



# RICHMOND FLYING SQUIRRELS 2016 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



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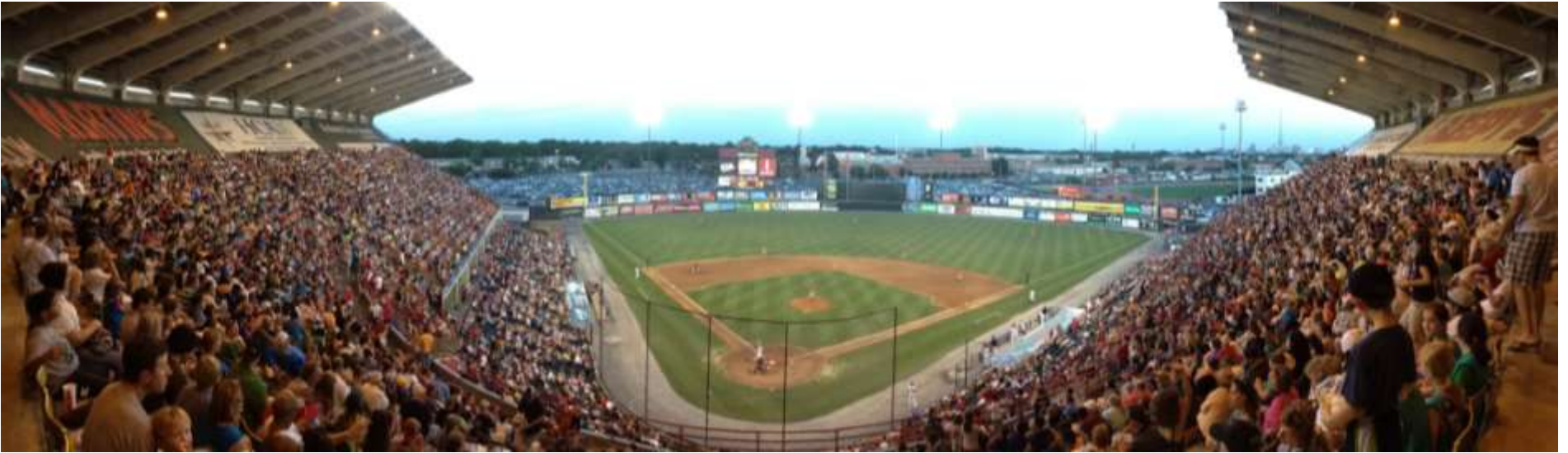
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# **COMMUNITY IMPACT**

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## **COMMUNITY IMPACT**

### **OVERVIEW**

The Richmond Flying Squirrels believe that for a Minor League Baseball team to succeed, it needs to impact the community in a positive manner. Since their inaugural season in 2010, the Squirrels have become a pillar in the Greater Richmond community and a reliable resource for area organizations by helping to raise funds, awareness and support through various methods.

In their 7<sup>th</sup> season, the Richmond Flying Squirrels continued to grow their community outreach throughout Greater Richmond and Central Virginia. The number of school programs, community events, mascot, team and staff appearances once again increased. The Squirrels partnered with countless non-profits, little leagues, schools and civic organizations to impact the Richmond area as much as possible while creating exciting partnerships that continue to grow each year.

The Richmond community also continues to return the support, by bringing out nearly 500,000 fans to The Diamond in 2016 through Flying Squirrels games, off-season events, and non-game day functions.





## 2016 John Henry Moss Award Video



Richmond Flying Squirrels

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# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – IN SEASON

## **SCHOOLS & YOUTH**

### **“Go Nuts for Reading!” Program**



Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_  
School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



In its 6<sup>th</sup> year, the “Go Nuts for Reading!” Program had 85 schools from 17 different school districts participate; reaching over 43,000 students.

Staff members and mascot Nutzy visited local elementary & middle schools to read a book and explain the importance of reading. Each student receives a bookmark and is challenged to read a certain number of books.

Students who completed the program were eligible for a free ticket to their school’s Reading Night game and were recognized during a pre-game parade.



### Flying Squirrels Art Contest



Each year, elementary and middle school students are asked to design new signage for the stadium based on a specific theme.

The theme for the 2016 season was “Nutzy Loves RVA”. Over 130 pieces of art were received from 35 different schools.

15 pieces of art were chosen to be displayed as signs in the main concourse of the ballpark throughout the entire season.



