



Ex-Tribe manager Hargrove to speak in Akron

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After 37 years in major league baseball, Mike Hargrove walked away from the sport in the middle of his Seattle Mariners' winning season last year, citing the need to spend more time at home with his family.

That's exactly what the former Cleveland Indians manager has been doing.

"Honestly, I've just been doing a lot of nothing," said the 58-year-old who still makes a home in Richfield. "I'm just spending time enjoying the kids (including four grandchildren) and doing a lot of things I haven't had the time to do over the years."

Hargrove and his wife, Sharon, will be the guests of honor Saturday at the John S. Knight Center from 2-4 p.m. for an question-and-answer town hall meeting hosted by the Sandlot Society.

"He took a lot of flak for leaving Seattle in mid-season, but he didn't let that stop him from doing what he felt was the right thing to do," Sandlot Society President Jason Woodruff said. "In many ways, he's a great example of everything we believe in: successful in his career, dedicated to his family, respected by his peers and confident in his beliefs."

The first-year organization, which is comprised of sport-loving families, adults and children, originally had scheduled the Hargroves to appear March 8. Snow postponed the event.

"The Sandlot Society is an organization I believe in," said Hargrove, who managed the Tribe to the World Series in 1995 and 1997. "It builds the foundation of sport and character in kids at a time when parents and coaches often forget the real emphasis on youth sports should be on learning and having fun — not just winning."

Hargrove didn't say it, but he might as well have: The organization's core values heavily promote family time together — the very thing he's also learning the true value of. That's why Hargrove said his major league baseball future remains up in the air after his year and a half sabbatical.

"I really don't know what's going to happen next," he said. "I'm taking this year off then maybe I'll get back into the game in some capacity — as a manager or advisor to a club — or something like that. That is, if someone calls."

For more information, log on to <http://www.sandlotsociety.com>.

Society members will be admitted free to Saturday's event. For non-members, the cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids under 18. Parking is free at the Broadway Deck, CitiCenter Deck and the J.S. Knight Lot.

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