

**JANUARY
2002**

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SIDELINES is the official publication of:

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www.goodlifeoutdoors.com/syaa

SIDELINES

News and Information for **Springfield Youth Athletic Association** Players, Parents and Supporters

TIME TO GET INVOLVED

It seems like we're always being asked to do "our part" in the many and varied organizations we choose to affiliate with. S.Y.A.A. is no exception in terms of the need for dedicated volunteers. We've had many over the years and can always use more.

As we prepare for a new diamond sports season (yes, it's really coming!), I see a need to get more people involved, new blood if you will. A core group of coordinators have kept things operating smoothly, but we need to start getting additional people involved and familiar with operating our baseball, softball and tee-ball programs.

The jobs are many and varied. We've tried to narrow their focus over the past few years, so volunteers can feel comfortable accepting responsibility for a small piece of the program. We use coordinators to organize team photo days, purchase and issue uniforms, purchase and issue equipment, schedule fields for practice and games, schedule umpires, run each level of play and more.

One coordinator I left out is the Field Maintenance Coordinator. Kevin Mitchell held this post in 2001 and did a terrific job for us. Unfortunately, Kevin's "real" job will require too much travel this year and prevent him from filling this important position. So we have an immediate need for someone to take responsibility for preparing our fields for the 2002 season, maintaining them as needed during the season, and finding other people to prepare fields for each game.

Please contact me if you wish to volunteer your services for any of these positions. If you already hold one of these positions, I'd appreciate you letting me know if you wish to continue in 2002. If you currently aren't volunteering and want to get involved, I'd like to hear from you too. You can call me, or you can indicate your areas of interest on the diamond sports registration form you turn in for one of your children.

Louise Jacott, our Registration Coordinator, could use some help with our diamond sports registration scheduled for Saturday, January 19. Details are inside, but Louise needs help with preparing for and serving food at registration. Please contact her to enlist.

Finally, Char Iske will be vacating her Officer position as Treasurer effective with the annual election of officers and commissioners in February. Char served over three years in this position, and I want to personally thank her for her hard work and dedication to S.Y.A.A. and the kids we serve. The Treasurer position is one of the busiest and most demanding, and Char has been a real asset to the organization over the years. Her contributions are numerous and greatly appreciated.

As we embark upon a new year I look forward to all we will accomplish. I hope you'll make yourself available to help out any way you can and be part of our success in 2002.

Happy New Year.



Frank Staskiewicz, Jr.
President

DIAMOND SPORTS REGISTRATION

BASEBALL SOFTBALL TEEBALL

Saturday, January 19, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Springfield Legion Hall

Lunch will be served again, so plan to bring your kids and stop in to register them for baseball, softball or teeball, and get a bite to eat. Subway sandwiches, chips and drinks will be available for a nominal price.

If you have any old baseball gear to get rid of, please consider donating the items to S.Y.A.A. We'll put a reasonable price tag on them and sell them during registration to other families looking for some good used gear. All proceeds will go to the diamond sports program.

Only these items in useable condition will be accepted:

Pants, belts, shoes, batting gloves, ball gloves, sliders, catching equipment

Please drop off your items at the Legion Hall between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. the day of registration, or contact board member Scott Lane to make other arrangements.

Additional registration forms will be available at all the schools in the district, Neitzel's Corner, B&B Pit Stop, and at registration. You can also contact Registration Coordinator Louise Jacott (592-0424) to request more forms. Please note we need a birth certificate **copy** for our files for all first-time baseball players (Mustang, Bronco and Pony) and softball players of all ages. We need these copies for our files to provide proof of age whenever our players compete in tournaments.

Registrations may be mailed to our post office box listed on the front page. Mailed registrations will be considered late if they arrive after January 19. Late registrations **will not** be processed until the late fee is paid.

If you have any questions about registration, please contact Louise Jacott.

Please make checks payable to S.Y.A.A.

Want to know more about our organization, the sports we sponsor, and our teams? Visit our web site the next time you're logged onto the Internet. We're online at:
www.goodlifeoutdoors.com/syaa

DIAMOND SPORTS REGISTRATION FEES SET FOR 2002

New diamond sports registration fees were established at the December Board meeting. Improvements implemented the past several years increased the cost of running baseball, softball and teeball, yet registration fees remained the same during that time. So for the first time in six years, the Board increased fees for all levels of play except teeball.

