

# House Of David to Lake Placid

By Ed Engler

January 16, 2019

Chet Johnson grew up in Benton Harbor, Michigan rooting for the Detroit Tigers and Al Kaline. He served with the Army 196th Battalion in Vietnam, then returned home to work in Michigan public schools until his retirement. A snowbird, he plays for the 863 Bar & Grill in the Lake Placid senior softball league.

When he returns to Michigan for the summer, he plays for the unique House Of David vintage religious community team that was founded in his hometown in 1903. Members of the church pledge to be Christian, celibate, and vegetarians. Players no longer have to honor the code. "I'm a vegan," observed Chet without further comment on the other two. The team travels and plays other teams that play with 19th century rules, equipment, and uniforms. All House players must wear a beard, and Chet has complied with this for almost 20 years. "Regardless of the century, players love the game," claimed Chet on his twin styles of play.

In Monday action, Chet's 863 team won a close 15-13 squeaker over Miller Air. Chet slammed a triple, and Dick Cook (two doubles), Jim Lorne, and Bill Scrase (double) had three hits each. For Miller, Dana Amundson and Ed Engler (double) had four hits, while Mike Kratt made two superlative plays at second base to thwart 863 rallies.

Central Security and Seminole Tire also had a tight game, with The Securitymen winning 15-14. Defense won for Central in the last inning, with Elston Hedges gunning down the tying run at the plate and Jim Radcliff spearing a hot liner at first to end the game. Pat Lowe and 85 year old Gallo Gonzalez netted four hits each for The 'Noles.

Conley Insurance upended Lake Placid Marine 18-13. Ron Kilburn paced The Insurers with four hits including a homerun, while Ellis Howard (double) and "Wild Bill" DeStefano headed on octet of Conley sluggers with three hits each. Bill Gallagher and Manager Paul Stephenson both knocked out three hits for The Mariners.

On Wednesday, Central Security (4-0) continued its winning ways with a 17-6 triumph over Miller Air (0-4). Manager Elston Hedges had a double and triple and got help from Ron Hanisch's long triple. Norm Grubbs slugged two doubles for Miller.

Conley Insurance (3-1) stayed on Central's heels with an 21-14 win over 863 Bar & Grill (2-2). Will Ramsey homered for Conley and got support from Jack Smith (triple) and winning pitcher Charlie Quinn with four hits apiece. For The 863s, Dick Cook (two doubles) banged out five hits. Manager Mitch Dallen and Cliff Bluml added four hits each.

Seminole Tire (2-2) rallied late for a 19-17 victory over Lake Placid Marine (1-3). Paul Marcellus (two doubles) and Dan Rasmussen (triple) had four hits apiece for The 'Noles, while ageless Gallo Gonzalez (two doubles) had three hits and turned in two nifty plays at second base. The trio of Dave LeHue, Ron Melia, and Richard Rivera Ortiz netted three hits apiece for The Mariners.

Games are at 11 AM on Monday and Wednesday at the Highland Sports Complex. Come out and enjoy the fun. For further league information, please visit [lpssoftball.com](http://lpssoftball.com).