

## Who Wants to Be the Best?

I vividly remember...I was eight years old as I walked into our house on Creek Drive and told my Dad that I wanted to play little league baseball. He and my mother agreed that it was time. The very next afternoon Daddy came home from work with a brand new Regent baseball glove, an Adirondack bat, and a bucket of baseballs. I was so excited that my Dad was going to teach me the game that I so wanted to play. My excitement waned once the "training" began.

My Dad took his eight year old son to our back yard, made me stand about ten feet from the back of the house, placed that new Regent glove on my left hand, backed away about twenty feet with that Adirondack bat and bucket of balls and said, "Don't let this ball hit my house." He then proceeded to hit baseballs at me. He would hit the ball and tell me, "Catch it or eat it." His cold black eyes were staring a hole in me, daring me to let the ball hit "his" house. My eight year old eyes filled with tears as I took grounder after grounder off the chest, shins, and stomach. He continued to hit the ball at me until I began to catch a few. The more he hit, the more I caught. This went on for days. I was bruised and battered, but by week's end, none got by me. I could catch as well as any little leaguer.

Daddy told me that if I was going to play, I needed to be the best. He taught me to work hard. His lesson taught me that the things that are important to you are worth the sacrifices to get them. I wanted to play baseball and I wanted to be a good baseball player. I worked very hard to become that caliber of player. It started with an eight year old little boy taking hot shots off his shins for weeks to become a decent third baseman. It served me well as I played in high school, college and even a few games for a semi-pro team in Americus, Georgia. I continued to use the skills my dad taught me playing softball until my 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. I even played in a short softball tourney last spring. Not bad for a 50 year old.

So who wants to be the best? I believe everyone wants to be the best at something. However, not everyone is willing to take the hard liners off the chest to get there. VRHS is going to be the best. We are going to continue to achieve at the highest level in academics and athletics. I know this to be true because everyone in this building is more than willing to "keep the ball from hitting the house." We will not worry about how hard the ball is hit. We are all equipped with our Regent gloves that have been broken in by years of preparation and experience. We can field the hot corner of education's third base with the best of them.

I am so proud to be the principal of Villa Rica High School. The students, parents, faculty and staff work hard to be the best. So as new challenges come down the pike, we are ready and willing to take them on and sit them down... 1, 2, 3, no runs, no hits, no errors.