



2024
6th Edition



AROUND THE BASES

*Happy
Holidays*



A YEAR OF REFLECTION

GREETING FROM THE 2024 SCP SOFTBALL BOARD

It's been a fantastic season, and we'd like to extend our well-deserved gratitude to every member; from players to supporters who contribute to the vibrant community spirit that makes SCP such a special place. Here's to the joy, camaraderie, and countless memories made on and off the field. May the friendships and support foster this season continue to thrive in the seasons to come.

As you may know, each year the fall season typically shows a significant reduction in player registration. Therefore, the Club adjusted the leagues to accommodate fewer teams and schedules for games/practices on specific days of the week.

Our Ladies League leadership found a way to keep things fresh and engaging. By dividing the season into three "mini seasons" and shuffling the teams, they not only ensured a balanced distribution of skills but also gave everyone the opportunity to bond with different teammates. The LL coordinators served as team managers for two of the three teams and three new volunteers took on team management roles. This new approach fostered a lot of new friendships, enhanced the sense of community, as well as provided great leadership opportunities. Foremost, this approach allowed for a less competitive atmosphere while encouraging more enjoyment of the game and camaraderie among the players.

The Board continued to embrace new ideas by fostering an inclusive environment with the Co-Ed pickup games. The positive feedback suggests that these games were a hit, providing a fun and engaging way for everyone to come together and enjoy the sport. We are planning to continue the Co-Ed pickup games in the Spring. The continuation and success of the CORT instructional program, along with their exhibition games, confirms a strong commitment to skill development and providing opportunities for everyone to improve and showcase their abilities.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, January 25, 2025

- ◆ Registration Opens (in conjunction with Clubs & Activities Expo)

Saturday, February 8, 2025

- ◆ Registration Ends

Sunday, March 2, 2025

- ◆ MLA Draft

Monday, March 3, 2025

- ◆ LL Draft and Reveal

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

- ◆ MLB Draft

Saturday, March 29, 2025

- ◆ OPENING DAY

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A YEAR OF REFLECTION (continued)

We are dedicated to maintaining and improving the ballfield facility as well as enhancing spectator experience. Removing the juniper bushes behind the bleachers opened the space and improved visibility, while the new backstop fencing ensures safety and a better play environment. The installation of new PA speakers continues to enhance the atmosphere, making announcements clearer and more enjoyable for the spectators.

These initiatives highlight our league's dedication to innovation and community building. Our ongoing efforts to make improvements display our strong commitment to the community and sport.

In closing, "Congratulations" to our Fall Season award winners and team champions. Great job! The Board wants to once again say thank you to everyone for being a part of this amazing journey. Whether a player, manager, coach, umpire, scorekeeper, board operator, photographer, or announcer – your involvement makes the Club the success it continues to be. A special thanks to our league leadership teams for making everything happen. Let's look forward to many more years of fun, friendship, and softball.

Your 2024 SCP Softball Board

2024 SCP Softball Veterans Game Day



"Thank you for your service and all that you do for our country."



SPONSOR HIGHLIGHT

Georgia Banking Company

SCP Ladies' League Sponsor, GBC is an amazing community bank that continues to build relationships with the SCP community. Established in 2007 at their only Griffin location, GBC Retail Market Leader, Derricka Sterling, shares their goal of creating healthy, lasting relationships between GBC and the community. They continue to live up to these goals through various partnerships, most notably, the Spalding County Sheriff's Office to teach Elder Abuse and Exploitation classes to the Sun City Community and others.

Since 2017, GBC has been **a continuous, reliable sponsor of the SCP Softball League**. Since the inception of the SCP community, they have been sponsors of numerous and various initiatives. Within the SCP community they sponsor Pickleball, the Military Affairs Association, and ACES; just to name a few.

The members of the GBC Griffin Branch Retail Team are often seen at various SCP functions. GBC staff remain active participants at the Annual SCP Spring and Fall Vendor Fairs. Derricka states, "Being a sponsor of the softball team has been amazingly rewarding to GBC. Not only has it brought exposure to the bank; but it has also given GBC staff the opportunity to build relationships with amazing residents of Sun City, and other clubs from the community." She further shares that their values are centered around service, expertise, and relationships. They offer an ATM in the Amenities Center for the convenience of the residents and are located five miles from the Sun City Community at 1624 North Expressway.



