

## CARTERET YOUTH LACROSSE

By Jon Bradley

CARTERET YOUTH LACROSSE is an initiative started by a small group of parents on Emerald Isle and in Cape Carteret, because we want to see our children play youth lacrosse this spring 2013 in Carteret County. When I transferred to Camp LeJeune during the summer 2011, I was very surprised to find there was no youth lacrosse program offered in Carteret County. This was especially shocking considering how big lacrosse is at UNC and Duke University. Unfortunately, for those families who live in Emerald Isle, Cape Carteret and Swansboro, the closest youth lacrosse league is in Jacksonville (Onslow Youth Lacrosse Association), New Bern and Havelock (approx. 40 miles or more in each direction). With our children attending school at Broad Creek, White Oak and Swansboro, those locations are simply too far to travel several times a week for practices. In addition, as I experienced this last winter/spring (Jan-July 2012) when I deployed overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), it is completely impossible for our spouses at home to make that trip by themselves everyday with multiple children. Therefore, now that I am back from deployment, my plan is to do everything in my power to bring youth lacrosse to Carteret County.

CARTERET YOUTH LACROSSE is a brand new organization starting a grassroots campaign to spread the word about youth lacrosse, generate interest/participation in the community, and provide our military and civilian youth (Boys and Girls ages 7 thru 18) a fun and safe sports activity. In addition, with lacrosse being one of the fastest growing team sports in the United States since 2001, many of our military families have been able to participate in lacrosse leagues during other tours of duty in different geographic locations bringing much needed experience and enthusiasm to the community. Even more important, because lacrosse has been the fastest growing sport over the past six years at the NCAA level for both men and women, lacrosse has the potential to provide our youth with increased student-athlete scholarship opportunities for college.

As a brand new organization starting from nothing more than an idea in October 2012, CARTERET YOUTH LACROSSE is desperately in need of organizers, parent volunteers, coaches, and equipment. At this time, the Onslow Youth Lacrosse Association in Jacksonville has been gracious enough to invite our teams to participate in their spring league and offer registration assistance to our children. Currently, the plan is for our teams to meet and practice at Western Park in Cape Carteret, and then travel to Jacksonville, New Bern, Havelock, Topsail, Raleigh and elsewhere to compete in lacrosse games and tournaments. However, none of this can be accomplished without funding and support for lacrosse gear and equipment.

To date, CARTERET YOUTH LACROSSE has reached out to organizations such as the Cherry Point Officers Spouses Club, Under Armour Youth Movement, and the US Lacrosse First Stick Program for funding, equipment grants, uniform donations,

coaching materials, safety instructions, clinics and camps. However, with the exception of the Cherry Point Officers Spouses Club, we have not been very successful. Therefore, we are also attempting to acquire funding assistance in the local community of Carteret County through business sponsorship, community fundraisers and charitable donations. Lastly, we are asking parents to consider purchasing personal gear and equipment for their children. By contacting vendors such as BattleLax in Wilmington, Lacrosse.com, Hibbets Sports, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Play It Again Sports, we hope to find reduced prices on quality equipment to outfit our children, until we, as an organization, can provide gear for the children to use during the lacrosse season.

If you are interested in playing Youth Lacrosse in Cape Carteret this Spring (March – May) 2013... REGISTER NOW! Practices start in February. Games kick-off on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Step 1: Register with US Lacrosse at [www.uslacrosse.org](http://www.uslacrosse.org)

Step 2: Register for the CARTERET YOUTH LACROSSE Spring 2013 Season at [www.onslowyouthlacrosse.uslaxteams.org](http://www.onslowyouthlacrosse.uslaxteams.org)

Step 3: Contact us at [carteretyouthlacrosse@yahoo.com](mailto:carteretyouthlacrosse@yahoo.com) or find us on Facebook at Carteret Youth Lacrosse.

We will be hosting our last Free Lacrosse Players Clinics for Boys and Girls (Ages 7-18) at Western Park in Cape Carteret in early February. Bring your own lacrosse stick if you have one. If not, lacrosse sticks will be provided for new players. No sign-ups required. No experience necessary. Just come on out ready to have a great time and learn the "Fastest Game on Two Feet!" For more information on CARTERET YOUTH LACROSSE look us up on Facebook at Carteret Youth Lacrosse or email us at [carteretyouthlacrosse@yahoo.com](mailto:carteretyouthlacrosse@yahoo.com).