

The Dugout

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Bisbee High School football: thrilling fans at Warren Ballpark for more than a century...

During the past three years the Friends of Warren Ballpark have chronicled the rich history of baseball at Bisbee's beloved ballpark. What we haven't done, however, is to do justice to the sport that's played at the other end of the field.

In this edition of The Dugout - and in our future editions - the Friends will be paying tribute to the game that many, many thousands of Bisbee

High School alumni and other community members remember with great fondness and have eagerly anticipated each fall with great expectations: football!

In this gridiron-oriented edition, we'll take our readers back to some of the more notable moments that have transpired on the football field.

We will be aided in our efforts by a couple of Bisbee High school's best-known football players from the 1950s and 1960s - Hadley Hicks and Fred Giacoletti. Hadley and Fred recall their days playing for the Pumas on the inside pages of The Dugout.

Readers having their own stories to tell, photos to share or who have suggestions for future football articles can contact us at:

www.friendsofwarrenballpark.com

Hadley Hicks remembers ...



(Photo courtesy Hadley Hicks)

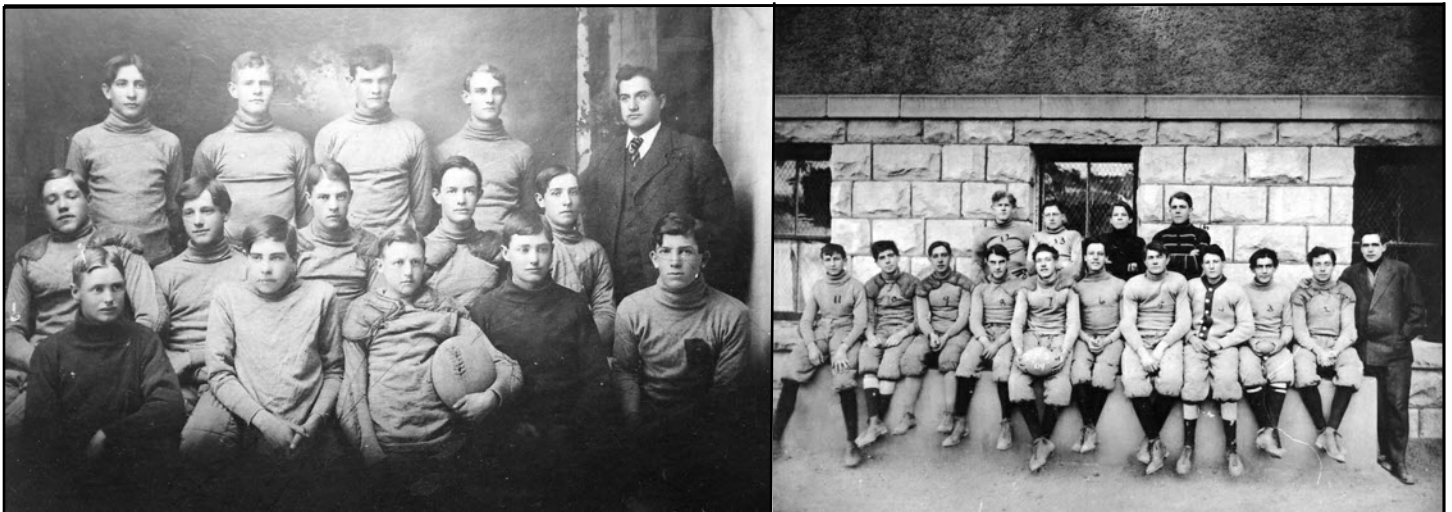
Hadley Hicks, one of Bisbee High School's finest athletes to step onto the football field at Warren Ballpark, gains yards against Douglas High School Bulldog defenders in 1951. Hadley tells the story of the Bisbee-Douglas gridiron rivalry on page 3.

Our next projects: a ballpark sign and new restrooms

History and memories have been made at historic Warren Ballpark for over a century. It has served as a special and wonderful place for watching baseball and football games, attending high school graduation and even

