



Fayetteville-Manlius Little League
www.fmlittleleague.com
Little League Charter since 1962

January 26, 2021

Dear Fayetteville-Manlius Little League (FMLL) Families,

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Happy New Year! As FMLL concluded the 2020 season, we could have never imagined what was in store for all of us throughout the entire year. As a result of the pandemic and its significance, we were left wondering if FMLL would play any baseball or softball in 2020. For the first time in organization history, Little League International made the difficult and disappointing decision to cancel its World Series. Many Little League organizations throughout the nation ultimately decided to cancel their season in 2020.

However, as a result of the guidance from many organizations and the leadership of the FMLL board of directors, we were able to pull off a hybrid season that was designed to create a safe and fun environment for each of our participants.

On behalf of the FMLL board of directors, thank you to our FMLL families, coaches, volunteers and most especially our players as last season certainly saw its challenges. Despite all that is going on worldwide, we were very fortunate to have had the opportunity to play softball and baseball last year and look forward to a safe, enjoyable and successful season in 2021.

Although we will continue to receive guidance from our leadership at Little League International, District 8 Little League and local government, we are gearing up for our Spring season. Plans have been underway for several months now and updates will continue to be provided on our website at www.fmlittleleague.com.

In the meantime, please review the following information below which should bring you up-to-date on everything that is planned:

Registration:

Registration will officially open on February 1st for all participants. Our registration will remain open for our baseball and softball minor/major divisions until March 20th. Registration for our tee-ball and training leagues will close on April 18th. Juniors/seniors registration will close sometime in mid-May.

You can visit our website starting on February 1st at www.fmlittleleague.com to register online. **Due to the pandemic, there will be no in-person registration this year.** Please note that once you complete the online registration process, you will be sent an email from our web provider, Sports Connect to confirm that your child is registered for the Spring Season. If you

do not receive this email, I encourage you to contact us at fmlittleleague@aol.com.

Upon registration, you will ultimately receive follow-up emails from FM Little League regarding evaluations that our coaches will conduct at the minor and major levels only. All parents whose child is participating at the minor/major levels should receive an email from their child's coach no later than the 1st week in April. Tee-ball and training league parents should expect first contact from their coach no later than the end of April.

Registration fees for the 2021 season will remain the same as last year:

- \$55 for Tee-Ball participants. These leagues are for our youngest participants, ages 4-5 years old.
- \$65 for our Single A participants (Coach Pitch/Training League). The league is for boys' baseball and girls' softball ages 6-7 years old.
- \$90 per each Baseball and Softball Minor/Major League participants, ages 8-12.
- \$120 for our Junior and Senior Baseball league. The age group for these participants are 13-16 years old.
- There is a \$225 maximum rate for families with multiple participants.

Full and partial financial scholarships are available – all children who want to play will be able to play. If paying all or part of the fee would pose a financial hardship to you and your family, please contact me at vjkuss44@yahoo.com. Inquiries will be kept confidential.

When registering online, you can only pay by credit card. Please note that registration in our league is limited to residents of the F-M school district or to those students who attend a school within the F-M school district.

Our website and registration software are operated by Stack Sports and Sports Connect. As a result, Stack Sports charges a \$3 service fee to our participants per transaction. We apologize for the slight increase with this fee but please know that the FMLL's registration fees are (or close to) the least expensive within Central New York.

Frequently Asked Questions and League Descriptions:

Do you have questions regarding how long the season will last or what type of equipment you will need to purchase for you child? If so, the league has developed a “**Frequently Asked Questions**” document that covers all our leagues from tee-ball all the way up to our juniors and seniors. Please visit www.fmlittleleague.com and look for the “**Frequently Asked Questions**” and “**League Descriptions**” links to answer questions that you may have.

The Spring Season is right around the corner:

The spring season for our baseball and softball major/minor leagues will start tentatively around the week of April 19th. These leagues typically end the 1st week of June. Our tee-ball league (4-5 years old) will begin on Saturday, May 8th and run for roughly six weeks. Our coach pitch baseball (6-7-year-old boys) and coach pitch softball leagues (6-7-year-old girls) will begin tentatively on the week of May 6th and conclude around the third week in June. Lastly, our junior/senior baseball leagues (13-16-year-old boys) begin a little later in the season. Parents should begin to hear from their child's coach in late May/early June for this league.

The schedule for our major and minor leagues is typically two games per week along with one or more practices per week as set by their coach. Attendance at games and practices is necessary. The FMLL prides itself on commitment and responsibility and each of our teams will learn this throughout their experience. This schedule is also typical for our junior/senior league. Our tee-ball and coach pitch leagues can also expect a two game per week schedule; however, practices are not usually held for this age level. More information can be found by utilizing our “**Frequently Asked Questions**” document by visiting our website.

Little League International establishes a “league age” for players as determined by their date of birth. Our website has a Little League chart that will illustrate a player’s “league age.” This calculator can be found by clicking on the following link: <https://www.littleleague.org/play-little-league/determine-league-age/>. The online registration process will also lead you through the league age process. **There are no exceptions for players at any league based on ability. Players must participate in the division they are eligible for per their league age as set out by the F-M Little League Board of Directors.**

Volunteers are needed!

