

# South Portage Little League Connection



April 2009

## Opening Ceremonies...

A look back at 2008...



Our kick off to Season 2008 was a bit chilly, but lots of fun. We had six Division flags to announce, a 50/50 raffle and some candy bars to win. Caleb Mergener helped us recite the Little League Pledge, while Zack Pope threw out the first baseball pitch and Aimee VanWalbeck threw out the first softball pitch.

***Wondering what's in store for April 25th?***



Main Concessions will be open prior to the parade. They will be ready to take your orders for pop, hot chocolate & Biggby coffee. They will also have Sweetwater's Donuts on hand.



Feeling lucky?

Be sure to play the 50/50 Raffle

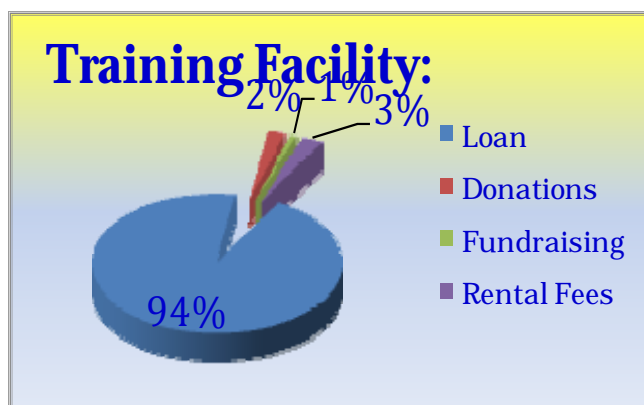


### ***On Opening Day Time Table:***

- 8:15 Teams meet designated spots
- 8:30 Parade Route begins
- 8:45 Opening Ceremony: Field 2
  - National Anthem
  - District 2 Winners
  - Special Recognitions
  - 50/50 Raffle
  - Little League Pledge
  - First Pitch
- 10:30 Game Schedules Begin

## Training Facility Update . . .

*If you would like to rent time in the Training Facility, contact Steve Graham for availability: 929-3114*



By Coach Pope

### ***Spring Training Hitting Tips***

The number one problem a batter usually has is their balance. Proper balance is the key to successful hitting. There are two areas which effect their balance and their ability to become great hitters. First and most obvious is that players haven't spent much time over the winter working on perfecting their swing. Second is that many kids have had growth spurts since the end of last season which changes their timing and in turn effects their balance.

For me the best way to prepare for a new season is to use a batting tee and a bag of wiffle balls. Start slow and work on staying balanced. It's true there are several aspects to the swing that could be looked at; but I recommend starting slow and keeping it simple. If you try and adjust too much too fast, they will become frustrated and that won't help anyone.

I like former Padres **Tony Gwynn's Tee drill**. To work on basic balance start hitting wiffle balls off the tee. The sooner you can hit a wiffle ball (with holes in them) cleanly off a tee, the sooner you will become a better hitter. When you hit the wiffle ball off a tee correctly, it acts like a knuckleball, traveling without any spin. You can actually hear the air going through the ball. When you don't hit it correctly, you create spin on the ball and it goes all over the place.

For more tips feel free to go to:

[www.MICSports.info](http://www.MICSports.info)

#### Rental Fees:

##### SPLL groups/families

Field Rental per hour: \$30.

Hitting/Pitching lane per 1/2 hour: \$ 5.

#### Rental Fees:

##### Non-SPLL groups/families

Field Rental per hour: \$60.

Hitting/Pitching lane per 1/2 hour: \$10.

#### Umpire Clinic

April 18th 6:00—8:00



Any persons interested in learning more about umpiring is encouraged to attend the Umpire Clinic being held in the Training Facility on April 18th. This free clinic is for all ages 13 and up. Please contact Ken Pope: 743-7177 or [coachpope@att.net](mailto:coachpope@att.net) if you plan to attend so he has enough materials for everyone.

# Attention parents and youth caregivers:

## Did U Know?

Early alcohol users are **5x** more likely to be alcohol dependent in their lifetime.

## Did U Know?

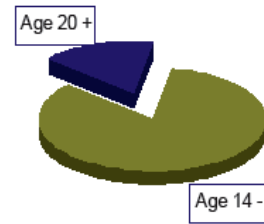
In the US, Alcohol *kills* more kids than ALL illicit drugs *combined*.