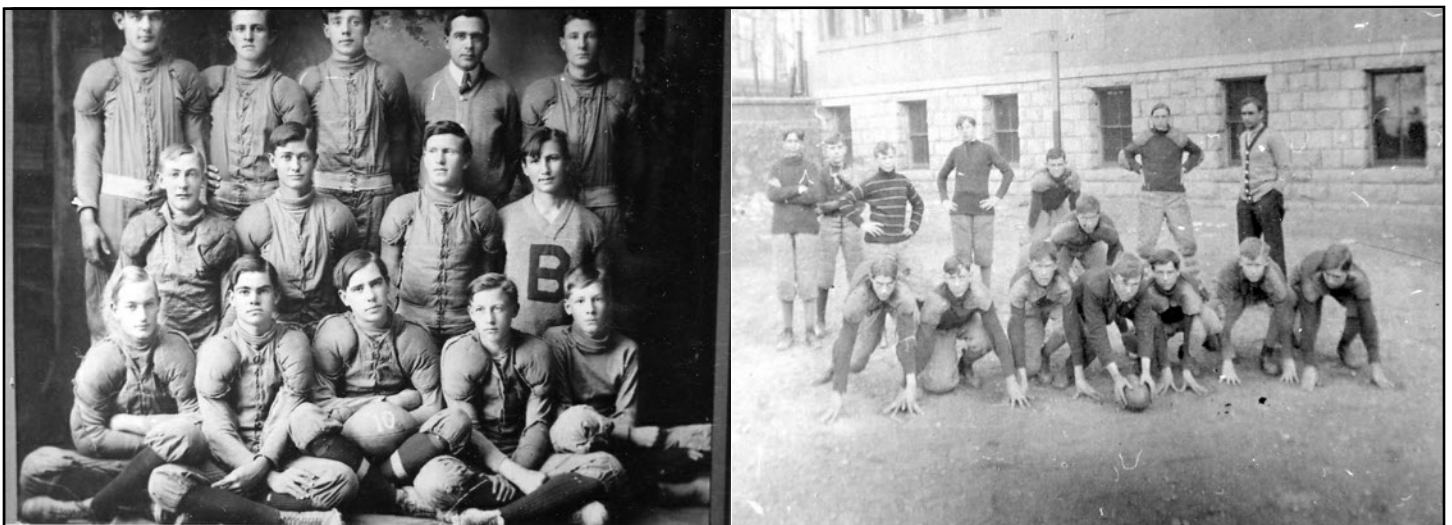
enjoying the music at the Bisbee Blues festival. But our grand old ballpark is in need of some tender loving care. Many who have attended events at Warren Ballpark have less pleasant memories of its historic restrooms.

The facilities located under the baseball grandstands date back to 1937 and are in deplorable shape. The men's restroom lacks a sink and a door for privacy. The women's restroom is not accessible (See **Projects** page 4)



Both of the photos above are of the 1909 Bisbee High School football team. At that time the high school was located in Central School in Old Bisbee. This team was the first to play at the new Warren Ballpark, on a dirt field. (Photos courtesy of the Bisbee Mining and Historical Museum)

BHS football & Warren Ballpark: a winning combination!



Football has been played at Bisbee High School since 1906. The 1910 team is seen at the left. The 1907 BHS team in the photo on right is lining up outside of Central School. What would these boys and their coach think about helmets and the modern game? (Photos courtesy of the Bisbee Mining and Historical Museum)

The game of football came to Bisbee after baseball, but caught on quickly as a popular spectator sport. The first high school games - in 1906, 1907 and 1908 - were played on a rough field located in Don Luis. Among the Pumas' first opponents was Douglas High School - and a **SERIOUS** rivalry was born!

When Warren Ballpark was constructed in 1909, baseball was the first sport to be played on the field. But as summer turned to fall, baseball was replaced by football. Bisbee's team took on opponents from all over the county, the state of Arizona and even played teams from El Paso. Because there were no lights until the late 1930s, all games were played in the daytime.

While the boys and their coaches who posed for the camera in these photos are long-gone, the passion with which they played the game and their spirit of competitiveness continues on during each game played by their modern-day counterparts. Enthusiastic crowds still fill the stands to cheer for their beloved Pumas at Warren Ballpark.

The Bisbee-Douglas rivalry: a cat & dog fight since '06

Bisbee vs. Douglas. More Than A Game

(Excerpted from "The B Shines Brighter: The Bisbee High School Legacy")

Every other Thanksgiving Day, the entire population of Cochise County would flock to the Warren Ballpark for the annual home and home "Turkey Day" battle between the BHS Pumas and the hated Douglas Bulldogs. The game was played for possession of the coveted "Copper Pick," which went to the winner of the game.

Big Bobby was a ticket taker and self-appointed bouncer for most of those games.



