

Family Y has fastest growing slow-pitch program !

By John Benton
The Tribune-Star

TERRE HAUTE — With the 2009 adult softball season in full swing, I thought it might be a good time to look at the state of softball locally. In short, how many teams are playing at local facilities, what are the costs for participation and which programs are enjoying success?

The fastest growing program appears to be the Terre Haute Family Y adult program. Presently, the Terre Haute Family Y program has 36 teams playing in its men and co-ed programs. Playing slow pitch on a field built to fast pitch specification (much smaller), the Y program has witnessed continual growth in the last couple years. The cost is \$350 per team for a 12-team league schedule and a postseason single-elimination tournament.

The Terre Haute Family Y program is presently an unaffiliated league and does not register its teams with any national softball organization.

Another long-standing local adult program is the Terre Haute Church League which has 37 teams participating at its North Fruitridge facility. As in past years, the Terre Haute Church League offers men's league play on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, with Friday play for co-ed teams. Participation costs are \$300 per team for a 12-game men's schedule or a 10-game co-ed schedule. Congregations with a second team can participate for \$250.

On a side not, the Terre Haute Church League is one of Indiana's oldest organized church leagues. They have enjoyed a 30-year plus run of successful recreational church league softball.

The Terre Haute Church League is a long-standing member of the Amateur Softball Association.

In Clay County, the Brazil YMCA program has 24 participants in its adult softball program. The Brazil YMCA program offers league play for men, co-ed and church co-ed teams. As with the Terre Haute Church League, the Clay County operation has enjoyed many years of offering recreational adult softball programming. Cost for the Brazil YMCA program is \$350 per team for a 10-team regular season schedule and a single elimination post season tourney.

As with the Terre Haute Church League, the Brazil YMCA is an Amateur Softball Association affiliated league.

The Terre Haute Parks and Recreation program presently has 15 teams participating in its adult program. The Parks and Recreation program offers men's league play on Tuesday nights and co-ed play on Monday nights. The cost to participate is \$410 per team for a 15-game regular season schedule. There is a \$50 refundable forfeit fee in addition to the league fees.



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The Terre Haute Park and Recreation program is an ASA program and utilizes ASA certified umpires.

The Terre Haute Parks and Recreation leagues seem to be suffering from a decline in participation. I would enjoy hearing from local softball enthusiast what they think the problem is with the program.

Before hearing your comments, I would like to offer some of my own. The problem isn't the facility, which is the best facility in a multi-county area, nor is it a lack of support from the Parks and Recreation front office. Eddie Bird, head of the Terre Haute Parks and Recreation Department, is a former teammate of mine and a strong supporter of the local adult program. In addition, the program is blessed with strong on-site supervision in the person of Chris Patterson, a very knowledgeable softball player.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts concerning the Terre Haute Parks and Recreation program.

The Terre Haute Family Y will be hosting a women's invitational tourney on June 20. Teams interested in participating can contact Ellie Hightower at (812) 239-9039 or John Benton (812) 877-2566. The cost to participants is \$100 per team.

Se ya at the park.

