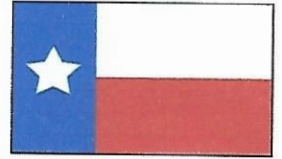




TEXAS SENIOR SOFTBALL HALL OF FAME APPLICATION



Submit to: TSSHOF Chapter Director/Committee Members

(Please Type)

Category: Circle appropriate category: PLAYER, MANAGER, TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR, UMPIRE, SPONSOR, SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT

Candidate Name:	Clemmons	Claude Leslie "Les"	
	Last Name	First Name	Initial

Address: NA

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone: _____ **Residence:** _____

Fax: _____ **Business:** _____

Cell: _____ **E-Mail:** _____

Date of Birth: 4/17/1953 - 4/30/2021 **Place of Birth:** Borger, TX

Current Occupation: NA

How did you first learn about Senior Softball? For this and all other following information, see attached.

Positions Played: _____

Number of Years Participating in Texas Senior Softball:_____

Current Team: _____

Previous Senior Softball Teams: _____

June 26, 2025

To: Mr. Tom Altman and the TSSHOF Selection Committee

From: Jerry Koch and Gary McCoy, Lubbock Senior Softball Nominating Committee and Recommenders for Induction

RE: Claude Leslie "Les" Clemmons, Candidate for Induction – Special (Lifetime) Achievement

Les Clemmons was a man of honor and faith who became a leader and mentor for eighteen years in Lubbock Senior Softball and Senior Softball USA. We submit the following insights, essays, and stories for (sadly) posthumous recognition as a Texas Senior Softball Hall of Famer.

Les's impact on Senior Softball – coach, player, sponsor, and administrator - locally in Lubbock, and in SSUSA Tournament ball was the logical continuation of a lifetime of athletic competition and sportsmanship. He played High School Football, then Rec and Church League Softball for his entire life, migrating to Senior Softball as soon as he was eligible, turning 50 in 2003.

After one year as a player, Les began fourteen continuous years as a player, coach, and Board member for Lubbock Senior Softball. He served as a league Commissioner, Player Agent, and a seven-year stint as President of our local group. From 2009 – 2018, he sponsored a team as well as coached and played.

More clearly than most anyone we know, Les understood and embodied the reality that sports not only builds character; it more importantly reveals character. Les's sense of honor, faith, and relentless good humor showed up on the field in every game he played and every meeting he chaired or attended. After coaching other sponsored teams for five years, Les sponsored his own, choosing "John 3:16" for his team name. We knew at the outset that Les wanted our play to honor his Lord's love, and his team wore it, literally, on their sleeves. Though he rarely spoke of his faith or sought in any way to sway others to religion, he embodied a generous spirit and caring heart throughout his life and most certainly while swinging a bat or wearing a glove. As a team coach and Board leader, he led us to honorable play, largely by example. And when there were inevitable breaches, Les led the Board to call for amends from offending players, always with an eye toward restoring honor for any player so involved.

As Board President, he led the discussion and implementation of a moment of prayer before every game. He wanted it known that it was an honor and privilege to be playing this kid's game at our age, and for our time. He was among the first to learn, and make it known, when one of our own was in need or struggling. Often when one of us was home ill, hurt, or even in the hospital, Les's initiative brought our friend's spirit to the field as we named them before first pitch. A grateful player wrote this to Board and Les shared it as President:

Words cannot describe the feelings you and the organization have bestowed on me. My last prayer in the middle of the diamond touched my heart in a way that will never be forgotten. Your gift lit up my room with love and support. It was great seeing Les and (name redacted) at my bedside, cheering me on. Thanks so much for all of these things. I am blessed to have all of you in my life. With Fondest Regards, (Name redacted)

We believe Les Clemmons regarded playing softball and leading us by example as a sacred calling. His deeds matched his creeds.

Les was not only a man of honor, he brought relentless good humor, admirable skill, and clever guile to the field. He switched his sponsorship name for the next ten years to the "Desert Penguins." And a sacred stuffed Penguin was their dugout mascot. This was a devilish side-eye to the West Texas dust and wind. And there were a couple of guys on his teams that acted the part, lining to left and making their way down to first as best they could.

