



Date: March 4, 2008

To: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

From: Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske GS

Subject: AGENDA ITEM: Naming of the Pony-Colt field in Heartwell Park as the "Al Weiner Ballpark"

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**BACKGROUND**

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine received a letter (attached) from Mr. Toby Hess, President of Heartwell Pony-Colt Baseball League, requesting that the field located at their complex in Heartwell Park be named "Al Weiner Ballpark" in honor of the league's patriarch, Al Weiner. This year, the league will be celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of providing a meaningful experience to teenagers (ages 13-16) in the greater Long Beach community. According to the league, no one is more responsible for the long-term success of the league than Al Weiner.

The Administrative Regulations AR 8-7 applies to the naming of all public land, buildings, and facilities. AR 8-7 provides several policies to guide the consideration of a naming request. The following are those policies:

- The name should incorporate Long Beach whenever important for civic recognition or identification;
- A name in honor of a recognized geographic area, a topographic feature or a historically significant event may be appropriate;
- A name in honor of person or families who have donated the land or a substantial portion of the improvement costs may be appropriate when applicable;
- A name in honor of a person or persons who have served the Nation, the State of California, and/or the City of Long Beach in an exceptional or distinguished manner may be appropriate if warranted by service of major significance;
- A name in honor of a living person, or of a deceased person within one year of their death, is not appropriate unless the significance of that person's contribution is worthy of an exception to the policy;
- A name in honor of a person is not appropriate when a name in honor of another person has been given to the same site, building or facility in the past;
- A name in honor of a person is not appropriate if that person has been overly recognized in the past; and
- A name may be selected through a competition or contest.

Even though Mr. Weiner is still active with the league, naming the field in his honor seems appropriate because of the special 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the league and the long-term leadership of Al Weiner to the league and the youth sports community. The obvious achievement of Al Weiner to the league and to youth sports warrants an

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exception to AR 8-7 to name this field in Heartwell Park, on this special occasion, in his honor.

On January 17, 2008, the Parks and Recreation Commission concurred by recommending to the City Council that Al Weiner Ballpark is an appropriate name for the Pony-Colt Field at Heartwell Park.

#### DISCUSSION

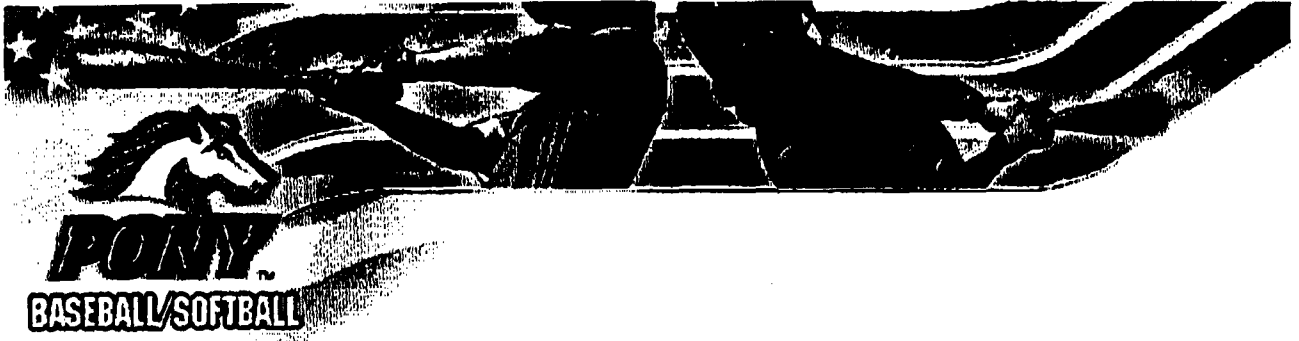
In 1981, the inaugural year of the McDonalds/Lakewood Youth Sports Hall of Fame, Al Weiner was inducted for his lifetime contributions as a coach in youth sports. He has remained a volunteer coach every year since then. A local youth sports icon, there is no name or face more synonymous with the Heartwell Pony-Colt Baseball League. So enamored with the health and success of the league and its facilities was Coach Weiner that three years ago he purchased a home across the street from the field on Parkcrest Street so that he could serve as head caretaker and watchdog for the field in his retirement. A long-time patron of many youth sports endeavors, he single-handedly financed the construction of a grass infield on the baseball diamond and remote control sunscreens over the bleachers. His generosity is only surpassed by his commitment to the children in this community. He has been coaching in the Greater Long Beach area for almost 40 years, including 35 years as a volunteer for the Heartwell Pony-Colt League.