### Score an A, Score a Ticket Program



Students in grades K through 12 are eligible to receive a free general admission ticket for each “A” they earn on a report card. Over 800 tickets were redeemed using this program.



### Squirrel Tails Kids Club



With over 25,000 members, the Squirrel Tails Kids Club offers fans 14 and under free membership. Members receive a bi-weekly E-Newsletter, and can receive a free general admission ticket to all Sunday home games. These games feature a kid’s themed giveaway, catch on the field and post game run the bases!





### 2<sup>nd</sup> Inning 2<sup>nd</sup> Grader PA Announcer

Virginia 529 and the Flying Squirrels partnered to select a local second grade student to be the Public Address Announcer for the Squirrels during the bottom half of the second inning. A new student was selected for each home game of the regular season.

### Flying Squirrelettes Dance Team

For the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year the Flying Squirrels had their own dance team, the Flying Squirrelettes.



Approximately 100 girls ages 5 to 14 participated in six on-field choreographed performances that spanned three different games during the season.

### Scout Nights at The Diamond



On their selected nights during the season, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts from the Central Virginia area were invited to receive discounted tickets and come out to the ballpark. Scouts in attendance were recognized during a pre-game parade around the field, and participated in on-field contests throughout the game. They were also invited to camp out with their troops in the outfield following the game. Portions of the group ticket sales were donated back to each organization; with the boy scouts raising \$2,500 and the girl scouts \$3,500.





# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – IN SEASON

## **SCHOOLS & YOUTH**

### **Camps**

Youth baseball camps are held at The Diamond annually, run by Flying Squirrels players and coaches and providing instruction to over 300 campers annually.



The Flying Squirrels also partner with Chevy Youth Baseball to host four one-day clinics that are free for participants ages 4-16.





A one-day baseball camp for children with autism, Camp Warrior expanded in its 5<sup>th</sup> year to accept more participants and a greater age range. Each participant received specialized instruction from Squirrels players and trained volunteers, a camp T-shirt, and a ticket to that night's game.







## **COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – IN SEASON** **SCHOOLS & YOUTH**

### **United Healthcare Homerun for Life**

The Flying Squirrels partnered with United Healthcare to give a deserving child a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! The child selected had received medical treatment from United Healthcare, and was invited to come out to the Squirrels game on August 20<sup>th</sup>. That night before the game, he stepped up to the plate to participate in his very own homerun call. Facing an opposing team pitcher, the Flying Squirrels radio announcer set the scene of a tie game down to the final out; then swinging as hard as the child could the announcer called it a homerun for the win! The child rounded the bases to a standing ovation from the crowd, and ran to home plate to be greeted by the Squirrels team.





## **COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – IN SEASON** **IN-STADIUM TICKET PROGRAMS**

### **Community Nights**

The Flying Squirrels created special partnerships with businesses in the towns of Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Williamsburg and Tri-Cities to provide free tickets to fans in those areas.

### **“Never Waste a Ticket” Program**

Season ticket holders are invited to turn in their unused tickets to be donated to non-profit organizations. Approximately 50 area non-profits were able to utilize nearly 5,000 donated tickets during the 2016 season.

### **Silver Squirrels Program**



The Flying Squirrels partnered with State Farm Insurance and Fifty Plus Magazine to offer fans ages 60 and older the chance to join the 2016 Silver Squirrels Club. With over 400 members in its seventh season, senior fans attended 10 Tuesday games throughout the season. Members also received concessions coupons for each of those games, special offers from sponsors, fun activities and prizes, and an exclusive 2016 Silver Squirrels t-shirt.







# **COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – IN SEASON** **IN-STADIUM MARKETING**

The Flying Squirrels partnered with various businesses to provide in-game recognition for charitable causes.



## **Virginia Credit Union Strikeouts for Hunger**

Virginia Credit Union made a donation to FeedMore for every strikeout by a Flying Squirrels pitcher. \$5,000 was donated during the 2016 season.

## **GoodFeet Walks Donation**

The GoodFeet Store made a donation to the T.A.P.S. Program during the 2016 season for every walk issued to a Flying Squirrels player. The total donation was \$3,000.

## **Blossman Gas Homeruns**

Blossman Gas donated \$1,000 to Special Olympics this season thanks to every homerun hit by a Flying Squirrels player during a home game.

## **Kroger Double Play**

For every double play made by the Flying Squirrels during the 2016 season, Kroger made a donation to both USO and FeedMore. Both organizations received \$4,000.



