



It's a Whole New Ball Game!

Diamond Baseball of Boulder, Inc.

3165 23rd Street ♦ Boulder ♦ Colorado ♦ 80304

richardmthomas@yahoo.com (303) 809-6562

What is Diamond Baseball?:

Diamond Baseball of Boulder, Inc. is a non-profit organization started in the mid 90s. We are, officially, a 501(c) 3 organization according to the IRS. We are recognized as tax exempt by the City of Boulder and we are registered with the Colorado Secretary of State. Contributions are tax deductible!

What do we do?

We organize and field teams that play competitive baseball. We have teams for those 13 and under, 14 and under (Boulder Bison) and we field American Legion Baseball teams, in the A, B, and C divisions. We are big supporters of Boulder High School's Baseball program, however the BHS High School Season is entirely separate from our organization.

DBOB Philosophy:

It is all about competitive baseball and providing opportunity for kids who want to play and learn the game. We are striving to build an organization that will provide a lasting legacy in terms of baseball programs and facilities from the youth level to the High School Level and American Legion A level. We want to teach baseball fundamentals and the love of the game. We want to bring baseball back into our social fabric of our community where an evening at a game is an enjoyable community and neighborhood event. We want the kids and the fans to have fun! We will provide a base program that feeds Boulder High School and our American Legion program and wins state championships! How will we do this and what have we done so far? Read on.

It's A Whole New Ball Game:

While the major leagues are contemplating contraction with the elimination of the Twins and the Expos, Diamond Baseball is busting at the seams by adding a second 13-year-old team this year. Diamond Baseball is moving in the right direction. The Diamond Baseball Board has been meeting every two weeks since October. Our board meetings are standing room only! Since

October, our meetings have been extremely well attended with an overall attendance record of 95%. We are setting goals, meeting deadlines, and getting things done. Under the leadership of Rick Thomas, our organization is exploding with energy. Our Board meeting attendance and ability to get things done is not by happenstance; it's due in large part to our president, Rick Thomas. Rick has applied his business savvy and managerial skills to Diamond Baseball. Being a bit of a bulldog, Rick is turning our organization into a first class outfit. It's fun being involved in an organization that gets things done.

The Board has identified key issues to focus on; they include expanding our board and establishing an identity and formal goals and objectives

Identity:

If you were to ask anybody in Boulder who Diamond Baseball is, you would probably get a puzzled look followed by, "Isn't that the sports-jewelry outlet that Tom Shane started a few years back?" Everybody knows who the Boulder Bison are and have heard of Legion Baseball, but few people are aware that Diamond Baseball is the parent organization for both these programs. It is critical that people know who we are and what we do, if we are to succeed.

Fundraising:

Did you know that it costs \$10-13,000 per year to field a Bison or Legion team? In simple terms that equates to nearly \$1000 per player. The fees we charge our players pays for less than half the costs! Through fundraising, personal donations, and sponsorships Diamond Baseball has been supplementing our player's fees to the tune of over \$500 per player per year. Previous reserves have been nearly drained. President Rick Thomas, realized that we are headed for a collision course with "insufficient funds" if we don't start attacking this problem. As the first order of business, Diamond Baseball has initiated several fundraising programs, including concessions at Invesco Fields, baseball clinics, selling of Krispy Cream Doughnuts, and sponsorship programs. In addition, the board has approved and published an itemized budget for each



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team. Being financially secure is our single most important goal for 2002.

Building Bridges:

While there is usually an adversarial relationship between the Bison program and Little League because we often compete for the same players, (just ask South Boulder Little League and the South Boulder Bulldogs), Diamond Baseball has extended the olive branch. In an unprecedented move, Marlin Bohn (past NBLL President) and Mary Kennedy (current NBLL President) and our board have been working together for the good of both organizations. Kudos on our side to Eric Harman who has worked very hard for both organizations. NBLL and DBOB have teamed up to lobby the City of Boulder to build 6 new baseball fields at Valmont City Park. Diamond Baseball is putting on the first ever "Early-Bird Baseball Clinic" on February 23 for North Boulder Little Leaguers. The success of Boulder High School Baseball ultimately depends on the strength of the Diamond Baseball program, which ultimately depends on North Boulder Little League. Working together, both programs will grow for the betterment of all kids.