GBC Griffin Branch Retail Team



80's CLUB— Celebrating New Inductees

The SCP Softball Club continues to grow and we're proud to announce that since the league's inception in 2012, a total of 13 club members have been inducted into the "SCP 80's Club". As active members of the SCP Softball Club when they turned 80, they are acknowledged of such an achievement via presentation and receipt of a special SCP 80's softball cap.

The 13 inductees include Linda Desmond, Jeff Empie, Bev Farinha, Alice Fletcher, Lee Gorman, Tom Janecek, Ron Largent, Craig Larzelere, Bill Leachman, Jim McGohan, Brad Wideman, Susan Williams and Bob Ley. We acknowledge and congratulate the **2024 newest 80's Club members: Susan Williams, Bob Ley, and Jim McGohan.** Welcome to the club!

"We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing."

~ George Bernard Shaw

DID YOU KNOW?

Jay Knight stands over 6' tall; however, somehow served 25 years in the Navy, on submarines; must have been quite an adventure. And he also transitioned from an enlisted nuclear mechanic to a commissioned logistics officer while serving in the Navy. After playing several seasons of SCP softball, and even after being sidelined from playing softball due to knee injuries, it's wonderful that Jay continues to contribute to the club by umpiring. His dedication to the community and love for the game are truly inspiring. Jay's story is a testament to the resilience, dedication, and community spirit that make our league and Sun City Peachtree so special.

SCP's very own **Ken Nears** will be representing the State of Georgia in the bowling competition in Des Moines, Iowa. In July 2025, Ken will be competing in the National Senior Olympics. What a fantastic honor. You may be surprised to know that Ken transitioned from civil engineering to psychology and currently maintains a clinical psychology practice. Prior to 2023, Ken had played six seasons of softball; however, in 2023, Ken was struck by lightning in his home. Although all his electronics were fried, Ken survived! What an extraordinary story of resilience and fortitude. Best of luck to Ken in Des Moines next July.

Certified bilingual instructor **Janine Fearon** was an international instructor with over 38 years of teaching experience in California and Georgia.

Child Welfare & Family Lawyer **Tammy M. Griner** has over 33 years of experience and currently serves residents of Spalding County.

Since 2002, **Darlene Pressley** has been a Griffin resident and is also a sports enthusiast. She served as board member and chair of the Glenwood Hills Youth Association, an organization designed to form youth sport leagues.

The Diane Skelton Award *Keeping the Legacy Alive*



The SCP Softball Ladies League continues to foster friendships, support, and community spirit. It's heartwarming to hear how our Ladies League players value not just their skills and stats, but the bonds that are formed along the way. The **Diane Skelton** award is a beautiful tradition that highlights these invaluable aspects of the Ladies League.

If you ever had the opportunity to play alongside or talk with Diane before Covid brought the world to a standstill, you know that she was a true ambassador of softball and the community it builds. Her infectious enthusiasm and support for both the women's and men's league players exemplify the very best qualities of sportsmanship and camaraderie. Although not noted as a superstar player, she truly represented everything that made the Ladies League attractive to all those who signed up, whether experienced or first-time players. Honoring her with an award is our way of keeping her legacy alive and inspiring others to follow in her footsteps.

In 2020 after complications from surgery, Diane unexpectedly passed away. Her spirit and passion left a lasting imprint on the league and its members. Fellow softball sisters felt that creating the Diane Skelton award is such a meaningful way to honor her memory and ensure that her legacy of camaraderie and joy continues to inspire others.

Diane Skelton Award criteria beautifully captures the essence of what Diane stood for and the values she embodied. They highlight the importance of not just athletic skill, but the spirit of camaraderie, passion, and community that makes this league so special. Players who exemplified the criteria are reviewed and a winner is chosen by the reviewing board. The award winner joins the reviewing board for the following year.

Congratulations to Marva Blocker, 2024 Diane Skelton Award Recipient



Since joining the ladies' league in 2018, Marva continues to embody the spirit and qualities that the Diane Skelton Award represents. Her dedication, leadership, and encouragement of others are truly commendable. Marva experienced a heartfelt moment when her name was announced, and everyone cheered in approval. The element of surprise surely added to the joy of the occasion, making it even more memorable for her and everyone involved.