Puma left halfback Hadley Hicks threads his way around and through Bulldog defenders during the first of the two Bisbee-Douglas football match-ups played in 1951. (photo courtesy of Hadley Hicks)

Once, as he remembered it, as the huge crowd of both Bisbee and Douglas fans were coming in to the park through the common gate, a near riot broke out. Of course the fight was started by some of the reprehensible Bulldog fans. They always started the fights. The fight started, as Bobby remembers, when some words were exchanged and had to be broken up by the ever-present sheriff's deputies. Big Bobby verified that the Bisbee fans won the fight.

It was the following year

(Hadley Hicks, one of the finest athletes to come out of Bisbee High School, set down his memories of life in Bisbee during the 1940s and 50s in "The B Shines Brighter: The Bisbee High School Legacy," published in 2004. He was kind enough to allow us to use a small portion of his first book in this edition of The Dugout. Hadley's second book, "So You Wanna Be A Legend. So Did I" was published in 2010.)

that city officials decided that from now on visitors were to enter and exit through the gate behind the visitors' grandstand dugout on the east end of the park. Wise move.

Ken Hunt, BHS '51, recalls another near riot which he was a witness to:

"Among the many memories of my youth in Bisbee, one that still stands out is of the events during and after a football game in the Warren park on a sunny autumn afternoon in the late '40s. The game was between the Bisbee High Pumas and their arch rivals, the Douglas Bulldogs. Emotions, as always, were running high among the citizens of both communities. In the closing seconds of the game, Bisbee has a narrow lead but Douglas had possession near mid-field and there was just time for one more play. The Douglas quarterback completed a long pass in the end zone. Douglas

seemed to have won the game. But wait, one of the referees had called a penalty against Douglas, and their apparent touchdown was nullified. Douglas ran another play, but this time the Bisbee defense held. The game was over and Bisbee had won. The Douglas partisans thought they had been robbed.

During the game my neighbor Jack Gilbert recognized one of the referees as an old buddy he hadn't seen since college and Jack decided to renew their acquaintance. Immediately after the game was over Jack jumped the low fence in front of the Bisbee bleachers and ran out on the field. He caught up with the referee friend right in front of the Douglas section of the bleachers. The referee recognized Jack and an animated conversation between the two began. Most of the Douglas fans were still in the bleachers and observed this exchange between Jack and the referee. To some of them it confirmed their suspicion that the referees had sided with (see **Rivalry** page 4)

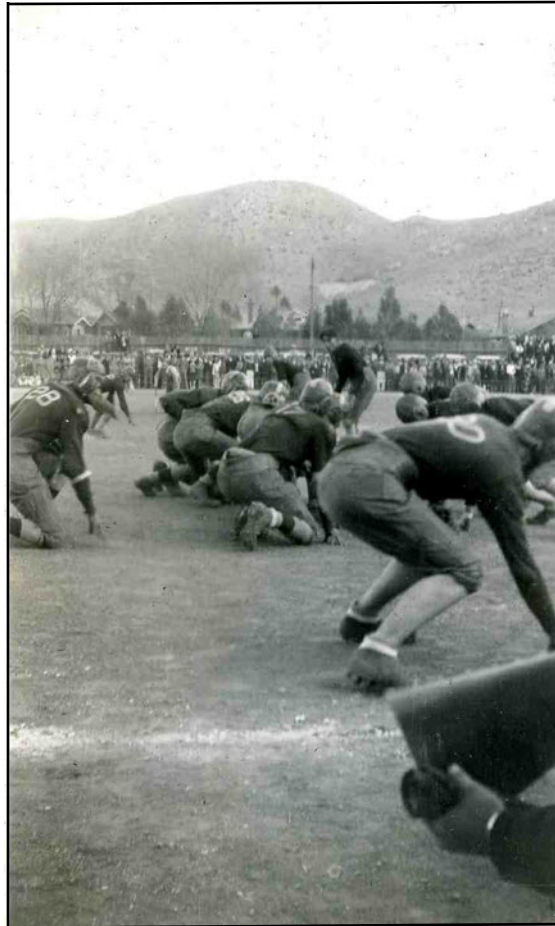
(Projects from page 1)

to disabled fans. Neither is adequate for the size of the crowds in attendance. The restroom facilities on the football side of the ballpark are also in poor condition. If you've been to the park for any event, you know it's time for modern restrooms.

The Friends are embarking on an ambitious project, raising funds for modern restrooms that will be available for use by both football and baseball fans. Rather than interfering with the historic integrity of the baseball grandstands and acknowledging that the aging plumbing now on site can't be upgraded, we are proposing that new restrooms be constructed. The cost estimate for construction of the new restrooms at Warren Ballpark is upwards to \$90,000.

