

Tribute to Negro League team Lebanon Clowns planned

Tuesday, July 24, 2012

The Roy Bailey African American Museum and History Center will celebrate the legacy of the Lebanon Clowns Negro League baseball team with a weekend of activities July 28 and 29.

The weekend begins Saturday, July 28 with a Youth Exhibition Game and stories about the Lebanon Clowns at 10 a.m. at the James E. Ward Agricultural Center. Teams will consist of boys and girls from the Lebanon community. Those who would like to sign up may contact Keisha Pickett, (615)290-9041. All participants will receive a gift.

On Sunday, July 29, the tribute begins at 4 p.m. at Pickett Rucker Methodist Church. Rev. Dr. Charley Edward McAdoo, a former member of Pickett-Rucker and of the Lebanon Clowns and an avid supporter of the event since 1999, will be the featured speaker.

A highlight of Sunday's event will be the presentation of the Chris Price Athletic Award to a young male or female baseball athlete. The late Chris Price was a standout baseball athlete at Lebanon High School, a former Ohio Valley Conference player at Middle Tennessee State University, and played professionally with the Kansas City Royals. He died in 2009.

In preparation for the event, the planning committee asks for names of former members of the Lebanon Clowns or of any Negro League baseball player. Call (615)739-2283 or (615)512-7921 by July 25 to submit names.

Baseball's Negro League teams offered the opportunity for African American athletes to play baseball at a professional level in the mid-20th century, before black players were integrated into major- and minor-league teams. The leagues were most popular during the 1940s and into the 1950s.

Former members of the Lebanon Clowns, as well as families, friends and supporters are invited to attend the tribute. There is no admission fee, but donations will be accepted.

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For more information on the youth exhibition game or the tribute event, contact Keisha Pickett, (615)290-9041, or Carla McAdoo, (615)444-3042. You may also call the Roy Bailey African American Museum and History Center at (615)449-2911.