It is not unusual to name a facility in a park with a separate name from the name of the park. The best-known example in Long Beach is probably Blair Field in Recreation Park. Other more recent examples include Darren Erstad Field at Silverado Park and Tim Salmon Plaza at Stearns Champions Park. Thus, this is not expected to cause any confusion or take away from the honor of naming the park Heartwell Park.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation to receive and approve to name the Pony-Colt field at Heartwell Park in honor of Al Weiner by naming the field "Al Weiner Ballpark."

Attachment: Letter from Heartwell Pony-Colt Baseball League



## HEARTWELL PONY-COLT BASEBALL

November 9, 2007

To Whom it May Concern:

The Heartwell PONY-COLT Baseball League will be celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the Spring of 2008. An "Opening Day" Celebration is scheduled for Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. **To commemorate our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the Board of Directors would like to name the field after the league's patriarch, Al Weiner. For 50 consecutive seasons, our league has provided a meaningful experience to teenagers (age 13-16) in the greater Long Beach community. No person is more responsible for the long-term success of the league than Al Weiner. We would finance the project ourselves, but would need your approval and guidance, of course. With your help we would like to unveil the newly renamed "Al Weiner Ballpark" on Opening Day next spring.**

In 1981, the inaugural year of the McDonalds/Lakewood Youth Sports Hall of Fame, Al Weiner was inducted for his lifetime contributions as a coach in Youth Sports. He has remained a volunteer coach every year since then. A local youth sports icon, there is no name or face more synonymous with the Heartwell PONY/COLT Baseball League. So enamored with the health and success of the league and its facilities was Coach Weiner that three years ago he purchased a home across the street from the field on Parkcrest Avenue so that he could serve as Head caretaker and watchdog for the field in his retirement. A long-time patron of many youth sports endeavors, he single-handedly financed the construction of a grass infield on the baseball diamond and remote control sunscreens over the bleachers. His generosity is only surpassed by his commitment to the children in this community. He has been coaching in the Greater Long Beach/Lakewood area for almost 40 years, including 35 years as a volunteer for the Heartwell PONY/COLT League.

Please contact Toby Hess at 562-472-4567 if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

**"Home of the 2003 PONY World Series Champions!"**

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Leslee Schoenberger	President Pony V.P. Colt V.P. Al Weiner	Steve Richard
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*Leslee Schoenberger*  
Heartwell President

*Toby Hess*  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Chairman

## Al Weiner Bio

### Personal Info

Born: Minnesota  
College: University of Minnesota  
Employment: Douglas, Rockwell, Boeing  
Occupation: Engineer

### Baseball

East Lakewood Little League Coach	1968-1971
Heartwell PONY/COLT Coach	1972-Present
♦ PONY World Series-4 <sup>th</sup> Place	1987
♦ PONY Western Zone Champions	1997
♦ PONY World Series Champions	2003
♦ Board of Directors, Pony V.P.	2001-Present
Lakewood High School Freshman Head Coach	1990-2007
♦ 14 Moore League Championships	
♦ CIF Southern Section Championship	2006

### Football

Lakewood Pop Warner Coach	1974-1982, 2007
Millikan Pop Warner Coach	1983-1988
Wilson H.S. Varsity Football Coach	1989-1992
♦ Last team to defeat LB Poly H.S.	1992
Mayfair H.S. Freshman Football Coach	1993, 2002
Paramount H.S. Varsity Football Coach	1994-2001, 2003-2006
♦ 4 San Gabriel League Championships	
Lakewood H.S. Freshman Football Coach	2007

### Basketball

“Home of the 2003 PONY World Series Champions!”

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Leslee Schoenberger	President Pony V.P. Colt V.P.	Al Weiner	Steve Richard
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