

The game of the half century



**Nicole
Rhine**

Text messages were coming into my phone days before the event asking, “Is it true? Is the Executive Council *really* playing in a softball game? Will there be video?”

Word of the showdown had spread like wildfire; if only our bats had been as quick.

Yes, it was true. In January, as part of the 50th anniversary celebration at Nalcrest, the Executive Council did accept a challenge laid out by the home team Nalcrest Eagles to compete in a slow-pitch softball game. The crowd was large. The atmosphere was spirited. The weather was beautiful. The field was well-manicured. Palm trees guarded the outfield fence. The smell of hot dogs

was in the air. It was the perfect day for a game.

We lost. Check that, we lost big time: 25-11 to be exact. But, man, it was so much fun. It is amazing how playing in a softball or baseball game can transport you back to your childhood. Suddenly, I was back on that lot with my friends playing until it was too dark to see the ball anymore. What a great national pastime we have.

So listen up, fellow baseball fans: It’s March and it’s time for spring training. Right now, 15 Major League Baseball teams are holding their spring training in Florida—the Grapefruit League.

But did you know that three of those 15 teams—the Atlanta Braves, the Detroit Tigers and the Houston Astros—

have spring training within an hour or less driving time from Nalcrest? Did you know that the New York Yankees and New York Mets are within an hour and a half of Nalcrest? Or that the Baltimore Orioles, Philadelphia Phillies, Pittsburgh Pirates, St. Louis Cardinals, Tampa Bay Rays, Toronto Blue Jays, Miami Marlins and Washington Nationals are just a couple of hours away?

Nalcrest is not only the perfect place for a baseball fan to call home, but also the perfect place for a baseball fan to stay on vacation to take in a Grapefruit League game or two.

What you may not realize is that Nalcrest has furnished guest apartments available to be rented on a short-term basis beginning at \$50 a night, plus tax. And you don’t have to be a retiree to rent one—they are also available to active members and their families. In fact, apartments are available for rent to branches as well—for both a yearly lease or a short-term stay in a guest apartment.

Guests who rent furnished apartments for short-term stays are also allowed to use all the amenities at Nalcrest—which include a heated pool and spa, tennis courts, driving

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range and basketball court.

Maybe baseball isn’t for you, but golf is. There are golf courses all over Florida and many can be found near Nalcrest. Why not get your golfing buddies together for a trip? You can leave your orange golf balls at home because there is no snow!

Or maybe you’ve been itching to get away to do some fishing. Nalcrest sits on Lake Weohyakapka and is a haven for boating and fishing enthusiasts. Just recently, a Nalcrest resident snagged a 13-pound bass. Nalcrest even has its own boat ramp with access to Lake Weohyakapka.

Or maybe you just want to get away with a good book to some peace and quiet and sunshine. My favorite spot at Nalcrest is on the park bench on the beach overlooking Lake Weohyakapka. Another great spot is on a lounge chair by the Olympic-sized pool.

So, what’s keeping you from heading to sunny Nalcrest?

You might even catch the Nalcrest Eagles in action—they play several times a week and are fun to watch. I’m sure they would be willing to give you a recap of the game of the half century.

Thanks Eagles; it was a blast. Nalcrest really is paradise with a ZIP code.



The NALC Executive Council took on the Nalcrest Eagles in a friendly slow-pitch softball game as part of Nalcrest’s 50th anniversary celebration. Above, NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine steps up to bat.