



Ahwatukee Foothills Pony Baseball

PO BOX 93184, PHOENIX AZ 85070 • PONYBASEBALLAZ.COM

Officers

OJ Liberta
President

Don Ricciotti
Vice President

Dan Beeks
Secretary

Pat Hunemuller
Treasurer

Welcome Coaches, Ballplayers, and Fans,

As President of the Ahwatukee Foothills Pony Baseball Association, I would like to take a moment to thank all of you for joining us in what will be another fantastic season of youth baseball. Stepping into the presidency I knowingly have some big shoes to fill. For numerous years our former President, Jerry Marino, led our league through all of its ups and downs with his countless years of knowledge in youth baseball. Though many of you know Jerry, very few realize Jerry has not had a child in the league for over 10 years. So why did he do it? The same reason most people do: first and foremost they get involved to help their own child and little by little they realize what a great feeling it is to be part of something bigger, something better, and something that is pure and just for the kids. Some won't realize how much of a difference they made in a child's life until years from now while walking through a store they hear "hey coach." Incidents like this help put things into perspective and remind us what this is all about.....kids.....our kids.

Doing what's best for the kids has always been my adage. As president my plan is simple: carry this adage throughout the league. For those of you that have been around the league, you will notice some changes that have "what's best for the kids" in mind. One change is the addition of our Club division. Club baseball has grown exponentially over the last decade. We have discussed the idea of adding a club division for several seasons; this year we put the wheels in motion. Adding a club division has many benefits. To name a few, it gives our local club teams a place to play, it keeps our kids that play club baseball in our league and it exposes our local players to club ball (something they might want to pursue).

Another idea coming to fruition is the expansion of our coaching clinic. Every year our league holds mandatory coaches clinic. This clinic covers various aspects of the game from running practices to off field team management. For the first time we will be running specialized clinics based on age divisions. For our older teams concentration will be on specialized positional development and more advanced skills with pitchers, catchers, base running etc. For our younger teams it will focus more on the basics and development of needed skills each player must master in order to excel. This will also be expanded outside of the coaches' clinic as we will have instructors visiting practices to guide and assist. As you can see this will take a great deal of time, but it is a worthwhile investment in our coaches and our kids.

Some other improvements you may not have noticed are our new portable pitching mounds, safety fence cap on the Bronco field, and a new infield irrigation system, to name a few.

So how can you help? The easiest way is to join me by simply taking a moment to thank all who make this league what it is season after season: our board members, coaches, umpires, field crews, sponsors and the many other volunteers. The next step would be to join us and be part of something bigger, better, something pure.....after all, your kids are only little once!!!!

Have a great season, see you on the field,

OJ Liberta

President
Ahwatukee Foothills Pony Baseball