

RELIGION

Friends to Brothers for Life

The journey of friendship for Men of faith

Mere acquaintances to lifelong brothers. Our parents relocated in the 50's and early 60's from Mississippi, New Orleans, Illinois, Georgia, Arkansas, Kansas, and Texas, established roots in Portland Oregon. Bring together a group of boys with various levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities. And through competing activities, "church, school, and sporting events," what was once a casual acquaintance has developed into a perpetual bond of non-judgmental friendship. Through it all God has been faithful and by His grace we'll celebrate our 50th class reunion next year.

Life is an untraveled trail with complex twists and turns. Appealing activities were detours that led us away from the Lord, and engaging philosophies



Charles Hudson, Quin Davis, Herman Bryant, Michael Donaldson back row: John Bryant, Eric Mashia, Michael Jones, Darryl Warren, Marcus Irving, Marvin Spires, Tony Washington

quite often ended in mire of muddled thinking. At times we've journeyed over rugged terrain and through dark valleys. We've had some struggles, health

issues, lost some friends and family along the way and the world seems to be more chaotic with each passing day. But God! For you see, we're all prod-

igal sons of the most-High. He has been at the helm and allowed the challenges, stressful situations, and falls to occur. All in an effort for us to recognize His hand of guidance and protection. Now the competing activity is our fellowship every other Thursday. Our mission, (as iron sharpens iron); "That we might walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Colossians 1:10).

We praise Him for His grace and mercy, which surpasses all understanding. All our hope, confidence and faith are in Him. We are now the parents and grandparents. Setting the example for generations to come. His word says, "walk worthy toward those that are outside redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man (Colossians 4:5, 6).

Passing on the mantle, "The Word of God," for He is the bread of life. Brothers for Life

Love for the Game and Community

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transition away from baseball, he says, shaped him into who he is today. "It's a great honor to join the FOB family in service to the mission of enhancing children's lives through baseball's power to teach." Dickson says, "Raised in a low income community, I have experienced first-hand how sports can empower kids of all skills and abilities. Providing opportunities to underserved communities is what I am most passionate about. Every insight I've shared with young people is reinforced in baseball. I look forward to further developing the programs and structures that lead to greater overall impact and growth of the organization." Friends of Baseball was founded in 2005 by an Oregon father, son, and Board of Trustees, driven by their passion to give back to the community of youth baseball and softball that they love. Now an independent 501(c)(3) with programs extending across the state, the FOB team brings the game and its lessons to kids and coaches through Full Count summer camps, scholarships and equipment, skills clinics, one-on-one mentoring, team-based opportunities, and after-school programming



Stackin' Kickz in Lloyd Center

Embracing Sneaker Culture

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tion of success. Having a strong mind is the most important thing, and once that's done, there's nothing you can't really do."

Jefferson said he brings middle school kids to the store because that's the age when a person starts to define who they will be.

"I bring them in the store so they can see the inspiration about what I'm teaching them, and how important individually it has done for me," he said. "In the store they can see this is real. It's teaching as someone doing things in his life

right now, and you can see it. It gives me leverage so they can really understand.

Jefferson came up with the name Stackin' Kickz because when you have a lot of sneakers, you have to stack them up, just like poker chips.

Jefferson said his customer base covers a wide range, from 12 months to 70 years.

"I believe it's because of all the aspects of it," he said. "I'm not just trying to sell clothes, but I also support community events and I want to move everybody forward. I want people to find out who they are, the light they envision."

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