



DRSEA INFORMER

Volume I, Issue 5: A Publication For Your Reading Enjoyment

Big Red Machine Headed To The Dominican Republic – Can you picture yourself on the links in a foursome with Johnny Bench? Or maybe breaking bread with Pete Rose? Or perhaps meeting the president of the Dominican Republic? All this is possible January 15-19, 2009 when former Cincy All Star and Hall of Famer César Gerónimo, a member of the DRSEA Board of Trustees, will be hosting several of his former teammates for a couple of days of receptions, golf, and a gala dinner to raise money for his organization, The Chief Geronimo Foundation.



Big Red Machine: (left to right), Pete Rose, George Foster, Dave Concepción, Johnny Bench, César Gerónimo, Joe Morgan, Ken Griffey, Sr., and Tony Perez.

Expected to attend, besides Bench and Rose, are other Big Red Machine former stars Joe Morgan, Dave Concepción, George Foster and Tony Perez. Also invited to participate are current Major League Baseball stars Pedro Martinez, David Ortiz and Alex Rodriguez.

The event will include a reception at the presidential palace of Dominican Republic President Leonel Fernandez, a round of golf on one of the island's best courses, and a gala dinner to close things out, while also allowing enough free time to roam the beaches, comb the shops, or just kick back with a hand-rolled robusto.

Proceeds from the event go toward Gerónimo's plan to create a public school baseball league for 8- to 12-year olds. Can you believe that there are no sports programs in public schools in the Dominican Republic? The creation of a league would give hundreds of kids something to do after school, and would potentially be a feeder system for the DRSEA, which will also benefit from the fundraiser through sponsorships and participation it facilitates.

So, if you are looking for a getaway during mid-January, where the beer is cold and the golf is hot, this is your opportunity to do so and help not only the DRSEA, but a another worthy cause as well. Most of the available information is in Spanish, but if you want more details, just drop me a line.

Cuente Sus Bendiciones (Count Your Blessings) – One of my friends, J.D. Walsh, a former Maryland basketball star who played professionally in Europe, travels the world giving youth basketball clinics. We often connect via the Internet, with me asking him, “Where in the world is J.D. Walsh?” The answer comes back: Japan. Israel. China.

A couple of weeks ago I inquired where he was and J.D. texted back: India. I thought nothing more of it because he had traveled there several times before. But when I texted him the same inquiry Thanksgiving Day, his response sent a chill down my spine and reminded me to count my blessings....and his as well.

J.D. had been staying in Mumbai during his clinic, but decided to leave India two days early to be home for the holiday. So he checked out of his hotel, the famous Taj Mahal. As most of the world knows now, Mumbai was the target, and the Taj the epicenter, of the horrific terrorist attack that left more than 170 people dead and more than 350 wounded.

Had J.D. stayed in India he would have still been at the Taj when the attack took place, and, at 6'8", and a white American, he would have been very visible. But for a last minute change of plans, who knows what would have happened to J.D., but God has a plan, and J.D. was blessed that the plan was for him to be home with his family.

I am counting my own blessings as I celebrate a personal milestone – five years of sobriety. I hit rock bottom with my drinking, and other things in my life were wearing me down or were out of control. My girlfriend of many years dumped me after I revealed my abuse of alcohol. I was then hospitalized with what was originally believed to be a heart attack. My mother died. My job became drudgery. I was drowning as the world caved in on me.

But faith kicked in. I had faith in God and the promises He offers those who believe, and I embraced the belief that my life would be better without alcohol, just as I had managed to fool myself for so long that alcohol would protect me, make me happy.

Faith, the Bible teaches, is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. When I hit bottom, I felt there was no hope, but faith got me past that to where I am today, where I am embrace hope and wisdom and vision for the future. The Bible also says that anyone who lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all, but let them ask in faith, without doubting. Go to God in faith and believe He is going to answer and He will.

Hope I didn't sound too much like a sermon, but when you go through a life-altering experience, it changes your perspectives, and the last five years have been sobering in more ways than one.

But those years have also been extremely rewarding because I have faith that my life is moving in the direction it is supposed to be moving, and for that, I am truly blessed.



