



THE Pony

Express



April 2003

2002-2003 Board of Directors

Board Staff Positions (all emails @mhp.org)

Baseball Store	Judy Mason	776-1523 store...
Booster Chair	Laura Moquin	booster...
Equipment Manager	Tim Mason	776-1523 equipment...
Fields Director	Matt Crider	847-7436 fields...
Head Scorekeeper	Mark Mom	778-5481
scorekeeper...		
Newsletter Editor	Tracie Zarubi	776-1303 newsletter...
Publicity Director	Kevin Crowley	779-5654 publicity...
Snack Shack	Bernadette Andrade	779-5711 snackshack
	Dianne Dariano	
Sponsorship Chair	Tony Saenz	778-2097 sponsorship...
Training Director	Joe Sorci	779-6640 training...
Winterball Dir.	Mike O'Connell	778-0609 winterball...
Tournament Dir.	Craig Martin	683-2721 tournament...
Webmaster	Mike Heil	782-8770 webmaster...

Executive Board Members

President	Roy Jackson	779-1041
	president@mhp.org	
Vice-President	Mike Rusch	778-6974
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Secretary	Byron Lengsfeld	779-2369
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Division Representatives

Shetland Division shetland@mhp.org
 John Howard 776-0316
 Troy Greenhalgh

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 Dominic Bejarano 779-4065
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 Bill Tuminaro 683-0602
 Louie Andrade 779-5711

Bronco Division bronco@mhp.org
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 Alan LaBranche 782-1197

Pony Division pony@mhp.org
 John Bennett 776-0983

Colt Division colt@mhp.org
 Ken Valencia

Player Agents Corner

Games

We are well on our way into the season. Hopefully everyone is improving their skills and having fun. The first week's games have all been rescheduled. Please see your Manager for information regarding these make-ups. Hopefully Mother Nature will continue to smile on us, and we won't have too many more rain outs.

So far, from my perspective, we have been having a great year. The games I have watched, have, for the most part, been well played and well coached. The pitch counts are in the front of everyone's minds, everyone is getting to play, and in general everyone seems to be getting along. This is a great improvement over previous years, and I applaud everyone's efforts.

A Few Reminders

[Pinto and Shetland Divisions](#): These are non-competitive divisions. No one should be discussing scores or standings with any players in these divisions. The purpose of these divisions is to encourage the players to develop their skills, have a good time, and prepare themselves for the next levels. Let's leave the competition to the higher divisions where it belongs.

[Mustang through Pony Divisions](#): Yes, these are competitive leagues, but keep it in

perspective, the end result is not as important as the well being and development of the players. Little Johnny deserves more than to play his 3 innings in right field and get his one at bat every game. It is better that Little Johnny got a chance to play 2nd base, and committed the game ending error, than for his team to have won the game. Because 20 years from now, when Little Johnny is deciding on a sport for his child, he will remember he was a second baseman when he played, and will want to give his child the same experience. If we only encourage the better players, we will be killing our sport for future generations.

Score books: Managers, please don't cost your teams any more games. Make sure the score books are correct **before** you sign them. Our rules include penalties for violations of minimum play times and pitching. Don't cost your team a game they deserved to win because of an error on your part. Before you sign the book make sure that it states when the players entered the game and how long they played. Make sure it clearly states when each pitcher entered and left the game and how many pitches they threw. The Official Book is the record of the game. If it is incorrect, then make sure it is fixed before you sign, because penalties are based on that book, and they are harsh.

Umpires and Score Keepers: These folks are out there doing their best for your children. They are not perfect, but they try. Treat them with the same respect you would want someone to treat your own child. We do not pay these kids enough to have them put up with ridicule or scorn, and they have all been instructed to walk away from conflict. Do your part to set a good example for the players and treat everyone with respect.

Parking: Please remember that we, Pony Baseball, are not allowed to park inside the gate at Britton. Most of that area is a marked fire lane. The fire lane is an important safety factor, because if one of the players were to be hurt and require medical attention during a game or practice, the fire truck and ambulance needs to have easy access into the facility.

Several people have already been reminded by the Morgan Hill Police that we have to obey these laws. The police will continue to be called when someone is parked in the fire lanes. Please remember that this is a costly reminder.

Have fun and see you at the ball park!

Gregg Hall

MHPB Fundraising Activities

Though the baseball season is still young, your MHPB Board and other volunteers have been very active in raising money to support the activities of the league for this year. Tam Bouslog and Laura Moquin and others have put on a successful See's candy

fundraiser that has typically been our largest and most successful fundraiser. Unfortunately, due to issues beyond our control, See's did not give us access to the full assortment of Easter products. We only had access to the very low cost items. What this means to us is that we have raised only about 50% of the money we would normally raise, even though our kids sold nearly 3000 separate items, which is a record. This has caused a significant shortfall in our planned income for the year.

What does this mean to us as parents? It means that we need to support MHPB's other fundraisers at a higher level than we have in the past. An example is the Mountain Mike's Pizza Card Fundraiser. We are selling coupons to Mt. Mike's for free and discounted pizzas, a \$200+ value for only \$15. For anyone who eats pizza, this should be a no-brainer! For \$15 you receive a card valid at Mountain Mike's. This card entitles you to 9 buy-one-get-one-free pizzas, 3 \$4 off coupons for Large pizzas, 3 \$5 off coupons for Ex-Large pizzas, and one free mini pizza. They can be purchased at the Snack Shack or from Gregg Hall, Tam Bouslog or Laura Moquin. If every family buys just one card, all of our fundraising problems will be solved! We are looking forward to your support in these fundraisers. Help yourself by helping the league in our fundraising activities.