Some noteworthy improvements made in recent years include:

- Use of certified umpires for baseball; one for Mustang and Bronco games, two for Pony games
- Baseball switched from in-town recreational play to the Tri-County PONY League, which requires annual league sanctioning fees
- Softball moved to the Todd Valley League, which requires league and state fees
- Annual liability insurance
- Quarterly newsletters and a web site to improve communication
- Supplying a hotline service for team communication
- Providing coaching clinics and resource materials
- Purchase and use of a computer program to track families with kids registered in our sports programs

The Board recognized a need to bring registration fees more in line with expenses, and generate funds needed to start making our fields safer, more rain proof, and nicer places to play and watch ball games. The increase in revenue will allow us to do just that, and we'll also be able to continue making the program better in less visible ways. Perhaps most importantly, we'll be able to continue avoiding fund raising efforts that would require our kids to sell things.

Here are the new registration fees:

Level of Play	Ages	Increase/ New Fee
Teeball	5-6 yrs	+\$0 / \$25
Coach Pitch baseball 8 and Under softball	7-8 yrs	+\$5 / \$40
Mustang baseball 10 and Under softball	9-10 yrs	+\$10 / \$45
Bronco baseball 12 and Under softball	11-12 yrs	+\$10 / \$45
Pony baseball, 14 and Under softball	13-14 yrs	+\$15 / \$65
16 and Under softball	15-16 yrs	+\$15 / \$65
18 and Under softball	17-18 yrs	+\$15 / \$65

These modest increases keep our fees well below metro area programs and among the lowest in our leagues. Playing ball in Springfield truly remains one of the best values around. And families registering multiple children to play ball can continue to take advantage of our unique discount offer. After the two oldest players are registered at the full fee, all other children in the same family are registered at half the fee.

SPECIAL THANKS TO...

Char Iske who will step down as S.Y.A.A.'s Treasurer in February after three plus years of service. During her term in office, Char spent a significant amount of time simplifying our financial records in Quicken, and then she adapted them as we reorganized into S.Y.A.A. The Board is grateful for her dedication to our organization and the kids and families we serve.

And to Mike Smith for all his legal support the past year. Mike led us through our reorganization, which included drafting Articles of Incorporation and by-laws, completing and submitting the necessary forms to state and federal government agencies, and helping us apply for and receive 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

BOARD ELECTIONS

Officer and commissioner elections will be conducted at the February Board meeting. The Treasurer position is being vacated by Char Iske. If you're interested in joining the Board as Treasurer, and you have experience with Quicken and understand accounting terminology and concepts, we'd like to hear from you. Commissioners will be elected by the officers the same night.

Nominees for all officer and commissioner positions will be accepted through January. Contact any current Board member if you're interested in any position.

WINTER TRAINING

Winter is a great time for young ball players to work on their skills at local indoor training facilities. Grun's recently opened at the Nebraska Crossing outlet mall in Gretna. They have indoor batting cages available. Contact them at 332-3512 for more information.

The Strike Zone in Rockbrook Village has many batting cages, training tunnels and a new fitness training room. They also offer a wide range of winter clinics and camps designed to build specific skills using well-known local baseball and softball instructors. Call 398-1238 for more information.

CALENDAR

January 10, Board meeting, 7:00 p.m.

January 19, Baseball, softball, tee-ball registration, 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Legion Hall

February 14, Board meeting, 7:00 p.m. (Elections)

March 14, Board meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Monthly Board meetings are open to all and are held on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Our regular meeting site is the Springfield Legion Hall. However, the date, time and location are subject to change due to the availability of the hall. Only members of the Board of Directors are sent meeting reminders. If you plan to attend a meeting, you're encouraged to contact a Board member to confirm the meeting will be held as scheduled.

S.Y.A.A. NEEDS YOU!

Our organization is run completely by volunteers, people like you who get involved in a wide variety of ways. It takes parents and other community members, who want to make a difference in the lives of young athletes, to keep S.Y.A.A. running smoothly.

For the upcoming 2002 diamond sports season we have a need for a new Field Maintenance Coordinator. Responsibilities include preparing ball fields for the season, maintaining the fields during the season, preparing fields for games, and recruiting help as needed. We pay individuals to drag and stripe fields and set bases before games. All other work is strictly volunteer. If you're interested in the coordinator job, or helping the coordinator, please contact any officer.

We can always use help with the program, so please check the appropriate box(es) on the form when you register your children for the 2002 season.

NON-PROFIT STATUS

The IRS granted S.Y.A.A. non-profit status in November. All donations made to the organization anytime in 2001, and in the future, are "officially" tax deductible. Now we'll be able to approach potential large donors and apply for grants from a large number of organizations and foundations supporting youth sports.

If you need our EIN for tax purposes, please contact our Secretary, Michelle Oiness.

S.Y.A.A. THANKS THESE SPONSORS OF THE 2001 DIAMOND SPORTS SEASONS.

Please thank our generous business sponsors with your patronage.

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Thank you to the following S.Y.A.A. families and friends(*) for your contributions.

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