Congratulations to Marva and all previous winners. Diane's legacy lives through the remarkable players who carry forward her spirit of camaraderie, support, and love for the game. To every player who has contributed to making the Ladies' League a supportive and inspiring environment, "Thank you!" Here's to many more seasons of friendship and unforgettable moments on the field!

"Doing your BEST is more important than being the BEST."

~ Shannon Miller



FUN FACTS

Competing in the Little League World Championship at just 12 years old and facing such high-stakes games is an impressive feat. **Brad Wideman's** story is a fascinating piece of sports history. Brad, along with 13 other “Boys of Summer” from the Southside Little League program in Birmingham, Alabama, traveled by chartered bus to Williamsport, Pennsylvania. They were one of the eight teams to play for the Little League World Championship that began August 24-28. During the month of August, they defeated nine state and regional teams to get to the finals. At Williamsport, they overcame Illinois 6-1 and Virginia 10-2. As Relief Pitcher, Brad had closed several games and now found himself in the “bull pen” warming up to face Schenectady, New York for the championship if they had to go to extra innings. Fortunately, they closed out the game in the bottom of the 6th with a 1-0 score.

Brad recalls the day he met Ty Cobb. “A day had been set aside for the eight teams to enjoy a day of relaxation with a picnic. The coaches instead chose to practice, and they were treated to meeting **Ty Cobb (The Georgia Peach) who was perhaps the greatest baseball player to ever put on spikes**. Cobb spent time with the team giving advice and showing useful techniques of the game which I remember and have continued to use to this day.” Brads’ journey is a testament to the enduring impact of early sports experiences and the remarkable people we meet along the way.

Reggie Pressley has accumulated over 40 years of experience starting from the ground crew and eventually becoming a **Flight Attendant with Delta Airlines**. Unable to initially achieve his dream career of becoming a Flight Attendant, due to imposed height and weight restrictions, Reggie never gave up on his possibilities. Prior to 1996, the airlines-imposed flight attendant restrictions of height and weight. Shortly thereafter, he became a Flight Attendant as today, airlines are focused more on functionality and the ability to reach overhead compartments rather than a specific height range.

When asked what he enjoyed most about his profession, Reggie stated, “I enjoyed the customer service and the opportunity to meet a diverse range of people, including celebrities!” Besides the travel perks, Reggie enjoys participating in sports activities with Delta, such as softball and traveling basketball, Reggie’s story is a testament to perseverance, adaptability, and the joy of connecting with others.

Our final fun fact for 2024-year features ... (drum-roll please!), SCP Softball Board member **Steve Heck**. Yes! SCP’s very own actor. In 2019, Steve made a special appearance in the movie “**Poms**” starring Diane Keaton (as Martha), Jacki Weaver, Rhea Perman, and many other famous actors and actresses. Filmed right here at Sun City Peachtree, the Sun City Poms is a truly inspiring story! It's remarkable how this cheer squad, with members ranging in age from 55 to 88, has continued to spread joy and enthusiasm over the decades.

Steve recently appeared in the 2024 release of **Fly Me to the Moon**, with Scarlett Johansson, Channing Tatum, Woody Harrelson, just to name a few. This stylish romantic comedy movie is set against the high-stakes backdrop of NASA’s historic Apollo landing. So, if you’re a space buff and recall the first moon landing, then you’ll enjoy the historical references, quirky romance, and alternative history depicted in this movie.

Our Year at Veterans Field

2024





This sums up the 2024 editions of Around the Bases for the SCP Softball season. We hope that you have enjoyed the insights and information provided in each edition about the league, players, sponsors and supporters of a sport that means so much to our community. We have enjoyed working together and look forward to the upcoming season.



May the season bring you gifts of peace, hope, and joy!
Wishing you a safe and healthy New Year!

Happy Holidays from the
2024 SCP Softball Communications Team



Left to right: Reggie Jones, George Bradley, Bev Callahan, Brad Carr, Darlene LeFlore, Jan McFarland, Tina Young, Donna Heavener, John Heavener, and Bryce Nolting.