The Friends plan to seek grant funds to help pay for the restroom project but grants require 50 percent matching funds - approximately \$45,000. We are reaching out to those who treasure their memories of attending events at Warren Ballpark and to those who recognize its rich history. We are asking for any donations - large or small - that can be made. The Friends are a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, so any donation is tax deductible.

The Friends have already replaced the tattered grandstand chicken wire screening with modern netting.



The 1929 BHS Puma football team lines up during a game played at Warren Ballpark. (Photo courtesy of the Bisbee Mining and Historical Museum)

We have also raised the funds to erect artistic historic identification signs for the ballpark. The construction of the new restrooms is a much more ambitious and costly project. We would appreciate your donation to help us reach our goal of raising \$45,000 to ensure that we have the matching funds that will help us to qualify for grants. Please make one of your charitable donations this year a donation to Bisbee's grand old ballpark.

Donations may be made to The Friends of Warren Ballpark, 611 Hoatson Ave., Bisbee, AZ 85603. For more information contact Judy Anderson, chairwoman of the Friends of Warren Ballpark, at (520) 432-3813 or send an inquiry to:

www.friendsofwarrenballpark.com

(Rivalry from page 3)

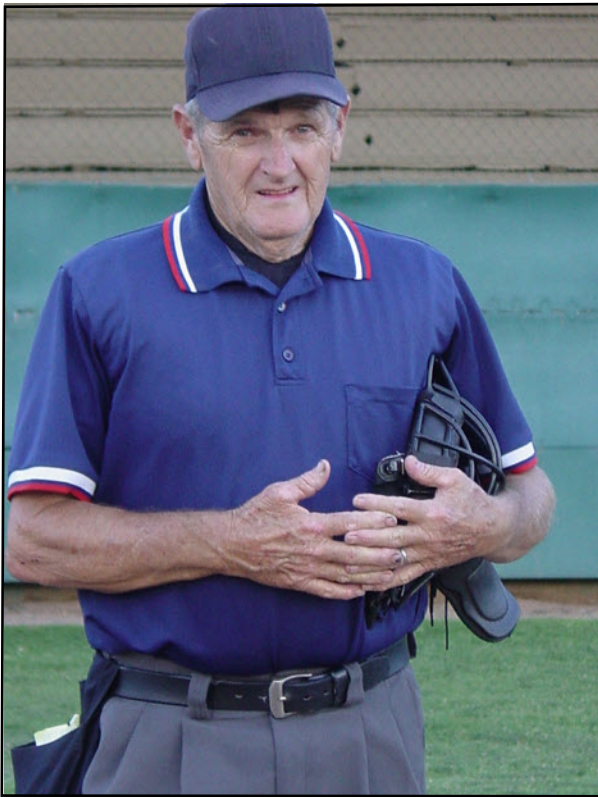
Bisbee and they proceeded on to the field in a fighting mood. The Bisbee partisans from the opposite side of the field responded in kind and a general melee ensued. Scattered fistfights broke out and continued for a good many minutes until the sheriff's deputies were able to restore order. The deputies surrounded and protected Jack and the referees from injury, but some of the other participants suffered black eyes, split lips and other assorted contusions and abrasions. I don't believe any of the injuries were serious. There were, no doubt, several misdemeanor arrests but no serious charges. Most of the combatants were grown men. Kids my age (probably about 12 years old) were not actively involved.

Obviously, feelings ran deep for both Bisbee and Douglas fans. We grew up with an inbred animosity for Douglas folks. A favorite saying of Coach Waldo Dicus was that "...they are just dogs of a different breed."

The major discussion each Thanksgiving was, of course, who would win The Game but running a close second was "I wonder how many fights there will be?"

Ralph Echave, BHS '48, recalls "I assure you that all Bisbee-Douglas games had fights involving fans. ..So long as they stayed under the bleachers the police did nothing..."

Bill Buxton - umpire, ballplayer, gentleman: 1938-2011



Bill Buxton officiated games in Cochise County for more than 50 years. In March 2010, he was the arbitrator for the Copper City Classic Vintage Base Ball Tournament held at Warren Ballpark.

The honeyed southern voice that called thousands of plays in countless games for more than half a century is still. The mellifluous voice that graced his church choir will never again ring out in praise of his God. But Bill Buxton, who left us November 27, 2011 in Sun City, AZ also left a very positive mark on family, friends, teammates and young athletes throughout Arizona.