Bob Morris

Memorial Weekend Tournament

We will be hosting a MEMORIAL BASEBALL TOURNAMENT this year. All games will be played at Britton School, Saturday May 24th and Sunday May 25th. We will be hosting Pony (ages 14U) with 2 teams from Morgan Hill, 1 team from San Jose Pacific and a team from Pleasanton. We will also host a Mustang Tournament featuring 2 teams from Morgan Hill, 1 from Blossom Valley and 1 from Los Altos.

At press time the Pony 13 team destination has yet to be determined. We NEED VOLUNTEERS for gate collection, dragging fields, putting up fences, and all around work to make this a great experience for the kids. Yes, we all lead busy lives and it's tough to take the time to get up early and do work, but hey, if we don't do it, who will?

Let's make this the best ever Memorial Tournament.

Does anyone know a great BBQ cook?

We will also be sending 2 Mustang teams to Blossom Valley.

In Bronco we will be sending all 4 teams out of town, hopefully to some nice destinations.

Pinto will be holding an in house tournament with Morgan Hill teams only.
Let's play ball!

Craig Martin
MHPB Tournament Director 2003

Coaching Tips

"WARM UP TO THROW, DON'T THROW TO WARM UP."

Always allow your players the opportunity to stretch and loosen up before letting them play catch. This is particularly important in the cooler weather this time of year. Don't let them pick up a ball until their arm is warm! Just a few minutes of exercise will go a long way to protect young arms and shoulders.

THROWING & CATCHING IS THE NAME OF THE GAME. There is no secret formula! It is repetition of proper form...and practice, practice, practice. It will cost you NO money, requires NO fancy equipment and all you need to do is put in the time and effort to "play catch." Unfortunately, all too often practice becomes an arduous time-consuming task; viewed by the kids as ALL WORK and NO PLAY! But it's no big secret that the kids' appreciation of baseball, as well as their ability to enjoy playing the game, seems to grow proportionately with their ability to compete. **I Know, I Know. It's Boring!** This is the single most important activity you, as an adult, can do to enhance their baseball abilities. **Playing catch properly** teaches and reinforces two of the most important aspects of the game: catching the ball & throwing the ball. Always have your player move toward the ball and try to catch it in the center of the body with two hands. There are many players who still possess a real fear of the baseball. Going to the ball and becoming confident in their ability to catch the ball is the only way to overcome this fear. The obvious benefit of catching with 2 hands is the prevention of the ball popping out of the glove. Another important benefit of catching with 2 hands is the quick transition of the ball from the glove to the throwing hand. Another key element in playing catch is "Fingers Up,

Fingers Down," depending on whether the ball is above or below the belly button. Discourage "slapping" at the low ball with the fingers up. Throw them line drives, ground balls, pop ups, short hops, etc. Have them get low on ground balls. Get that head down. Look for the button on top of their hats as they field grounders. (You should be able to see it when they are doing it properly.) **THROWING THE BALL:** Be sure to always have players stretch their arms. **DON'T** let them pick up a ball until their arm is warm. When throwing the ball, get those front (glove) shoulders pointing straight at the target. Step toward the target when throwing the ball, and follow through. Get those arms bent at the elbow, up above the shoulder, when throwing the ball ("Down, Back & Up"). (**Coaching Cue:** Thumb to the Thigh, Knuckles to the Sky.) Elbow comes through first followed by hand and ball, fingers on top of the ball. Use the 4-seam grip. Follow through on your throws by bringing the *Throwing Side Hip* around on your follow through. In throwing, work on keeping the throwing elbow **UP**. Don't sling it, push it or side-arm it. Throwing "over the top" increases strength, velocity and accuracy. It also protects the arm from injury. You can play catch almost all year round. Try to encourage the kids to keep their gloves close by in the offseason. Playing catch develops throwing techniques, receiving techniques and footwork more than any single thing you do. Talk to your players' parents. Stress to them the importance of proper catching and throwing techniques. Encourage them to play catch with their kids.

Remember:

"YA GOTTA LOVE THE GAME."

Article submitted by:

Troy Greenhalgh

Shetland Division Representative

Ref; Bartons Youth Baseball

I believe ...

I believe hitting a round ball with a round bat is the hardest thing to do in all of sports.

I believe in the sacrifice fly.

I believe that AstroTurf should be outlawed.

I believe that pitchers should buy catchers lunch.

I believe batting practice makes perfect.

I believe Lou Gehrig's birthday should be a national holiday.

I believe Tony Gwynn sleeps with his bat.

I believe the squeeze play should be taught in public schools.

I believe that no one is bigger than the game.

I believe somebody, somewhere, believes in the infield fly rule.

I believe it's time to sing "Take me out to the ballgame."

I believe domed stadiums are great ... for motocross.

I believe that "Field of Dreams" and "Bull Durham" are two of the best baseball movies ever made.

And I believe the two greatest words in the English language are **"Play Ball"**!

Submitted by:
Troy Greenhalgh
Shetland Division Representative

Author: Unknown

A few more things:

- There are no dogs allowed (except seeing eye dogs) on school property
- No alcohol is allowed on school property
- No tobacco products (chewing tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, pipes) are permitted on school property
- There is no parking in the Fire Lane at Britton
- The See's candy sale raised over \$11,000, MHPB gets half of that. The top three sellers were:

Mikey Galluci	\$348
Pete Athans	\$332
Tyler Lerma	\$324

GREAT JOB BOYS!!

A big thank-you to all players and families for their participation in the candy sales!