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Eugene Civic Alliance Announces Tri-Chairs to Lead Campaign for Civic Park

Eugene Civic Alliance Board of Directors announced today that Jon Jaqua, Kip Leonard and Bev Smith will lead a 35-person team to raise funds to build a new Civic Park. The facility will include the first Kidsports fieldhouse, a turf field for recreational play and semi-pro soccer, and a 2,500-seat stadium.

Jon V. Jaqua owns McKenzie Oaks Ranch near Eugene. He has been farming and ranching for more than 40 years and is now managing the ranch with his son, Josh. For more than 30 years, he was also an owner, in partnership with Tim Stokes, of Metal Products Company. The company is a metal stamping and fabrication business in Springfield.

Jaqua played in the NFL for the Washington Redskins (1970-74). He was Deputy Director and Operating Officer of the Oregon Economic Development Department (1989-96), and Executive Director of the University of Oregon Foundation (1996-99).

Jaqua has served on numerous state and local boards. He has lent his financial support, and has been particularly interested in and involved with organizations that are focused on kids. He also was a Kidsports football coach in the 1980's.

"As physical fitness and sport opportunities declined for kids in the Eugene schools over the years, it was always my hope that Eugene could create this type of youth sports facility. I actually built a soccer field on my ranch when my boys were growing up. We couldn't consistently find a good place to play soccer games in Lane County. Kids from all over the state came to play at the ranch. What the Eugene Civic Alliance intends to build is exactly the type of facility that I had envisioned this community needed 30 years ago, and I'm excited to help make it happen now."

Kip Leonard retired as a Lane County judge in 2010 after serving on the bench for nearly 25 years. Originally appointed to the District Court in 1986, he was appointed to

the Circuit Court bench in 1989. During his tenure he served as the presiding judge of both courts. For the last 10 years of his career he was the county's juvenile judge, dealing with matters involving children and families. Upon his retirement the county named a courtroom in the Serbu Juvenile Justice Center in his honor.

Mr. Leonard grew up in Eugene and played sports in the Eugene Boys Athletic Association (EBAA), which became Kidsports. As an adult he coached numerous Kidsports teams. He has been active in many community activities and boards, including the Lane County Public Safety Coordinating Council, the State of Oregon Criminal Justice Council, The Lane County Domestic Violence Council, the Boys and Girls Club, South Eugene High School, Tracktown USA, and Kidsports. He is currently the president of the boards of both the Oregon Social Learning Center and the Center for Family Development.

"My appreciation for the community's responsibility to provide activities and facilities for kids and families was shaped by my years on the juvenile court bench. While we do many good things, we do not do enough. Physical activity and fitness is an essential building block for healthy youth and a healthy community."

Beverly "Bev" Smith is the Executive Director of Kidsports, a non-profit organization that gives more than 15,000 children the opportunity to play seven-core team sports throughout the year.

"I want to help re-imagine youth sports to ensure that all kids have the opportunity to enjoy an early, positive, youth sport experience. A positive experience helps children to improve athletic performance, aids in injury prevention, and provides important social development. The Kidsports field house at Civic Park will enhance our efforts to keep kids playing, developing, and having fun."

From 2001 to 2009, Smith was head women's basketball coach at the University of Oregon. In 2002, her team won the NWIT national championship and in 2005 competed in the 2nd round of the NCAA tournament. Smith was also a student athlete at Oregon from 1978 to 1982. As a member of the Oregon Women's Basketball team, the Canadian native set multiple records and was named to the Kodak All American team in 1981 and 1982.

Smith played 12 years for the Canadian National Team, competing in the 1979, 1986 and 1994 World Championships, as well as the 1984 and 1996 Olympic games. She was head coach of the Canadian National Team from 1997-2001 and coached the team in the 2000 Sydney Olympics. She is a member of the Canadian Olympic Hall of Fame, the American Women's Basketball Hall of Fame, the Oregon Athletic Hall of Fame, and the Oregon Sports Hall of Fame.

Smith graduated from the University of Oregon with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Performance. She holds a level 4/5 National Coaching Certificate from the Canadian National Institute of Coaching. She was the author of the first draft of Canada Basketball's Long Term Athlete Development Plan and has conducted coaching clinics in Canada, Italy, Jordan and the United States. Currently she serves on the Sports Conflict Institute Advisory Board.

ECA, founded in 2014, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation established to redevelop the historic Civic Stadium property into an inclusive, long-term, self-sustaining community sports and entertainment venue, operated primarily to benefit the children of the community. ECA owns the site free and clear.

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