

Sports

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A family affair

Former major-leaguer Catalanotto and daughter to play and host inaugural charity softball game

By ANTHONY LIFRIERI

Most fathers and daughters look forward to father-daughter dances in their lifetime, but Head of the Harbor resident and former Major League Baseball star Frank Catalanotto and his daughter, Smithtown High School East junior Morgan, will try something new.

The duo will take part in the inaugural Frank Catalanotto Foundation vs. Boomer and Carton All-Star Celebrity Softball Game, started by Catalanotto, at Bethpage Ballpark in Central Islip, Sunday, August 2 at 11 a.m. The game, which features numerous celebrities, pits the Catalanottos and their friends against WFAN's Boomer Esiason and Craig Carton.

"We've been doing our golf outing for five years now, and Boomer and Carton had mentioned they wanted to do charity softball games," Frank Catalanotto said. "I said this would be a good opportunity to do it right before my golf outing, when we already have all the celebrities

in town. It's another great way to raise funds for the Vascular Birthmark Foundation, so I think it's going to work out great."

Catalanotto's association with the cause of Vascular Birthmarks dates back to the birth of Morgan, who was born with one on her nose. "When you're the parent of a newborn baby, it's very scary when there could be something wrong," he said. "We wanted to do something about it even though the doctors told us not to worry. Fortunately, when I was traded to the Texas Rangers, Linda Shannon, the head of the Vascular Birthmark Foundation, contacted us and told us about doctors that treat vascular birthmarks. We saw a doctor in Albany who was able to do laser surgeries and it went away. We wanted to find a way to raise funds and awareness about it, so we started the Frank Catalanotto Foundation in 2001."

Morgan is now 16, and just finished her sophomore year at Smithtown East. Not only is her birthmark unnoticeable, she also plays

varsity softball for the Bulls, including getting the game-winning hit against Smithtown West this season. With some athletic heroics already in her career, Morgan is looking forward to joining her father on the softball diamond.

"I'm really excited to meet and play with the celebrities," Morgan said. "I'm also looking forward to the chance to play at Ducks' stadium in front of a lot of people. The fact it raises awareness for vascular birthmarks, which is something I had, makes it even more special."

Catalanotto, who hit .291 in his 14-year career with the Tigers, Rangers, Blue Jays, Brewers and Mets, is also excited to get back on the field. "I haven't done it in a while," he said. "I love competing. It's not a situation where I'm going to be playing my hardest, but it's still going to be fun to be out there on the field and be with the guys again. As a former professional athlete, it's something I'll always miss—the camaraderie with the guys."

Joining the Catalanottos is a star-studded cast from the sports world. Aside from
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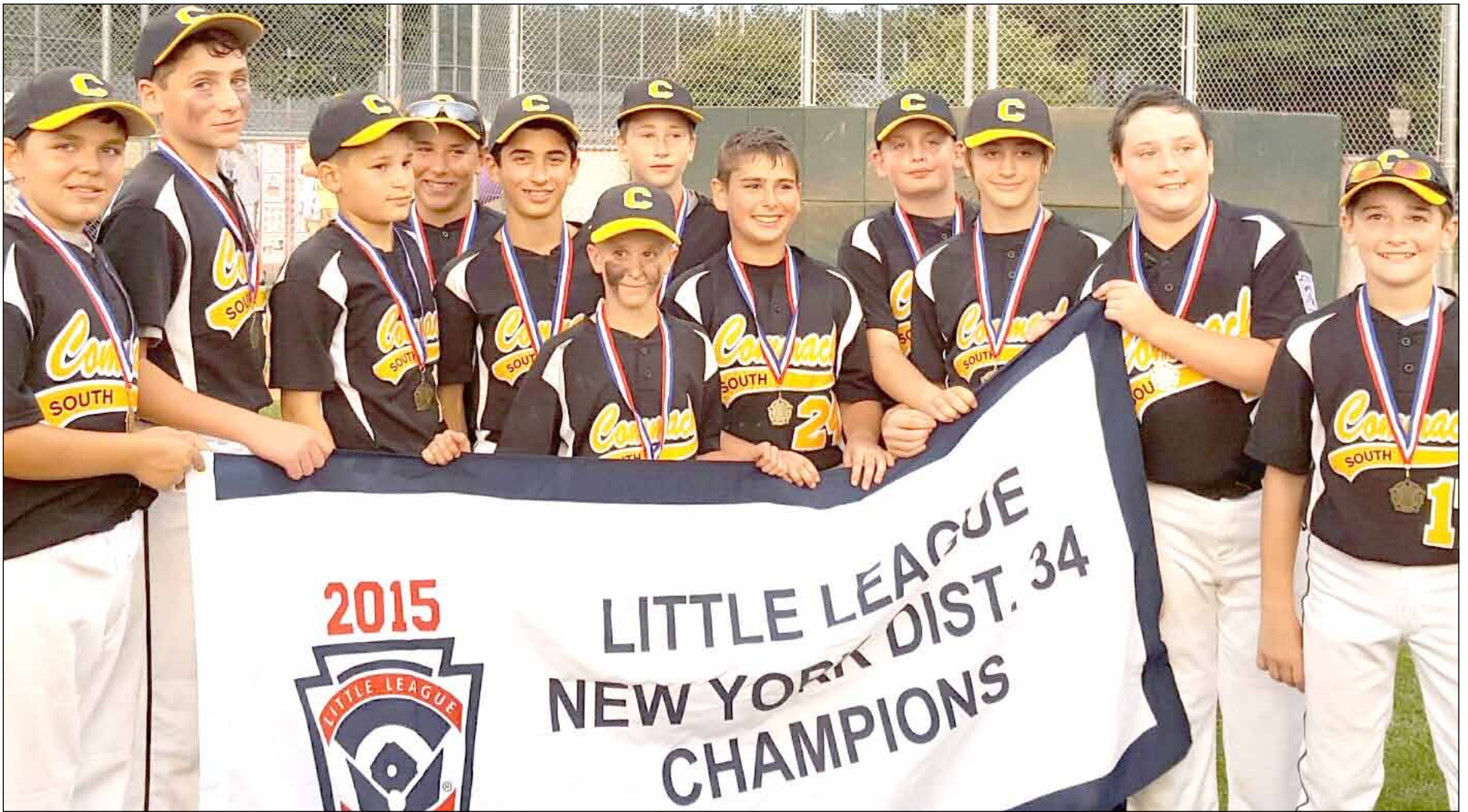
LIKE FATHER LIKE DAUGHTER: Former major-leaguer Frank Catalanotto (above and below) will host and play in a charity softball game with his daughter, Morgan, (left) to benefit the Vascular Birthmarks Foundation, Sunday, August 2 at Bethpage Park. -Rob Cuni photos