Equipment: The Boulder Bison and the Boulder Legion programs have always had first class uniforms and equipment but with escalating costs even these items are being threatened. It is critical that we have better control of our uniforms and equipment. The Diamond Baseball Board has assigned one person dedicated to the tracking and coordination of all uniforms and equipment. Enter, Craig Ansbaugh. Craig has stepped up to the plate and inventoried all our existing uniforms and equipment, and has been negotiating with our vendors to get the best possible prices on all future purchases. Thank you, Craig for taking on this daunting task.

Diamond Baseball on the Web

Our website was put online in early February thanks to the hard work of Dan & Linda Wilkinson and Paul Rutigliano. Please be patient as we add content. Our domain name www.diamondbaseball.org is

forwarded to the free web pages hosted by tripod.com, (that's why you will see diamondbaseball.tripod.com in the address line of your browser).

We also own the www.diamondbaseball.com domain name and a small web page at that location. In an effort to keep players and parents informed, we will be publishing and distributing a regular newsletter (like the one you are currently reading). Periodic communiqués will be distributed as the need arises directs users to this location. We will continue to try to update and upgrade our website to provide helpful and interesting information to all interested parties.

Hats Off To Invesco Field Volunteers:

Unselfishly, board members and many parents volunteered their time selling concessions at 6 Bronco games this past fall. Raising thousands of dollars for the organization, this is the first of many fundraising efforts Diamond Baseball will be running throughout the year.

Special Thanks To Amy Westfeldt and Grace Porrit:

Amy and Grace have worked very hard on a great many efforts to help us get organized. They represent the Bison 13s and have done a great job helping with fundraising, communication, uniforms, the newsletter and a whole bunch of other things. So do not hesitate to express your appreciation!

Special Thanks To Past Members:

While Diamond Baseball is thriving, our organization would not even exist if it were not for the contributions of the tireless volunteers of the past. We would like to recognize Vince and Karen Porreca, Warren Heim, Brad Littlehales, and all former board members for their past efforts. Past accomplishments are many (warehouse space, Scott Carpenter Press box and improvements, the



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formation of YBOB, field use contracts with BVSD, fundraising, community awareness) have allowed this year's board to focus on even bigger projects.

Communication :

One of the keys to any organization is communication. In an effort to keep players and parents informed, we will be publishing and distributing a regular newsletter (like the one you are currently reading). Periodic communiqués will be distributed as the need arises.

Love Baseball? Want to Help?

Diamond Baseball of Boulder, Inc. needs your time and money. We need volunteers to assist with fundraising, scorekeeping concessions, and administrative support. We accept donations in any amount you can give. If you would like to help in any way, please call or write Rick Thomas (303) 809-6562, richardmthomas@yahoo.com.

Coaching Announcements!

The Bison 14 year old team will be coached by Dennis Nickerson. There will be two Bison 13 year old teams; one head coach will be Phil Swan while the other will be a new addition to Diamond Baseball, Benjamin (B.J.) Otten. BJ responded to our advertisement for coaching help last fall and was interviewed by Jack and Rick and Phil. BJ brings a lot of enthusiasm to the program and he has great baseball experience. He graduated from Middlebury College in Vermont with a degree in biology. BJ competed in high school baseball, soccer, And Nordic Ski Jumping. He has been playing baseball since he was five in both summer leagues and school. BJ played in a semi-pro wood bat league in 1998 and he attended 6 summer baseball camp sessions at the University of Maine, supervised by Coach Winken, (a College World Series Championship coach). He played four years varsity baseball at Middlebury College being brought in as a middle infielder, and ending up a closer. He was a spot starter at second base. BJ indicates that he has a great grasp of the game and all of its facets, believing he is a stronger defensive coach. He has picked up a vast amount of knowledge hitting mechanics at the college level. I know all of the parents

will help us welcome BJ to the program and give him the help and support he needs.