Source: Center for Science in the Public Interest on the National Academy of Sciences' Report to Congress on Underage Drinking.

## Did U Know?

Youth report their parents as having the **MOST** influence on their decision whether or not to drink alcohol.

The 2008 GfK Roper Youth Report indicates that "74% of American youth ages 8-17 identified their parents as the leading influence about underage drinking decisions".



Nearly one-half (47%) of persons who began drinking before age 14 were alcohol dependent at some point in their lifetime, compared to 9% of those who began drinking after age 20.

Source: National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC)

## Did U Know?

### April is Alcohol Awareness Month!

***Because we care about our kids...what adults can do:***

- Be aware that most teens drink at home(s). Make sure alcohol is not easily accessible in your home.
- Refuse to purchase alcohol for anyone under 21.
- Refuse to allow anyone under 21 to drink alcohol in your home or on your property.
- Be a strong role model. Drink responsibly and in moderation. Avoid using alcohol as a way to relax or cope with problems.
- Connect with other parents; call them to verify information about occasion, location, and supervision of tween and teen get-togethers.
- Be at home when your child has friends over. Check on them regularly, especially during sleepovers (a very common time for alcohol consumption).
- Stand firm! Alcohol is not an option until age 21!
- Create alcohol free opportunities and activities in your home for your family and friends.
- Share with your youth the consequences of alcohol abuse and dependence, as well as the risky behaviors that often begin with underage drinking.



This message was brought to you by the Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force. For more information about us check out our website at [www.kzootaskforce.com](http://www.kzootaskforce.com)

**Our Voice. Our Community. Our Opportunity.**



## Jungle Joes & Spring Break Fun Day

Wednesday, April 8, 2009

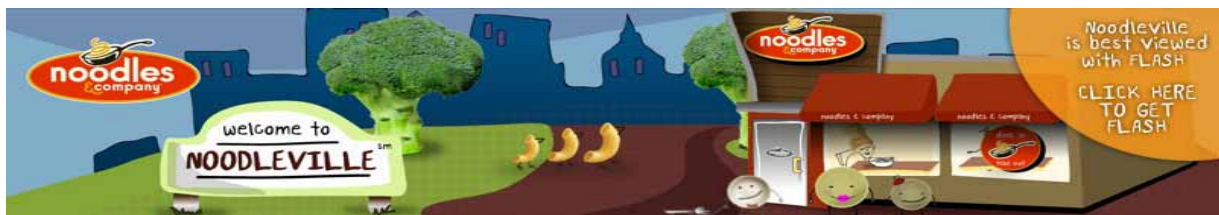
10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Cost \$8.00 per person

Please be sure to either bring this flyer or mention South Portage Little League when you pay your admission fee and they will donate back to SPLL.

FREE Gift Card Drawing!!!

Make sure you put your name/phone number on the back of your receipt



Noodles & Company

Tuesday, April 21, 2009

4:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Make sure to either mention your with South Portage Little League or bring in your flyer. Noodles & Company will donate back to SPLL. Visit there website for directions or to see a menu [www.noodles.com](http://www.noodles.com)

One lucky winner will be getting a Noodles & Company Gift Card so make sure and put your name and phone number on the back of your receipt!

South Portage Little League

P O Box 523

Portage, MI 49081

Visit us at:  
[www.SouthPortageLL.com](http://www.SouthPortageLL.com)

To: Current SPLL Families

Feel free to pass the news on.

## Events on the calendar

|             |                                                 |                            |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| April 8     | Jungle Joes Day                                 |                            |
| April 11    | Field Cleanup                                   |                            |
| April 18    | Umpire Clinic:<br>Training Facility             | 6:00—8:00 pm               |
| April 19    | Board Meeting:<br>Training Facility             | 6:30 pm                    |
| April 20/21 | Picture Day:<br>See Team Schedule               | Central High:<br>Cafeteria |
| April 21    | Picture Day:<br>See Team Schedule               | Central High:<br>Cafeteria |
| April 21    | Noodles & Company                               | 4:00—9:00 pm               |
| April 25    | OPENING DAY!                                    | 8:15 am                    |
| May 30/31   | Fun For All Tournament<br>Major Baseball        |                            |
| June 13/14  | Fun For All Tournament<br>Little Major Baseball |                            |

**Contact Info**

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