-Richard Valeo photo



Sports



The Commack South Young Guns celebrate their third consecutive District 34 Williamsport Championship.

Commackclippers

Little League team wins third Williamsport district title; outscores opponents 59-5 in five game tournament

By ANTHONY LIFRIERI

For the Commack South Young Guns Little League 12-and-under team, it's becoming something of a regular thing.

Each year, the Young Guns make the Williamsport District 34 tournament, win it and move on to the next level. But few teams have dominated their district in the way this team has.

The Young Guns mercy ruled four of the five teams they played and outscored their opponents 59-5 to secure their third District 34 Williamsport championship in the last three years, Wednesday, July 8.

"I don't know if it's ever been done before, but it has to be some kind of accomplishment for the boys," Commack coach Tom Salerno said. "We've also been undefeated for three years in a row and I think it's because we kept the kids together as a team and unified. A lot of them are good enough to leave and play travel baseball, but they like playing with each other and the coaches.

"We're just a local team from a small area in Commack. We all go to the same school and it just seems to work."

The Young Guns will take part in the Section 4 East Tournament, beginning Saturday, July 18 at 1 p.m. at Ostego Park in Dix Hills against the District 32 champion. The Young Guns will then play the District 36 champion at North Shore Rocky Point, Sunday, July 19 before taking on the District 35 champion at the Levitt Complex in Centereach, Tuesday, July 21. The teams with the best two records will then play in the championship game at Ostego

Park, Thursday, July 23 at 8 p.m.

"Our goal is to win the section, compete in states and see if we can pull out a bid to get to the Little League World Series in Williamsport," Salerno said.

The road to the Young Guns' District 34 title was one of dominance. As a team, Commack South hit .515 with an on base percentage of .662, a slugging percentage of .813 and an on base plus slugging percentage (OPS) of 1.475.

"Everyone was hitting the ball," Salerno said. "Even our outs were shots."

The only trouble for Commack South came in the championship game against rival Northport, when it had to rally from a 1-0 deficit to win 3-1 in extra innings. "I'm very proud of the boys because they never quit."

Down to their final three outs in the top of the sixth, it would have been easy for the Young Guns to quit. Rather than fold, Commack South went to work, getting singles from Anthony Foti, Tommy Smyth, Nicholas Cooper and Andrew Capuano scored Foti to tie the game and force extra innings.

In the top of the seventh, Justin Salerno hit a solo home run to give the Young Guns the lead before Smyth, Cooper and Connor Pedersen's hits brought home an insurance run. Smyth then slammed the door on Northport in the bottom of the inning to save the victory.