Announcements:

Bison Practice

Practice will start the first week of March. All the 13s will practice together for a week or so and then the squad will be split into two teams. Expect communication from Phil and BJ as to a big team and parents meeting to get things kicked off right.

USED BOOK FUNDRAISER

This is an easy, minimal effort fundraiser! Gather all your used books. (No textbooks, seasonal, or business books. All books must look new. No highlighting, tattered covers, and hardbound books must have their paper covers.) Drop off those books at Boulder Veterinary Hospital at 3630 N. Broadway (between Iris and Linden) Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 8am to 5pm, Tuesday and Thursday 8am to 6:30pm, or Saturday 8am until 11:30am. Books must be dropped off by March 2. Craig Ansbaugh will take all the books to Boulder Bookstore where they will give cash for the used books they want. The money will go into the Diamond Baseball general fund to help cover cost of fielding teams. That's it! It's that easy! So gather your books, and ask for your relative's and neighbor's used books, too! Remember to have them dropped off by March 2! THANKS!!!

We Need More Players!

If you are 13 or 14 and want to play for the Bison give us a call!

Dennis Nickerson (14 year olds)
303-499-4300 W
303-444-4155 H

Phil Swan (13 year olds)
303-440-8200 W
303-447-2716 H



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Boulder High School Baseball!!

It is bound to be a big season. We are planning a big opening ceremony (tentatively scheduled for the first Saturday of the season) to celebrate the new press box and real restrooms. There will be food, refreshments, short words of thanks to current and past benefactors and a BHS Varsity Baseball Game. There are colleges and MLB teams scouting several of the Panthers this season so come out and see some great baseball with Jack Taylor's 2002 squad at Scott Carpenter Park. Check our website for BHS schedules and more information.

Thanks to all who helped out at February 23's "Early Bird Clinic"

Linda just wanted to thank everyone for the great success of February 23's "Early Bird Clinic" put on to help tune up the NBLL youngsters for NBLL tryouts. Eric, Win, Michelle, the coaches, the high school players, and everyone did a terrific job! Today, as I was calling parents about fees and such, I heard wonderful comments about the day, and a hope that it will happen again! Thanks again, every parent appreciated the hard work and effort! Linda Wilkinson.

Interested In Attending Our Next Board Meeting?

Parents of Bison and Legion players are always welcome to attend our meetings as guests, as is any member of the public. Contact Linda Wilkinson or Diane Amidei if you would like to attend the next meeting. Beware! Attending a Diamond Baseball meeting is not for the faint of heart. Guest attendants may be subjected to intense board pressure for additional "volunteerism".

Got a Problem? Comment? Suggestion? DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT

DBOB President, RICK THOMAS!!

We are all working hard to build and maintain a strong organization, but problems will come up. Parents are sometimes unhappy with coaches and sometimes feel that coaches do not have an open ear. So what do you do? You come to me. Rick Thomas, phone (303) 809-6562, or email richardmthomas@yahoo.com. My job is to listen, explain, and help. Please respect the fact that the coaches work very hard and need your support, but never hesitate to speak with me or email me if you have a comment question, concern, or just want to vent. Please, if you have a problem, make a suggestion as to how you think a solution can be worked out. This way the executive committee and, if appropriate, the board can assess your constructive and positive input when determining how to address the issue.

Help!! Concessions!

We need a dedicated person to organize concessions at Scott Carpenter Park for the High School Season starting March 12 and the Legion season this summer. The City of Boulder has agreed to allow us to sell concessions and this is a great opportunity to raise money for the organization. There are lots of home games, four teams for BHS (Freshmen, Sophomores, JV, and Varsity, and at least 3 teams for legion. We need your help desperately!!! Please call Rick Thomas 303-809-6562 or email richardmthomas@yahoo.com.

Concessions at Iris Field for the Bison Games will be handled by NBLL's contractor. No cost or hassle to us, we just have to convince her that being open for our games (when there are no NBLL games) will generate some income. NBLL makes very little money from concessions because they pay a contractor to handle it).