Throughout the Little League season, we will register about 80 teams and 800 participants. We will need volunteers to help make the FMLL a positive experience for all our families. During the registration process, you will be asked to indicate how you can help. I strongly encourage you to volunteer in some capacity, if you are available.

You can help in several ways:

- **Managers and Coaches:** 80 teams mean 80 managers, plus the assistance of additional coaches. Manager meetings and guidance are offered. If you have questions about managing or coaching, please contact fmlittleleague@aol.com.
- **Umpires:** All adult umpires are volunteers. We provide training, equipment, and support for those adults willing to help by umpiring. We also have opportunities for students, age-14 or older, to be paid a stipend for umpiring in our league, after they have completed our umpire training program. If you or someone you know is interested, please let us know by sending an email to fmlittleleague@aol.com.
- **Snack Shack:** Our Brooklea fields in Fayetteville have a Snack Shack that is typically open for our families during games. We are continuously looking for volunteers to help run our snack shack throughout the season. Not only is this an important service to our families, but also a fundraising resource for the league. Please feel free to contact Tracy Schwab at any time at tracyschwab106@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteering some time at our Snack Shack.
- **Sponsorship and Donors:** Thank you to all our Donors and Supporters each year! Your generosity has allowed the FMLL to remain accessible to thousands of children in our community for the past 59 years. Our sponsorship program allows the League to maintain affordable registration fees, provide scholarships to players in need, replace aged equipment, and support operational costs. Sponsorship may come in the form of one or all of the following: sponsorship of a team, a billboard sign at one of our fields attended by thousands of community members from April through October, or a cash donation to support the many equipment needs of the league.

Our annual sponsorship drive is underway. If you, your employer or business might be interested in pursuing a sponsorship opportunity, please contact Michele DeMaio Grace at mrde Maio73@yahoo.com for more information.

Player Safety is a priority for the FMLL:

The safety and well-being of all participants in the FMLL is a priority for our League. Each year the FMLL creates a Safety Plan for our participants and their families. This plan is to ensure that our fields, uniforms, equipment and safety awareness efforts are all addressed prior to and throughout the Little League season. Once our plan is approved, we are required to submit it to Little League International, Inc. for their final authorization.

As a result of COVID-19, we have also developed guidelines to play baseball and softball during the pandemic. Please note that we will continue to receive the guidance needed from Little League International, District 8 Little League and local government in order to properly and safely play our sport during these times. As always, our safety plan and return to play guidelines are uploaded onto our website at www.fmlittleleague.com. We will update these documents as more information is provided throughout the year.

All local Little Leagues are required to conduct background checks on managers, coaches, board of director members and any other persons, volunteers or hired workers, who provide regular services to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams. These are all steps we take in order to provide a safe and fun environment for your children.

Thank you!

In closing, I realize how difficult last year was for so many throughout the world. We were so grateful for the opportunity to play Little League, even for a limited amount of time. Thank you for your patience and understanding and thank you in advance as we enter our 59th season in Fayetteville-Manlius.

I would like to acknowledge some of the individuals who make this Little League so special. First and foremost, thank you to our donors and supporters for their generosity each year! We are very thankful for your continuous support! I would also like to acknowledge our parent/family volunteers who help coach our teams, work at our snack shack and provide maintenance on a nightly basis on our fields. We are very fortunate to have so many parents/families involved in this great league!

We also receive many gifts in kind for several services provided to the league annually. Leading up to last season, there were several projects and needs to be completed by our Little League and I want to acknowledge the individuals/businesses that donated to the League this past year:

- Manlius and Fayetteville Departments of Public Works. Both departments are invaluable resources to the League and we are so grateful to the support they provide each year.
- Peter Cantalupe who made a very generous donation to purchase the new shed at Brooklea.
- Ryan Windows and Doors who donated the material and labor for our equipment trailer door.
- Onondaga Beverage who donated the Beverage Cooler for the Snack Shack at Brooklea.
- McGinnis and Nelson who donated the material and labor to widen and replace the shed door at our Manlius Fields.

- Erik Hehl who donated the material and labor to widen shed ramp at our Manlius Fields.
- Melissa Eppard who donated several five-gallon buckets of Hand Sanitizer for our participants to use on all our fields throughout the season.
- Mike Anzalone who repaired the scoreboard down here at Manlius.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Fayetteville-Manlius Little League Board of Directors. We have a passionate and caring board whose priority has always been to provide our participants with the best overall experience possible. Our board members spend hundreds of hours each year volunteering their time coaching, working at our snack shack, field maintenance and set-up, running clinics/Sommers Sandlot League, equipment management, website maintenance, umpiring, player development and so much more. Thank you for all that you do in making our Little League the premier league in all of District 8!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent J. Kuss". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "V" and "K".

Vinnie Kuss, President
F-M Little League