



ETOBICOKE RANGERS

BASEBALL CLUB

Jonathan Kielb
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Toronto, ON M5J 2S7

April 6, 2017

Councillor Mark Grimes
Ward 6, Etobicoke-Lakeshore
100 Queen Street West, Suite C48
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Grimes:

Re: Request to Name Etobicoke Rangers Players' Clubhouse at Connorvale Park, 281 Rimilton Avenue, Toronto in Honour of Steve "Whitey" Breitner

I am writing on behalf of current players and alumni of the Etobicoke Rangers Senior AAA Baseball Club to request that the clubhouse used by the Etobicoke Rangers players at Connorvale Park be named the "Steve 'Whitey' Breitner Clubhouse" in honour of Steve Breitner, legendary pitcher, manager and volunteer with baseball in Etobicoke.

Steve, nicknamed "Whitey" after New York Yankees Hall of Fame pitcher Whitey Ford, began his storied baseball career in the Queensway Minor Baseball Association at the tyke level and played in the Queensway organization through the end of his junior years at age 18. In 1976, he was selected the Most Valuable Player of the Leaside Junior League with a pitching record of 13-2.

In August of 1976, Steve signed a professional contract with the Detroit Tigers. Following his time in the Tigers' minor league system, Steve found his way to the Leaside Leafs (nine seasons), York Pioneers (one season), and finished his senior playing career in 1990 with the Etobicoke Rangers. In all, Steve had over 100 wins and over 1,000 strikeouts over his eleven-year senior baseball career, and he was selected as an addition to the roster of the perennial Canadian champion Windsor Chiefs to compete for them as a star pitcher at the Canadian championships in the 1980s.

Following his playing career, Steve took the reigns as Field Manager of the Rangers in 1991 and has held that position ever since. He has also managed the Etobicoke Rangers Minor Midget team (1998), Midget team (1997 and 1998), and Junior team (2008 until 2014). He has coached a wide range of players, including Major League Baseball and Canadian National Team players Greg O'Halloran, who played with the Florida Marlins, and Joey Votto, currently with the Cincinnati Reds and National League Most Valuable Player in 2010. Steve's sons Kevin and Kyle are currently pitchers with the Rangers.

Among Whitey's accomplishments as a manager are leading the Senior Etobicoke Rangers to three Ontario Eliminations Championships, the pinnacle of top-level senior baseball in Ontario. Those provincial championships resulted in trips to represent the province at the Canadian Senior Men's Championships in 1999 (Miramichi, NB), 2002 (Prince George, BC), and 2004 (Moncton, NB). He also managed the team to the finals in 1998 and 2000 and a third-place finish in 2009.

At the league level, Steve has managed the Rangers to championships in the Metro Major/Greater Toronto Baseball League in 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996 and 1997. After the team moved to the Central Ontario Baseball Association in 1998, Steve's Rangers' teams have been playoff champions three times and winners of the Anson Buck Trophy, dating back to 1927 one of the oldest trophies in Ontario amateur sports and emblematic of regular-season supremacy, seven times, most recently in 2016.

Over the past 25 years, Whitey has spent countless hours and days at the ballpark, sometimes coaching two teams when a coach could not be found for one of the other Rangers teams. His outgoing personality, tremendous knowledge and passion for baseball, along with his core values as a person, have positively impacted the players that have come up through the Rangers system. He has been at the forefront of many fundraising initiatives over the years in an effort to help reduce overall team costs, making it affordable for players to play the game they love.

In recognition of his achievements and contributions to amateur baseball in Etobicoke, Toronto and Ontario, in 2013 Steve was inducted into the Ontario Baseball Association Hall of Fame along with the other members of the Windsor Chiefs championship teams for which he was a . He was also inducted into the Central Ontario Baseball Association Major Hall of Fame in 2010.

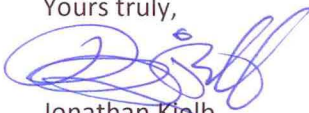
Sadly, Steve was diagnosed with inoperable cancer in January of this year, and he is currently undergoing chemotherapy. We are unsure of how much time he has left.

While we appreciate that there is a protocol to be followed, we respectfully request that the process be expedited to the extent possible in order that Steve and his family, along with players past and present, and the residents of Etobicoke, be able to share in this honour while he is still with us.

Attached to and in support of this letter are comments from former Etobicoke Rangers players and coaches on whom Steve has had a tremendous impact. If you have any questions or if there is anything else that I can provide in support of this request, please do not hesitate to contact me either at j.kielb@rogers.com or 416-523-5130 (c).

Mark, thank you and the City of Toronto for considering this proposal. Naming the players' clubhouse in Steve Breitner's honour would mean a lot to both the Breitner family and those who have been blessed to have played with and been coached by Steve in Etobicoke since the 1960s.

Yours truly,



Jonathan Kielb

Player and Coach

Etobicoke Rangers Senior AAA Baseball Club 1995-Present

Encls.

QUOTES FROM FORMER ETOBICOKE RANGERS BASEBALL PLAYERS AND COACHES

“Whitey always paid me respect for coaching all the men when they were still boys. He always sought out my advice and respected my opinion.

