaches knew about the basics of teaching youth to throw, hit, run and field. The early years of the program brought Mr. Bucci to such places as the Springton Lake Middle School Auditorium, the VFW, and the little league fields themselves for live, interactive demonstrations. In fact, the late March demonstrations at the field, replete with coaches' workouts, have become somewhat of a ritual for the volunteer coaching staff, and invariably results in muscle strains and pulls, particularly among the over 30 crowd. (The over 40 crowd is smart enough to dog it!)

A primary objective of the Director of Baseball, two of whom over the years have been Mark Holland and Mark Hill, was to bring a good deal of fun to the instructional process. At the lower level leagues, that included instructional fun books from Williamsport (Al's Passport to Fun) which had an educational, as well as fun slant to baseball. The Directors of Baseball attempted to maintain a balance between pure baseball instruction, which would hopefully (and did in fact) elevate the brand of baseball we, as a league, play; and sheer fun, which is critical to the continued viability of youth baseball as a recreational option. In fact, this latter concern became paramount in light of the following: In baseball, like virtually no other team sport, mistakes or failures cannot be hidden; every one sees the error, strikeout or wild pitch. There is no hiding in baseball. Many of our youth fear failure and thus, shy away from putting themselves in a position to fail. This fear of failure prevents full development. A child (or for that matter an adult), who does not put himself or herself in a position to take a chance, be it pitching in the late innings, going hard after a fly ball, or swinging at that 2 strike pitch with runners aboard, will never really be able to reach his or her full potential. Further, for a variety of reasons, many of our youth are opting for other springtime activities, such as lacrosse or soccer, and thus, the number of youth participating in little league baseball has diminished over the years. All of these factors have motivated the Directors of Baseball to stress the importance of thoughtfully organized practices in which youth can learn baseball,

develop their skills, and have a good time doing it in a safe environment, all the while gaining a level of comfort with the law of averages that is baseball, i.e., the notion that "it's ok to fail". (We constantly like to remind the youth that the best professional hitters, those who bat .300, fail 7 out of every 10 times at bat!). While this balance may seem difficult, if not impossible, to reach, achievement of the objective has been made possible by the quality and quantity of instruction our volunteer coaches have received under the auspices of the Directors of Baseball.

With the assistance of Mr. Bucci, who developed 10 week lesson plans for running practices in a fun way at all levels, the program began to take root in 1996 and, by 1998, Media Little League had fielded its first group of State Champions. Our 10 year old tournament team finished 4th in the State. And that was not the league's only success story. In that same year, 12 year old Justin Chen pitched 18 consecutive innings of shutout baseball in 5 days of District Tournament play. Since 1994, the 12 year old tournament team has been winning more and more games in District 19 play. By all objective standards, including the observations of those outside the league, Media Little League has gotten fundamentally stronger.

By the year 2000, the Directors of Baseball had evolved the program to the point that during post season tournament preparation Mr. Bucci was brought in to primarily work with our 12 and 10 year old tournament teams. However, the practices were open to all league members during limited instructional sessions. This program was quite successful, in that 1) the kids participated in collegiate level practices that were fun, 2) they got personalized instruction (contrasted with the historical instruction given only to the coaches), 3) the entire league got to take part in the sessions, 4) they were conducted in a clinic atmosphere, and 5) something unexpectedly enriching happened. For the first time, all the kids in our league who really wanted to be on a baseball field, learning the fundamentals as well as the fine points about the game, were all receiving personalized instruction together, from 9 year olds to 12 year olds, and they bonded with, and took an interest in one another. The 12-year-olds watched and rooted for the younger kids, and vice versa.

Hopefully, as a league, we can continue the instructional development. It has been successful to date, and we owe it to the youth coming through the program to continue to evolve our league into a fun, but highly skilled and competitive league. While historically, our league's tradition has been that of a fine league comprised of the highest principles, we are now poised, as we enter our second 50 years, to take our league into the realm of the competitively successful baseball programs, as well.

Sportsmanship: To take a loss or defeat without complaint, or victory without gloating, and treat opponents with fairness, generosity and courtesy, etc.

2000 MEDIA LITTLE LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

MAJOR LEAGUE

TERSTAPPENS BAKE SHOP

Manager – Tom Connelly

Matthew W. Baker
Cameron Barr
James Bisciotti
Timothy Campbell
Thomas M. Connelly
Carlton (Mac) Harris
Kevin Newby
Matthew Olenik
Robert J. Rabena
Billy Touey
Stephen Virbitsky
Michael E. Weisbond

AMERICAN LEAGUE

BEVAN'S CANDY

Manager – Rich Blonski
Coach – Tom Mehalick

Vincent Benedetti
Philip Blonski
Richard J. Burns
Mike Holland
James Kim
Steven LaMonica
Kevin Mehalick
Adam Papamarcos
Carter Prince
Linda Salcedo
James Sennett
Jefferey Sennett
Philip Voutsakis
Paul Zippi

NATIONAL LEAGUE

MEDIA POLICE ASSOCIATION

Manager – Joe Travaglini
Coach – Ed Snow

Matthew Atkinson
Alex Cascioli
Nicholas Hoffman
Timmy Mason
Michael Mignogna
Eric Papamarcos
Matthew Robinson
Jason Silverberg
Andrew Snow
Matthew Snow
Will Torrence
Christopher Travaglini

We hope that you have enjoyed our inaugural Newsletter. If you should have any ideas for articles in future Newsletters, wish to contribute an article for a future Newsletter, or have questions or comments concerning this Newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me via telephone at (610) 566-0702 or via email at tmehalick@aol.com.

Thank you,
Tom Mehalick – Director of Public Relations