



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **From Mayor Dean DePiero**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Tuesday, May 19, 2009**

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## **PARMA READY TO HOST CHALLENGER LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL TOURNAMENT**

**(PARMA)** – The City of Parma is preparing to host the prestigious Ohio Challenger Baseball Little League Tournament scheduled for July 18 and 19 at Veterans Memorial Park, formerly State Road Park. The Challenger Little League Baseball program was established for boys and girls ages five to 18 with physical and mental disabilities.

“We hit a home run last fall when Parma was selected as the host city for this very special sports program,” said Parma Mayor Dean DePiero. “We are now planning to welcome several hundred players, parents and coaches from all across the Buckeye State. We’re proud to be a part of it.”

Organizers of Challenger Little League say the program provides therapeutic and socialization benefits for the players. Coaches say it also builds self-esteem while allowing the children an opportunity to enjoy the game of baseball along with millions of other Little Leaguers around the world.

“Challenger Baseball has proven to be a winner in cities across the country,” said Parma Recreation Director Mickey Vittardi. “Being chosen to host such a prestigious program says a lot about our community. We are still busy seeking sponsors for the big weekend and welcoming volunteers who would like to help.”

The program’s fundamental goal is to give everyone a chance to play, regardless of limitations. Parents, coaches and siblings act as “buddies” to assist the Challengers run the bases, catch, throw, push wheelchairs and more.

“Our plan is to give these young VIP’s the red carpet treatment,” said Mickey Vittardi. “Challenger Baseball allows them to experience the joys of pulling together as a team, something many of us take for granted.”

For more information on the Challenger Little League Baseball Tournament call the Parma Recreation Department at 440-885-8144.

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