Born William Donald Buxton on April 9, 1938 in Abbeville, Alabama, Bill was the son of hard-working sharecroppers. In 1958, while serving in the U.S. Army, Bill came to Fort Huachuca. Here in Cochise County he fell in love with both the beautiful country and a beautiful lady - Alice Faye Hatton, who became his wife and lifelong companion.

Discharged from the army in 1959, Bill returned to the south with

his bride to play as a catcher for the Dothan, Alabama Cardinals of the class D Alabama-Florida League. He also found employment with the local Coca-Cola bottler.

In 1960 Bill and Faye returned to Bisbee, where he took work for Phelps-Dodge as a mechanic.

Bill began his career as an umpire in 1960, calling Babe Ruth games. He also became an official for the Arizona Interscholastic Association, working high school baseball, football and basketball games all over southeast Arizona. For seven years, Bill called every high school baseball game scheduled at Warren Ballpark.

Not content to merely officiate, Bill continued to play baseball as a catcher for the Bisbee Chiefs in the early 1960s, switching to softball with the Chiefs in 1964 and remaining with the team through 1983.

After Bill retired from his job with the Central Arizona Project, he and Faye divided their time between Sun City and Bisbee. Bill continued to play softball as a third baseman on Sun City teams until his death.

Bill was inducted into the Sun Cities Senior Softball League Hall of Fame earlier this year. He was selected to be included in the Bisbee's Boys and Girls of Summer baseball card sets in 2009.

Bill is survived by Alice Faye - his wife of 52 years - and three children: Rhonda, William Jr. and Robbin.

The Friends of Warren Ballpark offer their heartfelt condolences to Bill's family, friends and teammates.

Friends commission metal signs for Warren Ballpark

The Friends have received emails saying, “we found the ballpark but had to check next door to confirm it was really Warren Ballpark. Where's the identification sign? “

Our response is that it's coming soon, to a ballpark near you. The Friends, in partnership with Cochise College are working to make this happen. Randy Fox, Cochise College Welding Instructor and Tate Rich, Ceramics, Sculpture and 3-D design instructor, recently presented these two prototypes for review by the Friends. As a Bisbee High School graduate, Randy Fox is very enthusiastic about this project.

The Friends have also asked for a sign honoring the long tradition of football at Warren Ballpark. The final design will be reviewed and approved by the Bisbee School Board.



A project to produce identifying signs for Warren Ballpark has resulted in two prototypes from the designers at Cochise College. On the left, a metal sign that could be fixed to the wall and on the right, a sculpture that can be placed inside or outside the ballpark. The actual sculpture would be approximately 16 feet tall.

March date set for vintage base ball tournament

Lincoln played it - and so did many members of the Illinois state legislature before the Civil War.

Vintage base ball - our national pastime as it was played when Abraham Lincoln was running for president - will return to Warren Ballpark this spring when the Bisbee Black Sox and other teams from the Arizona Territories Vintage Base Ball League take the field March 24 and 25 to play at the 3rd Annual Copper City Classic Base Ball Tournament.

Also invited to play in this year's tournament are the Springfield Long Nine from Illinois and a composite team from the Colorado Vintage Base Ball Association.

The Long Nine club is named for a group of Illinois state legislators which included the future President Lincoln, all averaging over six feet in stature, who took action in 1837 to successfully move the state capital from Vandalia to its present location in Springfield.

Colorado's team will be made up of members of the league's seven teams.

The cost remains \$10 a day or \$15 both days. Young people 12 and under enter free with a paying adult. Military personnel are invited to attend for free on Sunday. The tournament will honor two well known player-managers who made their marks at Warren Ballpark: Syd Cohen and Charlie Metro. Stay tuned for more details. We hope to see you at the tournament!

**Support
Athletic
Events
At
Warren
Ballpark!**

To Fred Giacoletti it was also more than just a game: **Puma QB played in final Turkey Bowl**

When he was a kid, Thanksgiving meant a whole lot more than a Thursday afternoon feeding frenzy.

The turkey dinner on the table would taste like crow if it wasn't accompanied with a Copper Pick for the Pumas.

Former Puma quarterback Fred Giacoletti, BHS class of 1967, played in the very last of the storied Bisbee-Douglas Thanksgiving Day "Turkey Bowl" games.

He recalled what it was like to play football for the Pumas when Bisbee's mines were still producing copper and high school football was the talk of the town.

