



Stay in Softball

STAY IN SOFTBALL 2015 YEAR IN REVIEW



Thanks to the support of softball players, parents and other generous donors and because of the dedication, time and hard work of many players, coaches and softball enthusiasts, Stay in Softball was able to accomplish the charitable activities outlined in this newsletter is past year.

SIS SPONSORS AKRON BUCHTTEL MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM

The Akron Buchtel Middle School softball team's fall season almost ended before it started due to a lack of equipment and uniforms.

The Lady Griffis had to forfeit their first game and were about to cancel their season when they were put in contact with Stay in Softball. A few days later, we were in Akron with a truck load of equipment for the team. We outfit all of the players with their own bat, helmet, facemask and glove. The team was also given two sets of catcher's equipment, two tees, and a hefty supply of softballs.

SIS also solicited donations for team uniforms and raised enough money to purchase a set of team jerseys, softball pants, socks and belts. We were also able to donate a few pairs of gently used cleats. Special thanks to the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association which gave a \$250 donation towards the

jerseys. Thanks also go to the Kuhrt family for responding to our Facebook call and donating over a dozen new pairs of softball pants and also making a monetary donation.

After being supplied with the equipment and uniforms, the Lady Griffis were able to complete their season and ended up with a winning record. The team was also invited to attend a free SIS clinic with Howard Kobata and will be invited to future free clinics. The players, their parents and Coach White asked that we relay their thanks to Stay in Softball's players and donors!

You can see pictures of the Lady Griffis on our website: www.stayinsoftball.com and can also see video of the ladies playing on our Facebook page: [Facebook.com/stayinsoftball](https://www.facebook.com/stayinsoftball)



The players at their home field picking out equipment from a selection of donations SIS collected at its used equipment drives.



The fall, 2015 Buchtel Middle School Lady Griffis softball team (Coach White, top row, first from the left).

OUR HISTORY AND MISSION

Stay in Softball was started in January of 2015 by fastpitch player, Meghan McKeogh. Meghan came up with the idea after her local softball team helped her family by providing meals and other assistance when her mother was recuperating from surgery. The assistance helped Meghan continue with her travel softball schedule without interruption.

Seeing how much the assistance helped her family, Meghan wanted to help other players who were experiencing some hardship so they could also continue to play softball. At that point, Stay in Softball was started.

In February, Stay in Softball was incorporated as an Ohio non profit corporation and in May, SIS obtained its 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. Although SIS started with the idea of helping players who had an ill family

members, it became apparent that there are many things that can keep girls from continuing to play softball at any level. Lack of equipment, facilities and coaching, inability to pay fees and health or family emergencies are just some things that can keep players from playing and advancing. SIS wants to help players experiencing any of these obstacles.

Therefore, as stated in its Articles of Incorporation, SIS's charitable purpose is to:

i) provide equipment, training, mentoring and other assistance to girls who participate in fastpitch softball and who, because of low income or other hardship require outside support; ii) provide equipment, assistance, training and mentoring to low income or otherwise in-need fastpitch softball teams; iii) conduct

activities that help keep girls active and advancing in fastpitch softball; and iv) conduct educational and charitable activities for fastpitch teams and players that emphasize good sportsmanship, team and individual values, and promote charity and goodwill among all fastpitch players."

Meghan McKeogh, Beatrice Titus and Caitlyn Kelm at a Valley Extreme Board meeting intro-



ducing SIS and asking for support for Stay in Softball's programs.

SIS PROGRAMS

Although Stay in Softball has a broad purpose and conducts many different activities, we have focused on three initial programs. They are:

1) Free Clinics and Lessons:

SIS will sponsor free clinics and provide lessons for girls who want to improve their softball skills but don't have the resources for or lack access to coaching or clinics appropriate for their skill level. The free clinics will be coached by well respected travel teams coaches and private instructors. Travel level players will assist with clinics and lessons appropriate to their level of skill. This year we have sponsored three free clinics and have also sponsored players to attend private clinics for more advanced coaching.

2) Equipment Collections/ Donations:

SIS collects used softball equipment and solicits companies and other sponsors for new equipment to donate to teams and players who may otherwise not be able to afford it. SIS distributes the equipment at its free clinics and also take requests for equipment donations from coaches and instructors on behalf of teams and individual players.

3) Player Assistance:

SIS seeks to assist players and teams who are unable to afford softball fees and expenses. SIS will consider supporting fundraising events for teams or families experiencing hardships or family emergencies on a case by case basis. This year we have helped two players whose parents have been diagnosed with cancer. For more information, please contact us.



Many younger players at the rec level do not own facemasks and may not be able to afford them. SIS provides free facemasks and other equipment to all players who need it.



