

## The Villages Recreation Softball . Division 4 Sometimes Life Can Throw A Curve Ball

by Jacque Dorazio  
December 2021



December 9, 2021 Presentation Of The Food Pantry Drive

My husband, Nick Dorazio, and I joined the D4 softball family in Fall 2020. He, a player, beginning with Terry Penrod's team Thunder, myself a professional photographer capturing all the action shots! We noticed, toward the end of that season, a smiling group greeting all attending the fields to play or watch the games of Division 4. Along with those genuine smiles was an offering of cookies and a donation box. We discovered it to be a special group of souls collecting for a worthy cause, the local food pantries. We added to their collection box each game although, gratefully turned down the cookies- I'm watching my girlish figure:) he's just watching his grow:)) We didn't know last year the final count collected for the drive, nor to whom or where the collection would go specifically. It didn't matter. The holiday season was nearing, we just hoped that the people on the receiving end would have a good meal. For Nick and I, the holidays are about sharing a good meal rather than focusing on material things.



The Fall 2021 season was coming to an end and happily those smiling souls appeared again collecting donations for the food pantry drive. Apparently, the drive began in 2012. This was a stellar year for the drive with D4 teams and spectators raising \$14,876.00! Since its inception \$151,000.00 has been raised! I believe I heard it mentioned it was also a record for the amount of cookies rewarded to the kind, giving bunch!

I was quite happy to cover the presentation of the check to the three grateful food pantries- Hope Lutheran Church, New Covenant United Methodist Church, and SVPD, St. Vincent de Paul, Food Pantry. The event took place December 9th, before the start of Division 4 Fall Season Playoffs at Buffalo Glen. A perfect ending to another great softball season.

I hope that when these giving souls are welcoming you to the fields during the next food pantry drive, you at least drop a buck in the donation box!  
We never know when, or if, we, family, or friends might be thrown a curve ball in life's game- food is comforting to all souls . . .





gift baskets of goodies, baskets of libations, gift cards, a stay at a vacation condo congrats to the winners, enjoy!

The season of giving is recognized all around The Villages, Florida via social and sporting groups. In November 2021 I saw a Villages Recreation Neighborhood player setting up a table at the Buffalo Glen softball fields concession stand. Martha Moore diligently hauled a display and gift baskets from the parking lot, with the aid of one of the maintenance workers, on softball game days. Out of curiosity, I strolled over to the table and read the sign, Basket Raffle, All Proceeds Go To The Angel Tree of The Villages. Martha also plays in Division 1 Ladies Softball. She shared this was a project the ladies league was sponsoring. Initially, the league had considered the food pantry program however, realized there was a need to support other's during the giving season. They went with The Angel Tree program beginning in 2017, what better choice than to gift kids at Christmastime!

Martha Moore's radiant smile shines upon all the giving souls who helped make the holiday season a little brighter for the kids! Thanks Larry Rivellese, player from Rec Division 4, and Mary Burgett for your support!



## The Angel Tree Project . FYI . . .

The Angel Tree project has been a national effort, created by the Salvation Army in 1979. Majors Charles and Shirley White organized the first clothing and toy drive collaborating with a Lynchburg, Virginia shopping mall ensuring children of families struggling financially receive a Christmas gift. Since it's inception this project has spread across the country spreading the warmth and joy of the holiday season to thousands of kids.

To receive a gift, each family is required to complete paperwork in accordance with the income level set by the Salvation Army, proof of residency of the regional drive, and documentation that the children are in fact parents or legal guardians of the children they are signing up.

Typically, months September though October are when the application process opens. Deadlines, qualifications, and specific details vary by location. Once applicants have been approved, the first name, age, and gender, along with their chosen wish list is filled out on an Angel Tree tag. Tags are hung on trees set up in the local sponsors facility. Program donors select tags, items are then purchased for each child per their wish list and delivered.

All five teams of the Ladies Division collected monetary donations from their players to purchase and assemble the gift baskets. Others donated baskets of their own. I had asked Martha if they would consider accepting non players basket donations for next year- a solid yes! In addition, monetary funds are always welcomed! Our conversation closed with her pointing out her dismay when she delivered the presents for the Angel Tree kids there were at least twenty to thirty tree tags left on the table. Those kids would not get picked up. She discovered, sadly, it had been a reoccurrence with other rec centers. Martha stated, " I wish it would be publicized more because I know that Villagers are givers. If more people knew about the angel trees at every regional rec centers, I feel like more kids would get Christmas".

I so agree with you Martha! I volunteer my graphic design and marketing services to spread the word on supporting and growing this wonderful project in the future.... beginning now!

Please keep an eye out at the fields in late Fall, 2022, for the basket raffle continuing this time honored program. The least you can spend is a couple bucks- how much do you spend on one beer or a latte? How much is a kid's smile worth? Together, we can make it even better, we can do this!

# The Rec D4 Softball League Acknowledges The Grounds Crew & Scorekeepers

by Jacque Dorazio . December 2021

The Dorazio's have been known to acknowledge hard work and volunteer efforts of others by gifting selfless people. Over 50 years they have helped out others in different situations. As they joined the family of The Villages Recreation Softball Division 4, in late 2020, they spotted some hard workers at the field that deserved an extra pat on the back.

In the 2021 Summer season, at Everglades, donations were collected from players of Division 4. Nick had asked what their favorite libation was in casual conversation over the course of the season. The last week of that season Nick and Jacque presented each groundskeeper their libations of choice in appreciation of keeping the fields in stellar condition. The Summer contributions were donations gladly given from players of all teams that hung out after their games enjoying a cold beer together!

This past Fall season, at Buffalo Glen, once again, Nick and Jacque, took up a collection among the rec D4 teams. As the effort of the fundraiser spread there was a greater response from all players. Players, Terry Fritz and Don Tenne, mentioned the inclusion of the volunteer scorekeepers. A great idea! Those people selflessly spend hours, week after week, in the press box- often sweating their you know what's off! The grounds crew, Jerry, Pete, and Bob, were quite surprised and very gracious. Two received their favorite libation, and one received a monetary gift. Each was presented with pictures Jacque had captured of each of them doing what they do best- keeping and maintaining great playing field conditions for all the teams!

The three volunteer scorekeepers would each be gifted a \$50.00 gift card to Bone Fish Grill. One got their's the last week of the Fall season, the other two will be presented their's at the beginning of the Winter season. Nick and Jacque deeply thank all who donated to the grounds crew and volunteer scorekeepers special acknowledgment for jobs well done! Here's to a great upcoming Recreation Division 4 Winter season!



## Cheers To The Buffalo Glen Grounds Crew!



# A Special Thanks!

To The Volunteer Scorekeepers  
From The Villages Recreation Division 4 Softball Teams!

### news update ....

Nick and Jacque are currently working on a new fundraiser for vets. Fundraising will be conducted via Nick's 3rd annual Clincher ball game, December 2022. ... get to second base where a cooler is loaded with your favorite libations! watch for details in the Fall . . .



The Second Annual Clincher Game . December 5, 2021