

Clem C. "Snowball" Gaskill



#6

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Snowball

From one Harkers Islander to
Another!!!

By Joe Boy Willis

When we gathered at Snowball funeral to mourn our loss, and to sympathize with the sorrow of the family, we searched for the many good things to remember, and there were many. We talked for more than three hours, almost non-stop with over 100 people, talking about the fond memories, and how our life has been impacted by Snowball.

It was so clear that it is the remembrances that remain when we die, and in Snowball case, what fond memories. That night, we choose to remember the best of his life, which can serve as a model, and which we should try to emulate.

Snowball, you will never leave us – because we remember. You see, for me, Snowball befriended me when I was directionless and hungry to find a meaning in life. I was a nine year-old boy; full of energy, walking around the Island barefooted, and Snowball's love and passion for baseball was just the ticket to keep me excited about life. He got me on the "Excited-About-Life Bus." You see, he believed you could do anything you thought you could do – or at least, that is the message I got. His passion and know-how of baseball was addictive -- in a good way.

He taught me, as well as many of my friends; how to improve our batting skills by taking old net corks that we would beg the fisherman for, and we would tape the cork, and stand about 20 feet from the batter, and through it as fast as we could. We spent hours at hitting and fine-tuning our skills. We got real good at hitting.

From cork balls, he taught us how to hit wiffle ball, which is even harder. I got so confident, that during sixteen years of playing baseball, I thought I could hit any pitcher. I always used the Harkers Island expression -- that "you couldn't throw a net lead by me", and I believed it.

Because of that "can do" thinking, taught by a friend, utilizing baseball as the vehicle, I believed I could do anything in life, and that positive thinking allowed me to pursue things that otherwise would have been impossible.

Through great remembrances, I honor Snowball for not what he brought out in himself, but for what he help bring out in me.

Thanks for the Harkers Island Memories.
Joe Boy Willis

A Friend