Les was primarily a pitcher. Though Les was our coach for two years each, we soon wound up as a fellow coaches and of course, opposing players. We always let our team know that Les's first pitch was going to be the best one you were going to see. After that, you were on defense to his motions, pace, and spins. He was also among our best hitters and most emotionally competitive, all the while putting sportsmanship and respect in every play. As the best of them do, Les led by example.

Beyond our locale, Les took over a floundering tournament team and became its coach and sponsor. He somewhat ironically called this bunch the "Claude-Hoppers." His 55+ AA team played regional tournaments from 2008-2012, travelling across Texas, spreading his love for the game, and winning hearts if not championships.

His most memorable tournament, however, was little known, and not often remembered. One of our own had little money, scant insurance, and a heart requiring surgery. Without going on and on about it, Les rallied our members, organized a tournament, we had some fun, and made a difference. The funds were significant, as was the horseplay and laughter. Our guy needed the latter as much as the money.

In any and all things, Les brought an almost evangelical energy to softball. The field was his calling, and he wanted to expand the fold. Gery Jennings, of Amarillo, wrote what follows as a testimony to Les's love of the game. He and Gary rather single-handedly initiated and perpetrated what is now a thriving partner to Lubbock Senior Softball. Gary's nomination form speaks for itself.



Texas Senior Softball Nomination Form

Submit to TSSHOF Chapter Director/Committee Members)



Date of Nomination Submittal: 7/15/24

Nominee's Name(Fir, Mid, Las) Les Clemmons - Posthumously

Nominee's Address: 5213 7th Lubbock, TX. 79416

Person Nominating: Gary Jennings

Person Nominating Address: 4503 Greenwich PL, Amarillo, TX. 79119

Have you reviewed the Process Information and Eligibility Requirements provided on the TSSHOF.org Website?

Initial G.J.

Do you feel that this candidate would meet these requirements?

Yes ☒

No ☐

If no, are there extenuating circumstances why you feel this candidate may not meet eligibility requirements but should still be considered as a candidate for the TSSHOF? If yes, please include in space below.

Yes ☐

No ☒

N/A(if self) ☐

Has the nominee been contacted or are they aware that they are being nominated?

Yes ☒

No ☐

N/A(if self) ☐

Spouse - widow knows

Nominee's for the TSSHOF will also be vetted regarding personal behavior or character. Are you aware of any incidents regarding this nominee which may surface during the nomination or selection process?

Comment in space below as applicable. Yes ☐

No ☒

Please present a narrative or summary explanation of why you are nominating this candidate for the TSSHOF.

Please use the back of this form for additional space.

In May or June of 2011 Les drove to Tulsa and met with myself and 2 Amarillo park directors. Les laid out the guidelines and plans and essentially sold the "Senior Softball story" to the Amarillo City officials. Without his persuasion and knowledge base from Lubbock Amarillo senior softball would have never gotten started. Soon after our initial meeting in Tulsa he made several trips to (over)

Received by _____

Date Received _____

Amarillo in order to discuss and educate
player prospects with the rules, etc.
of senior softball. Les also provided
me with the By-Laws necessary
to form the Amarillo Senior
Softball League.

I believe Les Clemmons deserves
to be in the TSSHF due to
his special gifts + dedication to
helping the Amarillo Club get
started. He was the co-founder
of our very successful Amarillo
Senior Softball League.

Sincerely,
Gary Jennings



Dr. Gary S. Jennings
4503 Greenwich Pl
Amarillo, TX 79119

Finally, we would like to add a personal note regarding the friendship, kinship, rivalry, and good fun we shared with Les through softball. Les was Jerry's first coach in 2004 and Gary's in 2005. He mentored us into the league, and his big booming voice cheered us on as we got better. Later, when we were coaching against him and facing his pitching, we'd on occasion maybe hit a double, or make our way around one way or another. Les would watch us lumber in; he'd back up the throw then give us a little nod or smirk: "Getcha next time."

Player, coach, sponsor, friend. We believe Les Clemmons was the best among us. Honoring him with induction would be a way for all who knew him, and shared time and place on the field, to know that he is indeed, "Safe at Home."