

# ASHLAND DAILY TIDINGS

## Entre Amigos: Little Leaguers share Sister City experience together

BY BETZABÉ “MINA” TURNER / AMIGO CLUB July 22, 2018



- Ashland and Guanajuato Sister City Little League players and their friends and relatives gather in front of the Guanajuato Mural on Calle Guanajuato in Ashland. (Ashland Little League photo)



Little League player, 10-year-old Raul Abascal (center), scored one run in Thursday's play. He is pictured (l-r) with his grandmother, Clarissa Arrache de Abascal; Ashland Amigo Club President Betzabé "Mina" Turner; and his Ashland hosts, Amy Lepon and Brad Hildreth. (Amigo Club photo)



A Guanajuato Little League baseball player waits for the pitch in Thursday night's play against Ashland at the U.S. Cellular Community Park in Medford. Guanajuato won 6-3. (Ashland Little League Photo)

Ten boys aged 10-12 from Guanajuato, Mexico, played Little League baseball in Ashland and Medford last week and at the same time shared a Sister City experience with their welcoming Ashland counterparts.

“I think it is a fantastic opportunity for these kids to learn first-hand about the Sister City relationship,” Clarissa Arrache de Abascal said as her 10-year-old grandson, Raul Abascal, chomped on a post-game hamburger at Ashland’s Black Sheep Pub and Restaurant. “They are the future, and they will keep this sisterhood alive. They will remember this event forever. It’s a fabulous exchange.”

Abascal said she fell in love with Ashland and its people on her first visit 20 years ago and has come back 10 times, once as a municipal councilor representing the Guanajuato mayor at Independence Day festivities, other times as president of the Amigo Club of Guanajuato. She intends to return this November with her husband, Luis, for the Ashland Amigo Club’s Guanajuato Nights dinner/auction.

“The people of Ashland are lovely and so kind and treat us so well,” she said.

In the opening game Wednesday of the fourth annual Sister City Classic at Hunter Park, Ashland jumped to a 12-0 lead and held on for a 13-7 victory. Jackson Rosenthal pitched two scoreless innings, while Pueo Kimokeo-Benson spearheaded the offense with a single, double and triple. Coached by Greg White, the Ashland team consisted of nearly the same team members who traveled in Guanajuato in March 2017: Rosenthal, Kimokeo-Benson, Bridger Foss, Evan Rhoden, Gabe Brabec, Sam Brabec and Colin Lawrence. Romulo Munoz and Jorge Miramontes each hit home runs for the Guanajuato Tigres.

Guanajuato won Thursday night’s game 6-3 at the U.S. Cellular Community Park against a different team of Ashland Little Leaguers. Guanajuato’s Romulo Munoz pitched four scoreless innings and smacked a ground-rule double.

Ashland families hosted the Guanajuato players and relatives, whose busy schedule included rafting the Rogue River and exploring Crater Lake, Jacksonville, and Medford during their five-day visit to the Rogue Valley.

Conceived and coordinated by Armando Preciado of Guanajuato and Rich Rosenthal of Ashland, the Sister City Classic represents a new chapter in the 49-year-old cultural, educational, civic, and community ties between the two cities. The two Little League teams have each visited their opponents’ cities twice.

*Amigo Club’s Entre Amigos (Between Friends) column about Ashland ties to its sister city Guanajuato, Mexico, usually appears on the third Tuesday of each month. This is a bonus installment.*