"My playing football for Bisbee was just something that was expected," recalled Fred. "My dad played for Bisbee High School and I would too."

His career as a varsity quarterback for the Pumas began in 1964, when Fred was just a sophomore, playing for head coach Al Ridgeway.

"Bisbee had three quarterbacks that year. The



Fred Giacoletti scrambles for yards against Canyon Del Oro defenders in 1966. The game ended in a 13-13 tie. Giacoletti, retired from a career in education, is now a member of the Bisbee Unified School District governing board. Fred still goes to all the games. (photo courtesy Giacoletti family)

starting quarterback blew out his knee in the fourth game and I got the job. I was the starter for the next two and a half years."

His first season as starting quarterback was also the last year in which Bisbee and Douglas would play the Thanksgiving Day game. Bisbee lost.

"We had family in Douglas and we used to eat wherever the game was played -

Bisbee or Douglas. The rule was that we could only tease the losers for thirty minutes.

"It wasn't like "Friday Night Lights," but people paid a lot more attention to high school games back then..."

But the winners used all of those thirty minutes to make sure the loser knew who won."

Playing football for Bisbee in the 1960s meant playing for a school with a larger enrollment and against larger schools than is usually the case today, Fred said.

"We were playing against Canyon del Oro, Nogales, Flowing Wells, Safford, Miami and Ajo. Douglas (High School) was larger than Bisbee even then, but not as much as now."

(See **Giacoletti**, page 8)

(Giacoletti from page 7)

Bisbee was at the top end of AA. We had Bisbee's biggest-ever graduating class in 1967."

Although the Pumas were always competitive during his high school career, winning the Bisbee-Douglas games was what made a good season better or a poor season more bearable, Fred remembers.

"When it came to that game, records meant nothing - just like the game between the U of A and ASU. I remember one year, it must have been when I was in 6th or 7th grade. We (Bisbee) hadn't won a game that year. Douglas hadn't lost a game. But we beat 'em 21-12. That was after falling behind 12-0.

"It was the way that one team or the other could redeem themselves."

Fred's senior year as starting

quarterback for the Pumas began with frustration and ended with triumph.

"We started the year with two losses and two ties - the ties were against Canyon Del Oro and Douglas. But then we won the last five games."

After graduating from Bisbee in 1967, Fred left home to go to school. He graduated from Arizona State University in 1974. His career as a coach began in Phoenix, where he worked with kids in the Pop Warner youth football program.

Fred returned to Bisbee to teach physical education at Lowell Junior High (later Middle School.) he coached football, basketball and track for 22 years.

His last nine years in public education were spent at Bisbee High School, where he served as dean of students and athletic director.

He retired in 2009, but ran for and won a seat on the Bisbee School

Board shortly thereafter.

Although it's been a long time since he put on pads and a helmet, Fed still gets a thrill out of watching the Pumas play on Friday nights. And he wishes that more of the community was out there cheering for their team.

"I don't think the kids have the feeling that the community's out there behind them. It really shouldn't be that way.

"Parents who have children playing football who don't go to the games - I really can't understand that."

For Fred, football remains THE game.

"It's the sport that teaches you the most about life. Not everybody's a star, but there's a place for you. It's the only sport where everyone has to do their job at the same time in order to be successful."

Local sports are one of life's special pleasures

There are many reasons why we live in Bisbee and love this town. For some of us our roots go back for several generations. For others, moving to a small town meant finding the charm of a slower, more intimate style of life.

One of the most delightful aspects to living in a small town is that it's life on a scale that allows one to be involved directly in community events.

Yes, it's fun to go watch the Diamondbacks at Chase Field in Phoenix or to see the Cardinals play

football in Glendale. But there is a more personal and much more fun aspect to watching young people you know, whose families you know and may have grown up with, cheering them on to victory - or to defeat.

If you enjoyed this edition of The Dugout, forward it to your family and friends.

Join the Friends of Warren Ballpark, donate to our projects and attend all of the football games, baseball games and other events held at historic Warren Ballpark.

Who we are: The Friends of Warren Ballpark is sponsored by the Bisbee Council on the Arts and Humanities, a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization since May 2009. The Mission of the Friends is:

- **To restore and preserve the historic Warren Ballpark.**
- **To research and share the rich history of the ballpark and sports played in Bisbee, and**
- **To support the continuation of Bisbee's athletic traditions into the future.**

Please join the Friends and help us to accomplish our mission.

For details, visit our web site at:

www.friendsofwarrenballpark.com