Cid Wilson Es Una Persona Especial (Cid Wilson is a special person) – Cid, a member of the Board of Trustees of the DRSEA, is director of equity research for Kevin Dann & Partners LLC in New York City, a founding board member of Dominicans On Wall Street (DOWS), a trustee for Bergen Community College in Paramus, NJ, a member of the Property Tax Policy Group for NJ Governor Jon Corzine, a board member of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense & Education Fund (PRLDEF), and a member of the Hispanic Advisory Board for PepsiCo, Inc. He also sits on the National Board of the Dominican American National Roundtable and is a past president of the organization.

Cid got his first job working on Wall Street in the mailroom as an unpaid intern, because nobody believed in his skills and potential leadership. Despite competing against Ivy League-educated colleagues for promotions, he rose from the mailroom to the executive room at UBS PaineWebber in Columbus, OH, before spending over five years at Smith Barney Citigroup in their Equity Research Division in New York City where his team was named as a runner up in the Institutional Investor All-America Research Team.

In May 2006, Forbes announced its ranking of the Best Wall Street Analysts in America and in the category of "Specialty Retailing Analysts", Forbes ranked Cid n #1 in America based on his leadership in forecast company earnings!

A renowned community leader, Cid was also very active in getting a number of Dominican elected to political offices around the country in November.

Leer Es Fundamental Para Empejar (Reading is fundamental program to start) – If all goes well, we will be kicking off our ***Lector Programa***, reading program for children, at the end of January 2009. Children International, a global organization that helps kids worldwide, has agreed to partner with the DRSEA to launch the program. A few weeks ago, I was at the opening of a community center in Boca Chica that CI got built and met with a number of wonderful people who are trying to make good things happen in the Dominican Republic. I was there at the invitation of one of the DRSEA Board of Advisors, Franklin Guerrero, a CI official, who embraced the reading project, contacted other officials, and made it happen.

We have arranged for someone to come and read to the children, and the Sports Foundation in the Bronx, NY, an organization I remain a consultant to, has agreed to donate school supplies to the young children who participate. And, a pro baseball player has also agreed to come and share some of his perspectives on the importance of education.

We continue to look for other sponsors/donors who can support the reading program, which we hope to do every two weeks or so in various locations. Besides financial underwriting, we also need more school supplies and anything else that young children might be able to use. As this

holiday season approaches, we hope you will be generous to those less fortunate. Contact me for more information on how to donate to the DRSEA.

Una Cuestión De Estilo (A Matter Of Style) – One of my biggest pet peeves are those teenagers and young men who think it is cool to wear their pants down around their knees, exposing their underwear for the world to see, coupling that with the baseball hats turn backwards, often with the do rag. Why they think it is stylish is beyond me.

That is why I have been pleasantly surprised not to see that look even once in the Dominican Republic. Young men here have a different style about them, dressing casually in jeans belted, ***at the waist***, with a neat T-shirt of polo shirt, or a pair of slacks with a nice dress shirt. And hats with the bills pointed forward, not backwards or cocked to the side! Friends tell me that Dominican guys take special care to look presentable and it shows. Now that is cool!

LETTERS TO THE DRSEA INFORMER:

Tyrone Barnes of New York asks: What do you miss about the United States?

The only things I really miss are my friends, particularly watching a football game together on a Sunday afternoon. Football is definitely a foreign sport here, though cable brings many of the games, and some games are even broadcast in Spanish, which helps me with learning the language. What I am constantly reminded of living here is that I am not in the United States, where so much is taken for granted. Drinkable water here must always be purchased, making it a precious commodity. If I have leftover coffee in the morning, it doesn't go down the drain; it goes into the refrigerator as iced coffee. A flick of the switch does not always mean there will be light, as power outages are frequent, so you have a greater appreciation for how automatic electricity is in the US. Sometimes the shower water is hot, sometimes it is not. But I wouldn't trade places right now for anything. The pace is slower, yes, but it means less stress, and the chance to appreciate things even more. I have a lot of friends who didn't travel a couple hundred miles to visit me in New York who now want to know when they can visit me here. I have urged them, and urge anyone else, to make the trip whenever they can. You really can't understand and appreciate what a wonderful country this is until you experience it first hand.

Charles S. Farrell

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