While most would not appreciate the Young Guns' brush with elimination, Salerno thinks the team will be better because of it in the long run. "I thought it was much more important

for us to have a tight game and show our character," he said. "It can be an advantage in the next round. Now they know they have the heart and desire to come back."

Commack South cruised through the tournament's prior games. The Young Guns clobbered HTV A&E in the opening game, 19-0, behind a combined one-hitter with eight strikeouts from Smyth and Pederson, before Foti went the distance with a three-hit, 13-2 victory over Deer Park. Game three featured Pederson throwing a one-hit, complete-game shutout in a 12-0 win over Larkfield before Foti had spun a complete game, three-hit shutout against North Babylon in the semifinals.

Salerno, who shares coaching duties with Mike Orlando, Ray Anderson, Chris Foti and Paul Pedersen, attributed his team's success to its ability to stay together and play year-round. "We were

able to hold the team together over the last five years while most players from other teams leave Little League and play travel ball," he said. "We play in competition tournaments all year long. We also do a fall ball league, winter training and a spring travel league in addition to Little League."

"It's a huge advantage," Salerno said. "Everyone knows their position, their secondary position and that they're part of a team. If they have to sit for a game, they're not upset because they know they're playing for the long term."

He also enjoys working with the team's young players, who also include Brett Anderson, Aidan Girvan, Robert Maikowski, Niko Pellechia, Anthony Orlando and Ryan Raggio, and hopes the team can advance as far as possible. "It's been a thrill," Salerno said. "We're just focused on the next tournament. Our goal is to get past [the section tournament] and on to the next one."

Local teams win sportsmanship award

Several high school athletic teams from the Town of Smithtown were recently recognized by Section XI with the Outstanding Sportsmanship Award. A total of 10 teams from Smithtown East and West, Commack, Hauppauge, Kings Park and the Smithtown Christian School took home awards given to teams that exhibit the best conduct on and off the field.

The Commack boys' varsity badminton team in League I and girls' varsity lacrosse team in Division I were given the award. Smithtown West's

girls' varsity track team in League III and junior varsity boys' tennis team in League II were recognized, as was Smithtown East's junior varsity girls' lacrosse team in Division I and the Smithtown Christian junior varsity boys' tennis team in League VI.

Hauppauge's girls' track team won the award for League V and its boys' swimming team took the award at the "B" level. Kings Park also had a pair of teams with outstanding sportsmanship with the boys' varsity lacrosse team in League III and the girls' varsity lacrosse team in Division II.

Sports

Get going for guided dogs

Block Chiropractic holding 5K run and walk to benefit Smithtown Guide Dog Foundation

By **ANTHONY LIFRIERI**

Block Chiropractic Sports and Wellness of Smithtown and Selden understands that dogs are man's best friend. That is why the group is putting together a 5-kilometer run and walk at Dowling College in Shirley to benefit the Guide Dog Foundation and America's Vet Dogs, also based in Smithtown, Sunday, July 19 at 9 a.m.

Dr. Jeffery Block, a partner in the firm with his brother, Dr. Rick Block, first conceived the run as a way to help the Guide Dog Foundation. "We were asked to come into the Guide Dog Foundation and do an ergonomic assignment," Jeffery Block said. "When we learned about the organization and who it was helping, especially on the veteran dog side, we wanted to get involved. There is a large amount of suicide among returning veterans, but the percentage of veterans with dogs trained for them is zero.

"We decided this would be a great way to raise money for charity, and we wanted to do a 5k race anyway, so this is a worthy cause."

All of the proceeds of the race will go to the Guide Dog Foundation in Smithtown, which provides guide dogs, hearing dogs, service dogs, post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) dogs and military dogs to

those who need it. "They provide dogs everywhere," Dr. Block said. "Our connection with them is through their employees we treated. We saw how much they care and how hard they work, and were drawn to it."

Aside from training dogs, the foundation also trains people. Anyone chosen to receive a guide or military dog goes to train full time at the foundation, eating, sleeping and living at the facility while they learn to work with their dog.

One of the graduates from the course will appear and give a speech at the race, a rare occurrence, according to Dr. Block. "I think it's fantastic," he said. "It's one thing to see [the foundation's] puppies, but you'll get a good understanding of how those puppies will make a huge impact on their partner's life."

Those puppies will also be on display at the race. "One of the best parts of our involvement with the Guide Dog Foundation was seeing the puppies and the dogs, and how well they take care of them," Dr. Block said. "Also, who doesn't want to see puppies?"

