

Donations for the diamond

City, volunteer group collecting used equipment

BY **JEFFERY SIMMONS**
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(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Bringing baseball and softball back to the forefront has become a community mission. Step one has already begun.

Community volunteers have teamed up with McMinnville Civic Center leaders to start an equipment drive. Bins are being set up all across the county in hopes of getting used items donated, with the hope of alleviating costs for players who may not be able to afford bats, gloves and cleats.

"We have a volunteer group which was organized by Terry Beard and Scott McCord," said Richard Gillespie, who was delivering bins around the community Friday. "We want to give more kids the opportunity to play. The signs look great and we tried to make them eye catching and spread them everywhere so they

are conveniently located."

Bins can be found at Morris Auto Body, McMinnville Lawn and Garden, Signs by Genia, Supreme Building Products, Eastside Market, Williams Wholesale Supply, McMinnville Civic Center and the *Southern Standard*.

Gillespie is hopeful he can add a few more bins in the area, including searching out a spot on Smithville Highway. Any business in the area which would like to put out a bin can contact Gillespie at 808-5361, Beard at McMinnville Civic Center or the sports desk at the *Standard*.

Morris Hobbs was a longtime member of the Warren County Youth Baseball Association. He took to social media Thursday in hopes of rallying the cause behind youth baseball and softball, sports which have seen an enormous drop-off in participation in the last two decades.

"Kids must be encouraged to

play next summer and this lack of equipment, uniforms or gear may have held a few back," Hobbs posted on Facebook, which had over 100 shares in 24 hours. "Let's help all we can. We need to bring the program back toward the glory days when there were over 1,200 kids playing at the Civic Center alone."

"The small group of volunteers, along with recreation officials, that are trying to help do this need the support of the community in this endeavor."

Beard sought out voices from the past over the summer in hopes of trying to bring new ideas to the league. The baseball council was born, allowing many people to help for a positive push.

"This is a lot of people getting together and talking baseball and softball," said Beard. "We want to help revive the sports in the community. Collecting used equipment was the first recommendation."



The Southern Standard is one of eight places currently collecting used baseball and softball equipment.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

MONDAY, AUG. 20

WCHS golf vs. Cookeville/White County, 1 p.m.
WCHS volleyball vs. Cannon County, 4:30 p.m.
Boyd volleyball vs. Franklin Road, 5:30 p.m.
WCMS soccer at Franklin South, 5 p.m.
WCMS volleyball vs. Shelbyville Harris, 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, AUG. 21

WCMS volleyball at Coffee County, 4:30 p.m.
Covenant MS volleyball at FCA, 4:30 p.m.
Covenant HS volleyball at FCA, 5:30 p.m.
Boyd volleyball at FCS, 6 p.m.
WCHS volleyball vs. Cookeville, 6 p.m.
WCMS football vs. Franklin North, 6:30 p.m.
WCHS soccer vs. Riverdale, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 22

WCMS cross country vs. South, 4 p.m.

THURSDAY, AUG. 23

WCHS golf at Cumberland County, 1 p.m.
Covenant MS volleyball vs. RCA, 4:30 p.m.
WCMS volleyball vs. White County, 5 p.m.
WCMS soccer at Franklin North, 5:30 p.m.
Covenant HS volleyball vs. RCA, 5:30 p.m.
Boyd volleyball vs. RCA, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUG. 24

Covenant HS volleyball at West Academy, 5 p.m.
WCHS football at White County, 7 p.m.

SCHEDULE NOTE: The WCHS JV football game set for Monday, Aug. 20 vs. DeKalb County has been cancelled.



Jeffery Simmons photo

Journey Cowan and the WCHS girls soccer team will be in action Tuesday at home. The Lady Pioneers will welcome Riverdale to town for a 7 p.m. match.

Lady Lions roar



Jeffery Simmons photo

Lily Kell, shown in a match at WCHS last week, and the Covenant Lady Lions picked up a win on the road Thursday. Covenant topped Madison Academy in four sets to improve to 6-3 this season.

Versatility, depth helps UT rebuild line

KNOXVILLE (AP) — Tennessee offensive lineman Ryan Johnson grew up in a family of home builders and sees plenty of parallels in what he's doing now.

"When you're building an offensive line, you've got to do it just like you're building a house," said Johnson, a civil engineering major and SEC Academic Honor Roll selection. "You've got to build the foundation. ... You've got to pick the foundation before you start picking paint colors."

One year after its foundation crumbled, Tennessee's offensive line is trying to rebuild itself into a competitive and physical group again. Plenty of work remains to be done.

New Tennessee coach Jeremy Pruitt understands that as well as anyone. The former Alabama defensive coordinator saw his units practice against the Crimson Tide's championship-caliber offensive lines. Tennessee isn't close to that

point.

"We're nowhere (near) where we need to be," Pruitt said.

Pruitt said that's partially because Tennessee has been testing players at multiple positions to increase the line's versatility. Tennessee needed that kind of resourcefulness last year, when injuries and defections devastated the Vols up front.

Tennessee had to burn the redshirt of Riley Locklear late last season just to have enough available bodies to make it through a game. The decimation of the line took a toll, as the Volunteers went 15 straight quarters without an offensive touchdown at one point.

By the end of the season, one of Tennessee's starting tackles was Devante Brooks, a redshirt freshman who hadn't played any football games since his sophomore year in high school because knee injuries had sidelined him as a junior and senior.

The addition of Alabama graduate transfer Brandon Kennedy and the anticipated return of Chance Hall from injury give Tennessee more options. The Vols welcome the change.

"Competition's a really good thing," Johnson said. "We've been really pushing

each other hard to improve together and individually."

Tennessee's chances of improving rest in part on whether it can get a full season from preseason all-Southeastern Conference selection Trey Smith, who missed spring practice with blood clots in his lungs.



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WCMS VOLLEYBALL

WCMS VS. TULLAHOMA

game played Tuesday, Aug. 14

LADY PIONEERS WIN 25-8, 25-13

ACES: Mia Hobbs 8, Brianna Winkler 8

KILLS: Mia Hobbs 3, Krista Chisam 2, Brianna Winkler 2

COACH KELLY CLAYBORNE: "This is Tullahoma's first year to have a volleyball program. Our service game was a little too strong for them."

WCMS VS. FRANKLIN SOUTH

game played Thursday, Aug. 16

LADY PIONEERS WIN 25-19, 25-6

KILLS: Winkler 6, Hobbs 4, Chisam 2, Jessie Young 2

Kennedi Pegg served on last seven points of game one; Young, Winkler served for 18 of team's points in game two.

COACH KELLY CLAYBORNE: "We came out flat in game one. The girls weren't communicating very well at all. We finally were able to get our service game going to pull out the win. In game two, the girls had a little more fire in them."