

MEDIA RELEASE



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15th Annual Gord Marshall Memorial Ladies' Fastball Tournament being held in July

INNERKIP, ON: The Innerkip Umpires Association (IUA) will host the 15th annual Gord Marshall Memorial Ladies' Fastball Tournament at the Innerkip Sports Field from July 5 to 8.

The tournament was initiated in 2004 as a local fundraiser for the Innerkip ladies' team. In 2006, local umpires were asked to take over the operation of the event and decided to use it as a means to showcase excellent ladies' fastball and to raise money for charity.

The Innerkip Umps are known for calling balls, strikes, safes and outs over this four-day event while hitting a home run when it comes to raising money for charity through this tournament.

Over the past decade, the event has donated \$110,000 to the Oxford County Chapter of the Canadian Cancer Society; \$12,700 to the Canadian Mental Health Association and \$5,000 towards the Parkinson Society in Southwestern Ontario in 2017. The organizers have also raised thousands of dollars for the Innerkip Parks & Recreation Committee in memory of their late friend, ball player and fellow umpire Gord Marshall.

For 2018, the IUA have announced that funds from this year's event will be given to VON Sakura House in Woodstock. Innerkip umpire and acting tournament chairman Brad Hallock said, "It is our pleasure to partner with this charity as it supports families in their time of need."

Catherine Dorais-Plesko, Manager of Fund Development for Sakura House says, "Serene, peaceful and family are the words that have been used to describe Sakura House, VON Oxford's 10-bed residential hospice.

“VON Sakura House opened its doors on September 1, 2009. We support patients and families with their end-of-life journey. There is no cost to patients for the care they receive. Donations help us run the hospice, enhance existing programs and create new ones.

She says, VON Canada believes that Health Starts at Home but when staying at home is no longer possible, VON Sakura House is there to offer an alternative to end-of-life care.

“Sakura is the Japanese word for cherry blossom, symbolizing the annual spring celebration and the shifting of seasons,” says Dorais-Plesko. “The name was selected to honour Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada who donated the house and the beautiful grounds.”

Umpire and media relations coordinator Kyle Smith adds, “This event continues to be one of the best ladies’ fastball tournaments in South Western Ontario. This is due in part to the support each year of our long-term supporting teams, sponsors, volunteers, many media partners and the local community.

“Make your plans now for July 5 to 8 to be in Innerkip,” said Hallock. “Come witness some top-level ladies’ fastball action at one of the finest fastball facilities in Oxford County in a small rural village known as Innerkip!”

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