



PRESS RELEASE

Teachers raise more than \$20,000 for schools during the third annual Teacher Games in Mesquite

MESQUITE -- The first winner of competition here in the third annual Teacher Games in Mesquite Nov. 12-14 was Todd Shaw, a sheet rock contractor who doubles as an assistant baseball coach for Indian Springs School.

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Shaw's victory in the billiards competition at the Virgin River set the tone considering that the Teacher Games in Mesquite generated more than \$20,000 for distribution to the top competitors who donate the money back to their respective schools.

Shaw won first-place money of \$2,000 and the check could not have come at a better time for the school situated about 70 miles north of Las Vegas. The story was repeated several times as dedicated educators traveled to Mesquite in search of gold.

"The money is going to our art department," said Shaw, who moved with his wife to Las Vegas from Iowa about 18 months ago before taking up his position as a coach. "The department has zero budget; and I assure you this is going to come in very handy."

Shaw's story illustrated the dedication of those involved in the teaching profession especially since the competitors strive to help their schools during the worst recession since the Great Depression. Teachers representing an estimated 21 schools from Nevada and Utah were undoubtedly some of the heartiest souls on earth considering that they, too, are suffering during the current economic climate.

The hectic and action-packed Teacher Games also included Co-Ed Softball, Bunco, Texas Hold Em Poker, Golf, 3-on-3 Basketball and Bowling.

When teams won, the cha-ching of victory was complemented by gracious comments by some of those who didn't win a championship.

Take for instance the final game of the co-ed softball competition where Granger High School of West Valley, Utah knocked off two-time defending champion Snyder Elementary of Las Vegas to win the \$5,000 first-place money.

"While no one likes to lose, we lost to a team with class," said Alyssa Horton who led Snyder Elementary to the title for the past two years to raise \$10,000 for her school. "Granger was very good."

Snyder still picked up \$750 for the second-place finish and took home a total of \$1,250 after placing second in the bowling competition.

Granger reversed the loss to Snyder in 2009 with the victory this year and immediately named second baseman Brittany Heaton the most valuable player of the game.

“We wanted to take the money back to Granger,” said Heaton, who coaches several sports. “This will go to very good use for education. It was an awesome experience.”

Granger’s wins in Softball and 3-on-3 basketball pushed the school to the top of the leader board in winnings with \$6,000. Finishing second with \$3,250 was Findlay Middle School in North Las Vegas.

Ronzone Elementary, Garehime Elementary and Farron Elementary of Las Vegas along with Indian Springs all won \$2,000. Granger defeated Canyon Springs of Las Vegas in the 3-on-3 basketball competition.

Scott Porter, a third-grade teacher at Ronzone Elementary in northwest Las Vegas, captured the golf title with an adjusted score of 68.5 at the Palms Golf Course.

“We’re going to use the \$2,000 we won for tutoring and technology,” said Porter, who has been teaching for seven years.

Runnerup Michael Lyons of RO Gibson Middle School in Las Vegas learned about the event late and won \$500 with a runner up score of 69.

“We thought we’d come up and have some fun while making some money for Gibson,” said Lyons, a seventh-grade math teacher. “I shot an 83 and we had a great time.”

Lyons said the money could be use for various avenues including field trips, assemblies or what is referred to “Be Kind” recognizing students for random kindness.

Two of the strongest fields in the Mesquite Teacher Games were Bowling and Poker. Ron Adams and Kristi Schaffler of Findlay Middle School captured the first two places in the Poker competition to win a total of \$2,500 for their school while Garehime Elementary of Las Vegas took \$2,000 home after winning leading the Bowling competition.

Lisa Marshall led Ferron Elementary by capturing first-place money of \$2,000 in Bunco. A total of 44 entrants made the Bunco competition among the top categories. The Teacher Games were sponsored by the Mesquite Resort Association. Events were presented at various locations including the CasaBlanca Resort, Virgin Valley High School, Old Mill Park and the Virgin River Hotel.

Teacher Games in Mesquite
Sponsored by the Mesquite Resort Association
Nov. 12-14

Softball: 1. Granger High School, West Valley, Utah, \$5,000; 2. Snyder Elementary, Las Vegas, \$750; 3. Findlay Middle School, \$500. 3-on-3

Basketball: 1. Granger High School, West Valley, Utah, \$1,000; 2. Canyon Springs High School, Las Vegas, \$1,000.

Bowling: 1. Garehime Elementary, Las Vegas, \$2,000; 2. Snyder Elementary, Las Vegas, \$500; JT McWilliams Elementary, Las Vegas, \$250.

Poker: 1. Ron Adams, Findlay Middle School, \$2,000; 2. Kristi Schaffler, Findlay Middle School, \$500; 3. Michele Evans, St. Francis de Sales, \$250.

Golf: 1. Scott Porter, Ronzone Elementary, \$2,000; 2. Michael Lyons, RO Gibson, Las Vegas, \$500; 3. Heath Stahle, Findlay Middle School, \$250.

Billiards: 1. Todd Shaw, Indian Springs School, \$2,000; 2. ButchVonExel, Indian Springs; 3. Travis Shaw, Indian Springs.

Bunco: 1. Lisa Marshall, Ferron Elementary, Las Vegas, \$2,000; 2. Olga Flowers, Nate Mack Elementary, \$500; 3. Jeff Berstler, Chaparral High School, Las Vegas, \$250.

Money Leaders: 1. Granger High School, \$6,000; 2. Findlay Middle School, \$3,250; 3. Garehime Elementary, Indian Springs, Ronzone Elementary and Ferron Elementary, \$2,000; 7. Snyder Elementary, \$1,250; 8. Canyon Springs High School, \$1,000; 9. Gibson Middle School, Nate Mack Elementary, \$500 each; 11. St. Francis de Sales and Chaparral High School, \$250 each.

CAPTIONS

Poker1: A strong field entered the Poker competition in the third annual Mesquite Teacher Games.

Bowling 13: Garehime Elementary of Las Vegas captured the first-place money of \$2,000 in the Bowling category of the third annual Mesquite Teacher Games.

Golf 5: Black Gaming sales manager Tim Webster, right, congratulates Ronzone Elementary teacher Scott Porter for winning the Golf category of the Mesquite Teacher Games.

Softball 13: Granger High School of West Valley, Utah defeated Snyder Elementary of Las Vegas to win the \$5,000 first-place money in the Co-Ed Softball competition.

Softball 19, 22 and 24: Granger High of West Valley, Utah and Snyder Elementary battled in the final round of the Softball championship at Mill