FREE SOFTBALL CLINICS

CLEVELAND CLINIC

Stay in Softball's first free clinic was held on March 29th at Earn it Athletic Academy in Euclid, Ohio. The clinic was held for 8-12 year old rec and CYO players. The purpose of SIS clinics is to help younger players learn correct softball fundamentals from high level travel team and private coaches. This should enable them to compete at a higher level, enjoy the game more and keep playing softball.

Through our used equipment donation program, we are able to provide equipment to players who come to any of our clinics and do not have equipment. Facemasks, in particular, are an item that many younger players do not have but need. We have provided over 30 new facemasks to younger players.

WARREN CLINIC

SIS held its second free clinic for girls age 8-12 on July 20th at Candlelite Knolls in Warren. We had over 80 girls come out to learn fundamentals from a great group of travel coaches and players. The coaches held sessions on fielding (infield, outfield, throwing) hitting and base running. Parents and rec coaches were encouraged to watch and learn as well.

The clinic was a huge success. We received many mes-

sages from parents commenting on how much their daughters (and they) learned and how much fun they had doing it. We had one mother who said that her daughter was about to quit softball before coming to the clinic because she often had to sit on the bench instead of playing. She said that all of the one on one attention and enthusiasm from the coaches and SIS travel player assistants made her excited to play again.

AKRON/ HOWARD KOBATA CLINIC

On October 27th, SIS, with the assistance of the Ohio Stampede, sponsored a free clinic with Howard Kobata for rec players, rec coaches and SIS players who assist with our free clinics. Howard taught the players how to be more efficient and fast defensive players and helped correct common fielding technique errors.

Rec coaches were invited to watch the clinic in order to learn Howard's defensive techniques, how to teach them to rec players and how to spot and correct common fielding errors.

Howard also helped SIS players attending learn how to assist rec players with proper fielding techniques and drills so that they were better able to assist at future SIS clinics.





USED EQUIPMENT DRIVES

One of SIS's main programs is its used equipment collection and distribution program. All year long, SIS asks players to donate their used equipment and gently used clothing so that we can give it to players and teams who can not afford their own.

In order to make it easier for players to donate equipment, SIS players conducted three used equipment drives at tournaments sponsored by Valley Extreme. At the tournaments, the players set up tables and a tent and not only collected equipment but also handed out free SIS stickers, face tattoos, treats and informational flyers.

At two of the tournaments, SIS held a team donation contest. The team donating the most items received a free pizza party. The winner of the first contest was Valley

Extreme, Angelo/Ingalls and the winner of the second drive was Coventry Fury 12u.

Other teams donating a large amount of equipment at the drives and throughout the year were: Pittsburgh Nitro, Lady Lookouts, Ohio Outlaws, Ohio Wolfpack, Diamond Chix '01, Hot Sox '02, Valley Extreme (all teams) Wizards '03, Ohio Power Ohio Ice (purple) and Pinnacle Fastpitch.

However, leading the way with the most used equipment donations was SIS player, Alaina York and her dad (pictured left) who conducted their own equipment collections.

Another large equipment donor was SPC Sports which donated 26 used bats, used catching equipment and other items.

VALLEY EXTREME, SIS TOURNAMENT

On October 3rd and 4th the Valley Extreme Girls Fastpitch Organization hosted the Valley Extreme, Stay in Softball Charity Tournament at the Candlelite Knolls fields in Cortland. The tournament included 26 teams in 10u, 12u, 14u and 16u divisions.

SIS players worked hard soliciting donations for the tournament. All players and coaches were given gift bags with coupons from Dick's Sporting Goods, SPC Sports, local restaurant coupons, SIS bumper stickers, popcorn balls, and other treats. We also held a raffle and used equipment donation drive at the tournament. Prizes included Akron Racers tickets and jersey, a new Xenon bat, overnight stay at the Marriott Key Center and many other great prizes.

One of the highlights of the tournament was the 14u Championship Game which was broadcast live on The Softball Zone Radio Show

by Ricky Moorehead and Jeff Baker (two of SIS's most generous donors). A recording of the game can be found at: <http://recordings.talkshoe.com/TC-35639/TS-1017073.mp3>

The results of the championship games in each age group were:
 10u: Coventry Fury w. Erie Frost
 12u: Ohio Sluggers w. Thunder Elite
 14u: Valley Ext (Kelm) w SPC Hot Sox
 16u: Ohio Blast w. Valley Extreme (Pozzuto)

Stay in Softball would like to extend a huge thank you to Valley Extreme and Scott Munnell (TD) and all of its coaches (Kelm, Titus, Grace, Buck, Angelo, Fife, Georgalas, Swipas, Pozzuto), Nate Schick from Thunder Elite 12u, and all of the Valley Extreme parents who worked overtime and non stop to get the very wet fields game ready.



