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Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2007

Rockville Express schedules fundraiser

by John Y. Wehmuller | Staff Writer

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The end of football season is officially approaching, and it won't be long before it's time for pitchers and catchers to report to spring training. The scent of baseball is in the air, and Rockville Express president John Pfeifer is betting some people are starting to catch spring fever.

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Which makes the second week of February the perfect time for the wood-bat summer league team's annual fundraiser. Former Baltimore Orioles Al Bumbry and Davey Johnson will speak at an event that includes dinner, as well as silent and live auctions.

"Everybody's back in the baseball mindset, so this is a good time to get people interested," Pfeifer said.

The dinner will be held 6-10 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 11, at the Glenview Mansion in Rockville. Tickets are available to the public for \$100 each. Proceeds benefit Rockville Community Baseball, Inc., which operates the Express in the Cal Ripken Sr. College Baseball League.

This is the annually the organization's biggest fundraising event, and the money raised goes primarily toward the operation of the Express, Pfeifer said. But any additional revenue will go to RCB's secondary mission of improving youth baseball facilities in the Rockville area.

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to RCB's secondary mission of improving youth baseball facilities in the ROCKVILLE area.

The club is in the process of lining up representatives from the Washington Nationals and Pittsburgh Pirates. Last year's guest of honor was Pirates General Manager Dave Littlefield.

"Last year, guests got the opportunity to sit and talk with Dave Littlefield and Al Bumbry," Pflieger said. "Unlike events where the speaker gets there just in time to talk and walks right by you, you really got the feeling that it was so interactive."

Bumbry and Johnson both have close ties to summer wood-bat baseball, Pflieger said. Bumbry's son, a freshman at Virginia Tech, will play in the Ripken League this summer with the Maryland Orioles. Johnson's son was just drafted last June.

Auction items include vacation packages, tickets to major sporting events, memorabilia and youth lessons. For more information and tickets, visit www.rockvilleexpress.org, call 301-340-1697 or e-mail postmaster@hollydres.com.

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