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www.BuildOurBallpark.org

Our mission is to improve the lives of kids by providing the opportunity to play baseball and softball which, through teamwork, strengthens character, builds pride and teaches skills for life. We will do this by helping ensure they have a quality place to play by providing assistance and rallying the support needed to build new ballparks and/or improve existing ballparks.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IOWA BASEBALL COMPLEX RECEIVES MAJOR FUNDING BOOST FOR RENOVATION Black Hawk County Gaming Association Awards \$80,000 Grant to Project

WATERLOO, IOWA (May 27, 2009) – Thanks to a major grant, Tibbitts Complex, a Waterloo baseball complex in poor condition, has moved one step closer to renovation. Tibbitts Complex has been awarded an \$80,000 grant by the Black Hawk County Gaming Association to help make its renovation a reality.

A former Cedar Valley baseball player reflects on his time spent playing at Tibbitts Complex. “Tibbitts Field wasn’t in the greatest shape when I played there, but it has really gone downhill since then,” said Matt Haskin, a recent graduate of UNI. “I doubt many of the kids who will play on it once its renovated will realize it at first, but they are going to have an amazing place to call their home field. When you play ball on a field that feels and looks good, it gives you a sense of pride.” Build Our Ballpark, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of youth by providing the opportunity to play baseball and softball, is partnering with the City of Waterloo Leisure Services Department on the Tibbitts renovation project to benefit local youth.

“I spent a large majority of my childhood summers playing baseball, many games at Tibbitts Field. Baseball was a huge part of my life growing up,” added Haskin. “Being involved in the sport and being on several teams taught me the value of teamwork. I learned that when you work as a team, you have so much more success than when it’s just you by yourself. It also taught me the value of hard work. You’ve heard ‘practice makes perfect,’ but when you’re nine years old, you don’t really get it until you actually have to work at it. Like many things in life, there is no way to get better at baseball without a lot of hard work.”

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“Since these fields are in use six days per week, renovation is necessary for Cedar Valley youth to continue playing baseball,” said Don Hoth, Black Hawk County Gaming Association President. “The Black Hawk County Gaming Association is proud to be able to assist with this project.”

Build Our Ballpark is an organization committed to providing the assistance and rallying the support needed to build new ballparks and/or improve existing ballparks to ensure kids have a quality place to play. “Baseball is an important part of American culture and history, and our organization believes strongly in the many benefits our youth receive by participating in baseball and softball,” said Bob Hellman, Executive Director of Build Our Ballpark.

Get Involved

Build Our Ballpark has also nominated the Tibbitts Complex project to receive financial assistance through the Frosted Flakes® Plant a Seed Promotion. The program, launched in February 2009, is set up like a contest and promotes the concept that all youth should have a place to be active and play. To support the Tibbitts Complex, visit www.frostedflakes.com and vote for the Tibbitts Complex in Waterloo, Iowa. Voting ends May 31, 2009.

About the Tibbitts Complex Renovation

Tibbitts Complex improvements will include construction of a new youth baseball and softball diamond, as well as new dugouts and bleachers. To ensure safer play, the infields and mounds at the two existing fields will be re-leveled. The project has received funding from the City of Waterloo, the Crossroads Rotary, the Waterloo Kiwanis Club and the Black Hawk County Gaming Association.

About Build Our Ballpark

Created in 2008, Build Our Ballpark was the vision of Bob Hellman Sr., the founder and chairman of the board at Hellman, a marketing and advertising agency in Waterloo, Iowa. An avid baseball enthusiast, Hellman used a teamwork approach to give back to his favorite game by helping build a showcase ballpark – Hellman Field – in his hometown. From that teamwork, Build Our Ballpark was born.

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The organization is committed to providing the assistance and rallying the support needed to build new ballparks and/or improve existing ballparks to ensure kids have a quality place to play. By promoting teamwork, strengthening character, building pride and teaching life skills, Build Our Ballpark is rebuilding passion in America's pastime – one field at a time. For more information about Build Our Ballpark, please visit our website at www.BuildOurBallpark.org.

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