### MiLB Charity Partners: ALS Association



The Flying Squirrels welcomed the ALS Association, DC/MD/VA Chapter, to The Diamond on Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> to educate fans about the disease, and spread awareness for the association. Buckets were sold to and raised over \$1,000 for the association; and everyone who purchased a bucket got to go on the field post-game to participate in the Ice Bucket Challenge. They were joined by several of the Flying Squirrels players!



### Auctions



In-stadium off-the back jersey and hat auctions were sponsored by local companies, and all proceeds benefited various charities totaling over **\$13,000** overall.

- **Father's Day Blue Hat** benefiting Flying Squirrels Charities
- **Muhammad Ali Themed Jersey** benefiting the VCU Parkinson's & Movement Disorders Center
- **ASK Jersey** benefiting the ASK Childhood Cancer Foundation
- **MLBPAA Memorabilia Auction** benefitting the MLB Player's Alumni Association & Flying Squirrels Charities



### FUNN-Raiser Ticket Program

200 non-profit organizations from the Greater Richmond region participated in the 2016 FUNN-Raiser Program. In total, the organizations sold nearly 20,000 tickets to raise more than **\$45,000.**

### Fueled By Hope Car Show

On Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup> the Flying Squirrels team was on the road; but the Fueled By Hope Car Show brought fans to The Diamond. The show was hosted in the parking lot surrounding the stadium, and raised funds for The Founders Center of Commonwealth Autism.







# **COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – IN SEASON** **IN-STADIUM FUNDRAISING**

## **Guns & Hoses Charity Softball Game**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Guns & Hoses softball game was held on Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup> where the Richmond City Police Department played the Richmond City Fire Department in a seven inning softball game following the Flying Squirrels game. Fundraiser tickets and t-shirt sales benefitted the two teams' selected charities – The Richmond Police Athletic League and the Evan B. Haynes Burn Foundation.



## **American Cancer Society Survivor Night**

On Saturday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> fans were invited to donate to American Cancer Society and receive luminaries to place on the field in remembrance of those lost to cancer and those whose fight still continues.

The luminaries raised \$800 for ACS and were placed around the infield and lit for the fireworks show following the game.





## **COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – IN SEASON** **IN-STADIUM FUNDRAISING**

### **Om Run at The Diamond Project Yoga: From Mat to Bat for Special Needs**

On June 18<sup>th</sup> the Flying Squirrels hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Vinyasa Flow yoga class in the outfield of the ballpark. The family-friendly event was open to all ages, and the purchase of a ticket included the yoga class and a ticket to the Squirrels home game that evening. Proceeds from the ticket sales benefitted Project Yoga, Richmond's services to adults with special needs. 100 participants came out and \$500 was donated to the cause.

### **Mustache May**

The men of the Flying Squirrels Front Office and members of the team grew mustaches during the month of May to raise funds for Mustaches for Kids, an organization that helps fund other local youth charities. The game on June 2<sup>nd</sup> served as "Mustache Night" to recognize the charity and pay tribute to those great mustaches that were grown!





# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – IN SEASON

## **NON-PROFITS**

### **ASK Childhood Cancer Foundation**



The 11th Annual ASK Fun Walk & 5K was held at The Diamond for the second time on April 30th, 2016. The race celebrates the strength and courage of local children who are battling cancer.

The 5K course took runners and walkers around the historic stadium and ended in the infield, crossing home plate.

Following the race, participants enjoyed a festival featuring live music, fantastic food, inflatables and activities for the kids. Plus, all participants received a free ticket to the ASK day celebration at the Squirrels game that night. For the game the team wore special ASK jerseys that were auctioned off and all proceeds benefitted the foundation. During the 7<sup>th</sup> inning stretch, all ASK Kids in attendance were invited to parade around the field. The parade received a standing ovation from the crowd, and high fives from both team dugouts.



### **Metropolitan Junior Baseball League Flying Squirrels Regional Youth Tournament**

In conjunction with the City of Richmond, Henrico County, and Chesterfield County the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Flying Squirrels MJBL Regional Youth Tournament was held in July 2016. The tournament was for youth 12 and under participating in a recreation association, and was free to all teams.

All teams were then recognized at a Flying Squirrels game later in the season.



### RAMPS Build

This summer, Flying Squirrels front office staff and players participated with RAMPS to build a wheelchair accessible ramp for a local military vet.

