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'Hammie' had big impact in Chesapeake

By **ANGELA
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For The Lawrence Herald

CHESAPEAKE — There are few institutions around Chesapeake on which Paul "Hammie" Leffingwell did not have an impact.

Leffingwell, who passed away last week at the age of 76, was a lifelong resident of Chesapeake. He was a former member of the Village Council and a member of the Chesapeake Board of Education for 32 years.

But the best example of his contributions might be seen on a sunny day when the Chesapeake Little League is in full swing. As league president and as a coach for nearly 50 years, Leffingwell gave many hours of his time to the organization.

"Hammie epitomized what a volunteer is," said Bill Pratt, Lawrence County Commissioner. "He built his life around volunteering for the youth of Chesapeake. He was an inspiration

and will be greatly missed."

Arthur Suiter played baseball for Leffingwell and later served with him on the school board for 12 years. "He really kept (the league) going," Suiter said. "It's what he loved. He loved making sure kids had a place to play."

One of those kids was Allen Osborne, who is now the associate head baseball coach at the University of Georgia. Osborne first met Leffingwell at the age of 7, when he started playing in the league.

"He knew everyone by name," Osborne said. "He cared for each one of us. And he loved us all the same. He was such a father figure to each one of us."

For Osborne and many others who played, Leffingwell was the Chesapeake Little League.

"All the great coaches in the Little League and Senior League, they were there because Hammie was the cornerstone of the Chesapeake



Please see **HAMMIE/2F** Leffingwell

Hammie

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Little League,” Osborne said. “He loved the game and he instilled that in all the coaches. He lived his life for his faith and his family. But he also lived his life for the kids of the community.”

Osborne remembers riding his bike to the little league field, which was just down the road from his house, and always finding Leffingwell mowing the grass or doing some other upkeep.

Larry Morgan, a longtime teacher and coach at Chesapeake High School, also remembers seeing Leffingwell hard at work. “He would spend countless hours during the season making sure the fields were ready for the kids,” Morgan said. “During his tenure as president of the league, he

always made sure all the teams had sponsorships and uniforms and equipment was ready for each season.”

Jack Finch, president of Tri-State Bible College, had three children participate in the league over 10 years. “Every child has a story from their childhood and no doubt Hammie will be remembered in their storylines,” Finch said.

Leffingwell is definitely a part of Osborne’s storyline, as Osborne continues to use things he learned in little league with his players today.

“The reason I treat my players the way I treat them goes back to how Hammie treated us,” Osborne said. “He presented a winning attitude that’s carried over in my everyday life. Every day, he woke up with the thought that he was going to make us better kids. I’m very appreciative of that.”