



FRCSE employees cover all bases for Walking Wounded softball team



Members of the Fleet Readiness Center Southeast softball team, The Walking Wounded, gather for a team photo April 28. Front row, from left, Alex Kapacinskas, Chris Null, Mary Beth Barriere, Aaron Milton and Grayson Pylant. Back row, from left, Rick Raber, Mike Curry, Jr., Kevin Pullis, Robert Kuchler, Mike King, Lev Raines and John Pisarski. Members missing from photo: Randy Parker, Capt. Trent Demoss, Juan Roitman and Antuan Floyd. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Injuries are a common occurrence in softball – especially as the body ages.

Pulled groins, sprained ankles and general fatigue can take the place of a once finely tuned physique. With this in mind, the elder statesmen of the Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) softball club gave the team its name: The Walking Wounded.

“It’s a nod to the times in history when every last man was needed for a battle and the commander gave the order to ‘bring up the walking wounded,’” the team’s player/coach Rick Raber said. “I pulled both groin muscles a few years ago and, since we only had 11 players, I had to play the last half of the season like that.”

Raber, the work lead for FRCSE’s technical library, and Randy Parker, deputy project manager of the P-3 line, are the last two players left from the original teams formed in the 1980s.



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“I came on board at FRCSE in 1981,” Parker said. “Back then, FRCSE had seven or eight teams and we just played each other. They were grudge matches, I guess you could say.”

Parker, 59, could start his own trophy shop with what he’s earned with FRCSE teams he’s played on. That’s not counting the 50-and-over team or travel teams he plays with as well.

Now FRCSE’s boys of summer are buttressed by men in their 20s and 30s, adding a little spring to the step of The Walking Wounded.

The new players have not only brought a youth movement, they’re also handy with the hickory – or in this case, aluminum. Nearly all played at least at the high school level, with others having college careers as well.

Mike Curry, Jr., 23, a hazardous waste technician at FRCSE, played baseball for two years at Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ).

“I started working here about two years ago, and this was a cool way to get back in to playing ball,” Curry said. “I pitched at FSCJ, but since that doesn’t really translate to softball pitching I’m playing left-center field.”

Curry began his time at FRCSE in the paint shop before moving to hazardous waste removal. Others on the team are aerospace engineers, artisans and production specialists. Aaron Milton was a correctional officer for the state prison system before coming to the depot where he’s worked since 2001, now as a quality assurance specialist.

“I was at the Baker County Correctional Institute for two years – working there, I mean,” Milton said with a grin. “We had a softball tournament there every year that was pretty intense.”

Like many on the team, Milton plays on other leagues across town as well as the FRCSE team.

“I’ve played baseball my entire life,” he said. “At Ed White High School, I was playing varsity baseball and I was in three other leagues at the same time.”

With the combination of youth and experience, the team is 6-1 so far in the spring season. As part of the Navy’s Captain’s Cup League, the team plays against other civilian teams, as well as teams made up entirely of active-duty Sailors from other commands at Naval Air Station Jacksonville.

“The overall skill level of the league has definitely increased over the last few years,” Raber said. “I have a number of guys who played at the collegiate level, so that’s the level of skill you’ll see out there now. A lot of your active duty guys are contenders for All-Navy Softball.”



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Everyone wants to win. However, for the men of The Walking Wounded, it was always about having fun with coworkers outside of the depot.

“You see some teams in other leagues out there fighting amongst themselves,” Parker said. “But our team is made up of a really good group of guys. We have a lot of fun out there.”



Randy Parker, the pitcher for The Walking Wounded and Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) P-3C deputy product manager, displays a slew of trophies his FRCSE teams have won dating back to the early 1980s. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)



Michael Curry, a hazardous waste technician at Fleet Readiness Center Southeast, loads a barrel onto a vehicle at the facility's



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F/A-18 line April 25. Curry, 23, is one of the newer faces on the team and plays left-center field. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)



Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) Commanding Officer Capt. Chuck Stuart, left, accepts an honorary jersey from the coach of the Walking Wounded, the FRCSE softball team, Rick Raber, center left. FRCSE Executive Officer, Capt. Trent DeMoss, center right, is a member of the team and accepts his jersey from FRCSE employee Antuan Floyd. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)