Ramp Access Made Possible by Students (RAMPS) is a local non-profit whose mission is to help the less fortunate by paying for and assembling modular wheelchair ramps for those who are in need. The program works with high school students, and on July 8<sup>th</sup> the Flying Squirrels were able to take part in one of their builds.

The organization was then recognized at the Flying Squirrels Military Appreciation Night game on July 30<sup>th</sup>.





## Drives at The Diamond

**Food Drive** – Each season, the Squirrels host a “Tribute to the Peanut” night at the ballpark. As part of the promotion, the team collects jars of peanut butter to donate to the local food bank, FeedMore. Close to 300 pounds of peanut butter was donated from the collection.



**Book Drive** – As a part of the “Go Nuts for Reading!” program, the Flying Squirrels teamed up with the Children’s Museum of Richmond to host a book drive at each reading night game. On April 14<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and May 3<sup>rd</sup> the Museum Book Buggy was at the ballpark and collected nearly 500 children’s books to donate.





### Military Appreciation

The Flying Squirrels annual Military Appreciation Night was held on Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup> to honor and recognize local service members. The night included a camouflage hat giveaway, discounted ticket offers for those who showed a military I.D., and recognition throughout the game.



Earlier in the season on April 16<sup>th</sup>, the Squirrels also had the honor of throwing a surprise military homecoming! Tech Sgt. Robert Champine took part in one of the in-between inning games on the field to surprise his wife and two children, who thought he was still serving overseas until the end of the year.



## Squirreloween



The Flying Squirrels hosted their 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Squirreloween event on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup> 2015 with over 3,000 guests in attendance over a three hour time span. The Halloween party included trick-or-treating through the suites, hayrides around the field, pumpkin decorating, live music, costume contests and more! The event was free to the public and provided a fun and safe environment for local families to celebrate Halloween.



## Ballpark Warming Party Puritan Cleaners Coats for Kids Drive

Partnering with Puritan Cleaners, the 6<sup>th</sup> annual event encouraged fans to bring new or gently used coats to the ballpark for Puritan's annual Coats for Kids drive. While at the event, fans enjoyed live music, free hot dogs, tours of the ballpark, kids games and more. Fans who donated coats were able to enter a raffle with unique items and experiences. Nearly 800 coats were collected during the November 2015 event.





## Nutzy's Rotary Funn Run

Held in partnership with the West Richmond Rotary Club, the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Nutzy Rotary Funn Run 5K was held on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> 2015 at The Diamond.



Nearly 1,000 participants lined up at the ballpark on the morning before the Richmond Christmas Parade to help raise money for Flying Squirrels Charities, United Methodist Family Services, and the Children's Museum of Richmond.

The event featured a holiday themed costume contest, free doughnuts, and a packet-pick-up event the night before with food, drinks, live music, cookie decorating, and a Toys for Tots collection.



## Richmond Christmas Parade

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dominion Richmond Christmas Parade took place on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

Nutzy, Squirrels staff, and the VCU Peppas rode through the streets of Richmond on a baseball-themed float, welcoming Santa to town.





## Nutzy's Block Party: Fan Fest

Nutzy's Block Party for Fan Fest was held on Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup> and was the first opportunity for fans to purchase individual tickets for the 2016 season. The block party was free for the community to attend and featured displays and set-ups from over 20 different partners and vendors, kid's games, zumba classes on the field, miniature golf, food samplings from new concession items, live music, a t-shirt giveaway for the first 100 fans who purchased tickets, and the revealing of the Squirrels new female mascot!

Fan Fest kicked off a fan naming contest for the new mascot, and the winning name was revealed on Opening Night.



## Battle of the Badges

The first ever Battle of the Badges was held at The Diamond on Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. The charity softball tournament featured games between 8 different area police departments to raise money for the Children's Hospital Foundation.

The free event was open to the community and attendees could cheer on the teams, participate in a doughnut eating contest, visit different police & SWAT team vehicles, play games for different prizes, and even “dunk a cop” in the dunk tank! Donations were being accepted by the Children's Hospital Foundation, who raised nearly \$3,000 from the event.





Flying Squirrels Charities is the 501(c)3 charity arm of the Richmond Flying Squirrels. The purpose of Flying Squirrels Charities is to partner and connect the Flying Squirrels brand with the Greater Richmond community in an effort to optimize results from fun and versatile fundraising campaigns to benefit youth in the city of Richmond.



New dugout being installed at Blackwell Recreation Center.