He helped many make the transition from baseball bum to man. Helped many get a job and take care of your family. He always stressed never to forget what the game gave you and especially the people it brought into your life.

Whitey gave so many a place to go and make it all make sense. He understands that baseball while being a game is really a metaphor for life.”

Naeem Siddiq
Ontario Principals Council
Player/Coach Etobicoke Rangers (1985-2005)

“Whitey is one of my favorite people in baseball. Not in Canadian baseball, or Etobicoke baseball, but baseball period. Whitey has always been very kind and friendly to me. He makes me laugh and reminds of why I got involved in baseball in the first place. He reminds me of home. Everyone that I’ve ever spoken to that knows Whitey knows of him as a wonderful man.”

Joey Votto
First Baseman, Cincinnati Reds MLB
2010 National League MVP, 2010 Lou Marsh Award, Member of Etobicoke Sports Hall of Fame (2013)
Etobicoke Rangers 1998-2002

“Whitey is loyal to all who come up through the Etobicoke Rangers program and he also looks out for players who haven’t been part of it. Every single player gets his share of playing time and an opportunity to earn more.

This team has been an amazing group of people from all kinds of backgrounds including guys who played Major League Baseball or for the Canadian National Team to guys who only played AA as a kid, teachers, students, welders, electricians, doctors, lawyers, realtors, sales guys and everything in between.

The team is more than just the players on it. Whitey has made it a point to involve all the wives, girlfriends, parents and friends. Some great friendships have developed over the years among people who aren’t even players, but who have been brought together by Whitey and his philosophy of being inclusive of everyone.”

Jonathan Kielb
Legal Counsel, Greater Toronto Airports Authority
Player/Coach, Etobicoke Rangers 1989, 1995-Present
Member, Central Ontario Baseball Association Major Hall of Fame (inducted 2010)

"I quit playing in 2006 to coach my seven-year-old son. I patterned my coaching style around what I learned from Whitey. He was like a father figure for me, not having an active father myself. Whitey and the Rangers gave me a family to identify with. The experiences and stories he created for all of us will be with us for a lifetime. Everyone wanted to win for Whitey."

Roman Kula
 Teacher, Runnymede Public School
 Etobicoke Rangers 1992-2006
 Member, Central Ontario Baseball Association Major Hall of Fame (inducted 2010)

"I was fortunate enough to play for Whitey from 1993 to 2005. They were some of the greatest years of my life. Whitey was more than just a baseball manager. He was a father figure, an older brother, a best friend all wrapped up in one. We had tremendous success on the field but our greatest accomplishments were the life lessons we gained from Whitey. As a parent now coaching my own daughter playing ball I constantly lean on the lessons I learned from him during my playing days and try to mentor young girls not just to be better players but more importantly to be better people."

On behalf of the Rangers Alumni who have played for Whitey over the past 25 years, I can say without hesitation he is the head of what we consider our baseball family. Through four generations of teams he has been at the forefront of the greatest years of our lives both on and off the field. We are forever indebted to him for his tireless efforts bringing a group of guys together, playing a sport we all love, creating a family atmosphere resulting in friendships and memories that will last a lifetime."

Mike Gauthier
 Director of Global Services, Trico Corporation
 Etobicoke Rangers 1986-2005

"Coach Steve Breitner was the last coach I ever played for. He always believed in his players and wanted the best for us. Representing Ontario at the Nationals in Prince George British Columbia was a wonderful experience and the team would not have made it that far if it wasn't for his leadership. Being the youngest player on the team I was very overwhelmed when I first met Coach Steve. He taught me how to play with confidence. The amount of knowledge and history that man possesses, truly defines the word "Legend". A student of the game, hard-nosed and old school mentality, he instilled confidence in his players and had one objective: "Being a Family". He exemplifies the true meaning of "coach"."

David Quattrociocchi
 President of Coach Q Baseball
 Texarkana Junior College Baseball Team (1998 - 2001)
 Etobicoke Rangers (2001-2004)

"I love Steve Breitner. He is not only one of the greatest baseball managers but one of the greatest people I have ever met."

I played for Whitey from 1991 to 2000. He took over for Bobby Smyth and brought in his old coach and best friend Ric Fleury to help out. To have had the opportunity to play for those two along with Bobby

Smyth, Bobby Hunter, and Nick Rico was something to say the least. Whitey didn't just bring together a great ball team, he brought together a family. The Etobicoke family runs about four different generations deep now and Whitey is at the head of that. Whitey didn't just build a team of winners, he built a family."

Joe Jurus

Vice Principal, St. Timothy Elementary School

Etobicoke Rangers 1984-2000

Member, Central Ontario Baseball Association Major Hall of Fame (inducted 2010)

"Steve's influence on people was educational and life changing. He always preached Team first, Guys first, all the rest of it is second.

He would always let you know about the guys that came before you. The guys that set the standard. The guys who helped build the organization. That was very important to him.

I met most of my closest friends playing for the Rangers. Why is that? Whitey. How many humans can say they brought together people in that way? Not many in my opinion. Whitey did and does. The game was great, it was the best. The people are better. The fact that I can call these guys after a long period of absence is a gift. The game, for me, was magic. And Whitey is the magician."

