Chipola event to honor the late “Big Sam” Mitchell

Legendsary leader “Big Sam” Mitchell will be remembered at a dinner and dance celebrating his life on Aug. 29 at the National Guard Armory in Marianna.

The dinner will honor the former Florida legislator’s legacy and raise funds for an endowed scholarship in his name at Chipola College, where he played on the college’s first football and basketball teams in 1947.

“Big Sam,” as he was known for more than 40 years of state service, was a coach, principal and father figure to thousands of children in Vernon and Washington County.

He began his coaching career at Campbellton High School in 1952 where he had a 24-2 record in his first season.

He was called to service in the United States Army, and upon returning home from military duty, Mitchell established himself at Vernon High School, where he compiled an overall career record as a basketball coach of 396-59. As a football coach, Mitchell compiled an impressive record of 113 wins and only 17 losses.

Mitchell was appointed principal of Vernon High School during the school year 1967-68 and served until 1977. He was elected to the Board of Directors of the Florida High School Activities Association from 1968-1975, and was elected vice-president from 1975-1977.

Mitchell served in the Florida Legislature for more than 20 years, receiving many legislative awards. He completed his term as speaker pro tempore during the 1988-1990 sessions. At the time of his retirement from the Florida House, Mitchell was one of the longest serving and most respected members in the history of the Florida legislature. Former Rep. Robert Trammell, who served alongside Mitchell in the Florida House, said, “Big Sam never forgot who he was or where he came from. He was one of the most powerful and influential members of the House, but always a friend to the common man.”

After retiring in 1994, he worked with the Florida Lakes Department for three years. Mitchell was born Aug. 2, 1929, in Chipley. He married Nellie Henders on Sept. 4, 1951, and they had two children, Brenda and Sammie Jean. After retirement he settled down in Vernon, where he ran a small seafood business as a hobby, which allowed him to make new friends until his death in November 2003.

The Aug. 29 dinner is hosted by “Friends of Sam Mitchell” and sponsored by the Chipola Appreciation Club. The event will celebrate Mitchell’s life and contributions to the people of this area while helping to endow a scholarship in his memory at the school that gave him his start. Chipola president Dr. Gene Prough, said, “Sam loved Chipola and he gave the college credit for providing him the opportunity to earn an education. I believe that Sam would be proud that we are establishing this scholarship in his name to help give other people the opportunity that he had.”

The event will begin with a social hour at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 p.m. Entertainment will begin at 8 p.m., featuring the world-famous Embers, the Raleigh, NC, band.

Summer programs set at Chipola

Chipola is offering programs for children of all ages.

**Baseball** Coach Jeff Johnson will offer several camps. Cost is $75. **Pitching Camp** for ages 8-18 will meet June 22-23. Cost is $100. **Hitting Camp** for ages 8-18 will meet June 24-25. Cost is $100. All camps meet from 9 a.m. to noon. Call 718-2237.

**Softball** Coach Belinda Hendrix will offer five camps. **Tear ‘Em Up Tuesday Hitting Camps** for all ages will meet June 23 and 30, from 6 to 7 p.m. Cost is $20 per date.

**Swimming lessons** will be offered for ages four and up. Session 3: July 13-23; and Session 4: Aug. 3-13. Class times are 9 a.m., 10 a.m. or 7 p.m. Cost is $45. Pre-registration is required, with a $5 late fee. **Infant and Preschool Swimming lessons** for children 3 and under will meet July 27-29 with classes available at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Cost is $30. Call Rance Massengill at 718-2473.
Chipola pitcher drafted by Angels

Patrick Corbin, the ace of the 2009 Chipola College pitching staff, has signed with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim.

Corbin was selected in the second round of the 2009 Major League Baseball First-Year Player Draft held in June.

According to an LA Times report, Corbin received a six-figure signing bonus. He is expected to join Single-A Orem, Utah.

Chipola has several connections with the Angels organization. Former Chipola pitcher Ryan Chaffee was drafted by the Angels in 2008. Tom Kotchman, a scout and manager in the Angels minor league system, played at Chipola in the 1970’s. His daughter Christal was a starting infielder on Chipola’s 2007 National Championship Softball team. Tom also helped draft Marianna native Jeff Mathis, brother of former Chipola player Jake Mathis. Jeff shares starting catcher duties for the LA Angels.

Gulf Power increases Chipola scholarship fund

Gulf Power in Chipley recently added $1,000 to the Gulf Power Endowed Scholarship Fund at Chipola College. Here Darrin Wall, Gulf Power manager (right), presents the check to Chipola president Dr. Gene Prough.

Ward is employee of the Month

Evelyn Ward (right) accepts the July Chipola College Career Employee of the Month award from Chipola president Dr. Gene Prough. Ward serves as Publications Coordinator in the Chipola Public Relations Office. She has worked at the college since 1996.

June 30 deadline for Chipola trip to Guatemala

Chipola College Spanish professor Dr. Mark Ebel is planning a Spanish Language Study program to Antigua, Guatemala during Spring Break, 2010.

The price of $1,715 includes meals, lodging, language classes, round trip airfare, ground transportation, tours and materials. This special rate is good through June 30 with a deposit of $150.

The eight-day study program provides three hours of college credit (Spanish Travel Study) during Spring Semester 2010. The trip is open to any current or prospective Chipola student, regardless of prior language instruction.

Antigua, Guatemala is known for its language schools, colonial architecture, and Mayan cultural influences. Each student will have a native speaking Spanish instructor and live in groups with host families.

For information, call 850-718-2282, or email ebelm@chipola.edu