Flying Squirrels Charities continued to expand in its third year, and is progressing on the **“Renovating Richmond’s Recreation”** campaign. This impactful campaign is designed to create safe, community-minded recreational spaces that are dedicated to the city’s youth.



# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – CHARITY

## **FLYING SQUIRRELS CHARITIES**

### **Renovating Richmond's Recreation**

The first community project is to renovate 16 Richmond City youth baseball facilities.

The 16 fields were chosen by the Greater Richmond Parks & Recreation Department based on the needs of each facility. Over 700 youth participated in the 2015 Parks & Recreation baseball league, and will be positively impacted by these field renovations. In early April 2016, the Flying Squirrels will team up with the Parks Department to host Opening Ceremonies at the fields and kick off the league's new season.



Before pictures of two Parks & Rec fields.



After dugouts were built at two of the fields.





# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – CHARITY

## **FLYING SQUIRRELS CHARITIES**

In 2016 Flying Squirrels Charities has raised over **\$50,000** through in-stadium auctions, donations, and fundraising events throughout the year.

### **Turn Left Golf Classic**

In partnership with Richmond International Raceway, the Flying Squirrels held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Turn Left Golf Classic on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

The tournament benefited RIR Cares and Flying Squirrels Charities and featured food, drinks, prizes, silent auction, and FUNN for all in attendance.



Total funds raised in 2016 were approximately **\$25,000.**



### Hot Stove Banquet

On January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 the Flying Squirrels held their 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Hot Stove Banquet at Virginia Commonwealth University's Siegel Center. The event included a silent auction, dinner, and speeches by former and current baseball celebrities. The star-studded evening raised nearly **\$20,000** to benefit Flying Squirrels Charities.





**500** mascot appearances were made in 2016  
at local schools, businesses, non-profits, festivals, fundraisers, and other  
community events.



Flying Squirrels players and coaches made over **40** community appearances and served over **200** hours of community service during the 2016 season (April-September). They participated in events at schools, non-profits, camps, senior living communities, the children's hospital and youth recreation facilities.







# COMMUNITY APPEARANCES

## **STAFF & EXECUTIVE SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**



Flying Squirrels Front Office staff members made over **150** speaking engagements and appearances at civic organizations, church groups, school career days, sports marketing and DECA classes, event expos, and more.



# **\$30,000+**

In Monetary Contributions to over 25 local organizations.

# **\$330,000+**

In-kind donations to nearly 900 programs for various charitable organizations







## STAFF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**Flying Squirrels Front Office staff members were involved in volunteer opportunities and community service for over 30 different local organizations including:**

- Alzheimer's Association
- American Heart Association
- ASK Childhood Cancer Foundation
- Better Business Bureau
- Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation Richmond Chapter
- Central Virginia Soccer Association
- Excel To Excellence Mentoring Program
- Extraordinary Women's Exchange
- Greater Richmond Chamber
- Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens
- Midlothian Athletic Association
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Retail Merchants Association
- Richmond Hockey League
- Richmond Junior League
- Richmond Miracle League
- Richmond Police Athletic League
- Richmond Region Tourism
- River City Sports
- Scott's Addition Business Association
- Special Olympics Virginia
- SportsBackers
- Sports Turf Management Association
- Susan G. Komen Foundation
- Tuckahoe Sports, Inc.
- Virginia Sports Turf Management
- Virginia Turfgrass Council
- Y-Richmond

The Squirrels also teamed up with the DARS Program (Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services) to offer game-day employment opportunities to community members who have gone through rehabilitative services.





# COMMUNITY RECOGNITION & AWARDS

## **BUSINESS OF THE YEAR**

Greater Richmond  
Chamber of Commerce, 2010

## **LOGO OF THE YEAR**

Ballpark Digest, 2010

## **MINOR LEAGUE EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR: TODD "PARNEY" PARNELL, VP & COO**

Baseball America, 2012

## **BEST LOCAL MASCOT**

Style Weekly, 2013, 2014, 2015

## **HALL OF FAME AWARD FOR FOOD & BEVERAGE**

NBC12, 2013

## **RICHMONDERS OF THE YEAR**

Style Weekly, 2013 & 2014

## **BEST LOCAL ATHLETIC EVENT**

Richmond Magazine, 2013  
Richmond Times Dispatch, 2015 & 2016

## **BEST MINOR LEAGUE LOGO**

Baseball America, 2015

## **CHARITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT**

Boomer Magazine, March 2015

## **BOB FREITAS ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Baseball America, 2015

