

## **Pig-tail/Pony-tail Softball League**

FL: The Pigtail-Ponytail League!

CG: We were going to ask you about the sports!

FL: By having daughters first...this guy Bernie Coulter, later he was the president of one of the banks here. I always gave him credit for starting the Pigtail-Ponytail league. Now this, I'm not sure, if it started in 1960 or '61. My daughter came home one day, and she said, 'Daddy, I'm going to play softball!' Of course, I love baseball, and having all girls first. My son was my only baseball hope. He wasn't too good of a baseball player, but is still hiking and all of that. She said, 'Daddy, can you help us out?' I said, 'Look, I'm going to school, I have a part-time job, and this and that and so forth.' She said, 'Well, how about going over tomorrow (or whatever date). We're supposed to meet at the Town Hall. We're going to try to get some money for the League.' So we showed up as a big crew there. I didn't realize anything about the Town Hall. In fact, that was the first time I ever went there, a Town Hall meeting. I think Bernie must've gotten up, or somebody got up, and they said, 'Look, we have this nice field for the boys at Yeonas Park.' Of course, that's a private park. They said, 'The girls don't have anything.' At that time, we had a lot of girls that wanted to play softball.

My daughter came and said, 'Dad, we need managers!' They said, 'Dad!' They called me right in with all the neighbors that they played with. So I volunteered to be a manager. But the Town gave us \$500 to buy bats and balls. The girls bought blouses with the teams' names on them. And, believe me, they were really competitive. They were good ball-players, some of them. I had this one little girl, I still remember, Joyce Billah. She was later a school-teacher. She could get a back-hand and the short-stop and throw them out in a couple of steps. Really sharp. Of course, some of them, we used to say should be pushing doll carriages.

It was well-organized. But the thing is, we didn't have—the girls didn't have any fields or anything to play on. I remember we had to go down and clear the rocks off the fields at Vienna Elementary School. Again, the boys had Yeonas Park. But they paid for it. They had the collection. It was well-organized. Later, Pigtail-Ponytail was well-organized. They got bats and uniforms and all.

But that was a lot of fun. I remember seeing, this was back during the '60s, we had a Field Day. The Mayor threw out the first pitch. All the girls met over at the field, which is now the ball-field for the boys. All the girls were over there—these white blouses and shirts and all. They looked so neat. And I said—back then, you see all the protests about the war, people burning stuff. And I said, you see all these kids out there, good kids, having a good time. The newspapers never play up the—you never hear anything about this. You only see the bad stuff.

But Pigtail-Ponytail was a good League. A lot of girls, later—talk about getting old—I'd see some girls later. They'd say, 'My momma used to play for you!' Baseball—softball.

VH: IS the League still going?

FL: Oh yeah. But it's more of a—it's pretty active. They play good ball. In fact, one of my granddaughter-in-laws, she played. She was at O'Connell (High School). The coach of O'Connell was Tommy Orndoff. Do you know Tommy? Tommy was one of my coaches at one time. I said, 'Isn't that something?' My granddaughter-in-law played for Tommy, my coach. It's a small world. But they played some good softball.