SIS BOARDS

SIS Advisory Board

Jeff Baker
Dave Kelm
Karen McKeogh
Meghan McKeogh (founder)
Tim McKeogh
Tom VanKirk
Larry York

SIS Player Advisory Board

Taylor Cassidy
Emily Darlington
Riley Frizzell
Caitlyn Kelm
Meghan McKeogh
Sydney Monroe
Beatrice Titus
Alaina York



SIS FREE CLINIC PLAYER VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to all of the travel softball players who assisted at our free softball clinics.

Taylor Cassidy, Ohio Outlaws
Emily Darlington, Ohio Wolfpack
Madison Dudek, Ohio Wolfpack
Riley Frizell, Ohio Lady Lasers
Julianna Hutchinson, Silver Creek

Starz
Emily Ickes, Ohio Wolfpack
Caitlyn Kelm, Valley Extreme
Olivia Kelm, Valley Extreme
Jessica Labeau, Ohio Wolfpack
Madison Long, Valley Extreme
Meghan McKeogh, Valley Extreme
Sydney Monroe, Valley Extreme
Maggie Moore, Ohio Outlaws

Concetta Rinaldi, Thunder Elite
Diane Salinas, Lady Lookouts, Prem.
Kaitlyn Sciortino, Valley Extreme
Rylee Squire, Thunder Elite
Olivia Stefanoni, Thunder Elite
Madison Terlizzi, Valley Extreme
Beatrice Titus, Valley Extreme
Madi VanKirk, Lady Lookouts, Prem.
Sydney Vukovich, Thunder Elite

SIS DONORS

Thank you to our donors, sponsors and volunteers. Because of your generosity, more girls can Stay in Softball.

Companies/Organizations:

The Softball Zone.com
Sign Guide wristband systems
Valley Extreme Girls Fastpitch
Dick's Sporting Goods
First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association
The Cortland/Bazetta Optimist Club
The Akron Racers
SPC Sports
Cleveland Marriott Downtown at Key Center
Ohio Lady Lookouts, Premier
Ohio Stampede
Ohio PGF
Pittsburgh Nitro
Coventry Fury Organization
Ohio Wolfpack Fastpitch

Ohio Outlaws Fastpitch
Ohio Power Fastpitch
Core Softball
Pittsburgh Pride
Pittsburgh Freedom
Leechburg Softball Association
Burrell Fastpitch
Cranberry Township Little League

Individuals:

Ricky Moorehead
Jeff Baker
Scott Munnell, Valley Extreme
Nicky Hufford
Scott Herrington, Sundogs
Andy and Sandy Popojas, Pittsburgh Nitro
Warren Wolff
McKeogh family
Tom O'Shea
Dave Kelm, Valley Extreme
Ronnie Titus, Valley Extreme

Tom VanKirk, Lady Lookouts
Danny Peterson, Coventry Fury
Sarah Ingalls, Valley Extreme
David DeWalt, Ohio Wolfpack
Matt Dohy, Silver Creek Starz
Rich Dudek, Ohio Wolfpack
Dan Lebeau (OhioWolfpack),
Dave Vukovich (Thunder Elite)
Monroe Family
McKeogh family
Salinas Family
Frizzell family
Kuhrt family
York family
King Family
Katz Family
Wolford Family
Jewell Family
Kelly Anne Winton
Steve Cassidy
Patrice Darlington
Rich Titus

SUPPORT SIS AND OUR PROGRAMS

Do you want to make a difference in the lives of young girls? There are many ways you can support the mission of Stay in Softball so we can help keep girls in the game.

Monetary Donations

Stay in Softball's activities are made possible by monetary donations. Your donation of any size will help make a positive impact on the life of one or more players. You can make a monetary donation on our website: www.stayinsoftball.com. You can also send us a check to Stay in Softball 464 Falls Rd. Chagrin Falls, OH 44022.

Equipment Donations

Softball equipment can be expensive and it is hard to practice and become a better player if you do not have your own equipment. That is why Stay in Softball collects used equipment to give to girls or teams that may not have the resources to buy their own. Whether it is a bat, a mitt, cleats or old balls, if it is still usable, there is some player who would love to have it. Please contact us with equipment donations and we can make arrangements to pick it up. Additionally, teams and coaches, please consider hosting your own equipment drive (we can help) and either donating the equipment to SIS or a needy team in your area.

Donate Your Time and Expertise

There are many ways you can help share your knowledge and passion for softball by volunteering. We are looking for coaches, teams and players who want to help lead clinics, adults and players who would like to be a part of the Advisory Boards, players to help collect equipment at tournaments and other events, people who have skills like web page design, social media skills and many others. If you have a desire, we can use your help.

CONTACT US

WEBSITE: WWW.STAYINSOFTBALL.COM
FACEBOOK: FACEBOOK.COM/STAYINSOFTBALL
TWITTER: [@STAYINSOFTBALL](https://twitter.com/STAYINSOFTBALL)
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