The community has rallied behind Block Chiropractic and the Guide Dog Foundation, contributing approximately \$7,400 in sponsorships to date. Sponsors for the race include McCarthy and Carbone P.C, American Imaging, Apex Laboratory, the Law

Offices of Charles Bonfante III, Gruenberg Kelly Della Attorneys and Counselors at Law, Kaplan Management Consultants Inc., Long Island Orthotics and Prosthetics, the Millennium Diner, OMAX 3, ROAR Sports Drinks, Stand-Up MRI, Zwanger-Pesiri Radiology, Cotgreave Agency, Kur Organic Bars, Economic Planning Health Corporation and Smithtown Bagels.

"I was pleasantly surprised at how our contacts and friends from the community have been willing to put their money where their mouths are," Dr. Block said. "These days, we're getting bombarded by things on all ends, but it's nice to know there are a lot of good people still willing to help."

Those sponsors also helped Dr. Block Chiropractic put together a bag filled with coupons, bottles of sports energy drink, protein bars and other goods. "I think the bag will be a nice little perk," Dr. Block said. "Everyone really stepped up to the plate."

The race itself features a fast, scenic course. It begins at Dowling College's eastern campus in Shirley, looping around its campus and athletic fields before running through the streets of the campus' surrounding neighborhood. After runners re-enter the campus, they will sprint to the

finish line, situated at the 50-yard line of the athletic field.

"It's a nice, flat, easy course with zero hills," Dr. Block said of the course. "It's also an official 5k run, and it is the same [course] that the Make-A-Wish Foundation uses later in the year."

Prizes for the run include medals for the top overall male and female, as well as the top three men and women in 13 different age groups. The age groups include 14-and-under, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, a 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, and 70-and-over. Registration is \$25 online by going to runsignup.com and searching for Block Chiropractic by Friday, July 17 at 11:59 p.m. Registration is also available the day of the race and walk for \$35.

Although Dr. Block said he hopes the weather holds out, he also believes between the sponsors already raising \$7,400 and the proceeds from runners, the event will be a success. "Our patients are really excited to do things to help the charity and help make this a success," Dr. Block said. "A lot of patients and our staff are involved, and a lot of fans are coming down. It should be a good time, and we'll be providing help... People like to do good things despite the reputation New Yorkers get."

Catalanotto host charity softball game

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Boomer and Carton are former Mets Paul LoDuca, Bud Harrelson and Bobby Valentine; former Yankees Jim Leyritz and John Montefusco, Islanders Rick DiPietro, Benoit Hogue, Brian Mullen and Claude Lapointe; former NBA stars Wally Szczerbiak and Wes Matthews; NFL players Will Witherspoon, Sidney Rice, Tommie Harris and Chris Simms; St. John's women's basketball coach Joe Tartamella, Constantine Maroulis of American Idol and Greg Cergol of NBC News.

"There's going to be so many great people out there who love to help charities and causes," Catalanotto said. "Most of them I know, and some we got through friends of friends. Everyone has been so generous."

The game will take place at Bethpage Park, home of the Long Island Ducks. Tickets are \$10 for box seats, and \$11 for field box seats. Tickets can be purchased the day of the game, or by going to www.liducks.com or calling 631-940-8499.

The game will last approximately seven innings, with the possibility of more innings if time permits, according to Catalanotto. The group is also contemplating a three-ball, two-strike format to help speed up the game.

The next day, Catalanotto will hold his annual golf outing through the

Frank Catalanotto Foundation at the Woodside Acres Country Club in Muttontown. Although golf spots are sold out, tickets to the dinner buffet at 6:30 p.m. are still available for \$175, as well as sponsorships ranging from \$200 for a tee sign to \$3,000 for two dinner tickets with a company name and logo on all golf carts, as well as an acknowledgment in the dinner program. Tickets for the golf outing are available at www.fcatalanotto.org.

"It's going to be a little hectic having everything on back-to-back days, but we've already sold out foursomes," Catalanotto said. "This thing grows every single year because the players seem to love it and always come back... It feels good to be able to do something positive for the community and help people out."

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SUNDAY 7/19/15 5K RUN/WALK

Block Chiropractic, Sports & Wellness First Annual Run/Walk

Give yourself the gift of health through training and participating in our first annual 5K Run/Walk while helping us raise money for Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs, Service Dogs, PTSD Dogs, and Military Dogs.

Pick up your free training materials at either of our offices when registering today. Call Today for more information: 631-696-4371 or 631-543-0004.



Location: Dowling Brookhaven Campus

07/19/2015

Race Time 9:00AM

Race Sponsorship Available

Register Now \$25, (Race day \$35)

Register Online Justregister.net

Packet Pickup 7/16/2015

BLOCK CHIROPRACTIC SPORTS & WELLNESS

301 Maple Ave Smithtown, NY 11787
248-260 Middle Country Rd. (Ste 7-9) Selden, NY 11784

www.blockchiropractic.com

Sunday 7/19/15
9:00AM Race Time