Dr. Jonathan Cardella, MD, FRCS

Assistant Professor of Surgery (Vascular), Yale University

Etobicoke Rangers 1987-2000

"I would describe Whitey as a great leader, a true winner and one of the best baseball people I have ever known. He has such a strong passion for the game. It's been his life for over 50 years. Not only does he love the game but he also loves the people he has met through it over the years. He deeply cares about people and really understands how to engage them and get the most out of them. Average players became really good players. Good players became great players. He always made you feel like the sky was the limit and your greatest potential was within your grasp. All you had to do was work hard and it was yours.

Whitey spent his entire career in Sales Management which is a great place for him. Once you know Whitey, you can't help but like him which is why he had great relationships with all of his staff and customers. On the baseball side, you've heard guys talk about building a "family". He knows people are social and human and the importance of managing each of them the right way and of staying in touch and getting together. Whitey knows how important that is to building great teams, and for him, it's a fundamental building block.

Being a former player, he was definitely a players' manager. If he had confidence in your abilities, he wasn't the type of guy to yank guys in and out of games or lineups, he would stick with guys because he knew we were human and that showing confidence in people brought the best out of them. We either won as a team or lost as a team, that was it. I've played for many different types and Whitey was the best. You always knew where you stood and worked hard, never quit and always wanted to do your best for him and the team. If something wasn't going right, guys never cared about their stats, but they did

care that they had let the guys down or that they couldn't do more. As a result of Whitey's great management, the Rangers have won a lot of league titles, tournaments and championships.

While Nick Rico, Bobby Smyth, Bobby Hunter and others played significant roles, at this point Etobicoke Rangers Baseball is what it is largely due to Whitey's efforts."

David Wiseman
Partner, Goodmans LLP
Purdue Boilermakers Division 1 Baseball Team
Etobicoke Rangers 1991-1997

"As an Etobicoke Rangers Alumnus, I am so grateful to Whitey for his never-ending work organizing alumni events not to mention everything else baseball related for the current Ranger teams.

Over 25 years of coaching, organizing and going to league meetings. His countless hours on the field and watching other games. Winters spent getting ready for the next year. Poring over scoresheets and checking stats (he knows the stats!!) for hours and hours. A number of years managing both the junior and the senior teams. Thinking strategically about the annual pitching staff plan and building guys' arms up slowly but methodically during the year so that the staff was strong and peaking in late July when the Ontario elimination tournament comes around. Recruiting consistently year after year to make sure that the organization was bringing in good talent and players that would fit the mold of the Rangers Way. He did so much that was unseen and that perhaps can very easily go unnoticed. I suspect that current assistant coaches Jon Kielb and Bill Thompson who are stepping up right now because Whitey has had to step back due to his health are finding out just how much he did.

I will always be grateful to Whitey for everything he did for baseball, for the Rangers and for me personally when I played for him and since that time as a Rangers alumnus. Those years as a Ranger were my best years playing baseball and those guys are some of my favourite people in the world. I count them and Whitey as great friends whom I will always cherish."

Sean Conlin
Director, Demand Sprinkler Design
Etobicoke Rangers 1989-1994

"It's tough to find a starting point in talking about Steve Breitner. I suppose the first thing that comes to my mind is being lucky enough to have enjoyed a few years of my life with a fantastic baseball man. He took over the senior team where Bob Smyth left off and never looked back.

He inherited a really good team when he began coaching the senior team and he just kept adding great players to the family every year. We became known as the team that hugs and Steve was the biggest reason for the family mindset of our team. He has truly been a blessing for Etobicoke Rangers Baseball."

John Hathazi
Manager, Topcon Canada Inc.
Etobicoke Rangers 1993-1998

"I go back a long way with Steve, to our days playing baseball at Queensway Park and attending the same high school. We played on the same teams from Peewee up to Junior, winning the City Championship at Peewee and the Leaside Midget Tournament. Steve was an outfielder and started pitching in his second year of Midget. He was recruited by Ric Fleury out of Junior to play for the Leaside Leafs Senior team. He would have played for the Etobicoke senior team but unfortunately it started the next year.

In 2000 I recruited him and his son Kyle for the Cawthra Rookie Ball team. It was a tough sell to get him to coach, as he did not believe that he could connect with 10 year old kids, but once involved he was invaluable and the kids and parents loved him. He assisted me with Cawthra/Mississauga Majors teams until 2006, managing the Etobicoke Senior Team at the same time.

In 2007 Steve assumed responsibility of Managing the Etobicoke Junior Team and managed both teams for years. I rejoined Steve as a coach with the Junior team in 2010 and moved to the Senior team in 2013.

Steve is solely responsible for the existence and success of the Etobicoke Rangers Senior baseball team since he took over as Manager.

Steve (and his wife Karen) have lived and breathed baseball forever. They are two of the most incredible and generous people you will ever hope to meet."

Bill Thompson
President, William J Thompson CA
Vice President, Finance, Winfair Group
Etobicoke Rangers Player/Coach 1977-1989 and 2010-Present