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Commemorative coins help fund new lights at World Series Field

The new lights at World Series Field at Heritage Park aren't made of gold, but organizers of a fund-raising campaign hope to help pay for them by selling a little gold.

Gold-plated coins commemorating the "Light Up the Series" effort that will light up the Junior League World Series in August are being sold for \$20 each.

The international week-long tournament brings the best teams of 13- and 14-year-old baseball teams from around the world. Teams that play arrive in Taylor as regional champions from the United States, the national champions of Canada and Mexico and the regional champions of Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and the Asia-Pacific region.

The 28th annual series is scheduled for August 10-16 with opening ceremonies set for August 9. The championship game is broadcast live by ESPNU and via tape delay by ESPN2.

Series organizers are trying to raise about \$120,000 to pay for the installation of new lights. Greg Bzura, the founder and director of the World Series, said new lights have been needed for years to replace the antiquated 23-year-old lighting system on World Series Field.

The Taylor South Little League operates the fields at Heritage Park for the City of Taylor. In addition to World Series games, the Junior League field is used during the regular season by all four Taylor leagues, players from other communities and high school teams.

Taylor South contracted with Musco Lighting, a nationally experienced company that is approved by Little League International.

Six new light poles have replaced the former eight-pole system, reducing electricity costs by more than 50 percent while eliminating any dark spots that may have existed during games. The old wooden poles have been replaced by poles made of galvanized steel.

The new system includes 25 years of maintenance – a priority of a league made up of volunteers from the community.

Series organizers are seeking grants, corporate sponsors and other fund-raising ventures. The Detroit Tigers Foundation kicked off fund-raising activities with a pledge to donate \$20,000 to the effort. Series organizers have raised another \$20,000 and must raise the rest and make annual payments.

The commemorative coin sale could contribute thousands of dollars to the cause.

Each of the coins is numbered and has a grooved edge like a quarter. One side has an artist's rendering of World Series Field and "1981," the year the series started. The other side has a rendering of baseball field lights.

"It's an elaborate coin encased in a nice see-through case," Bzura said. "Every one has a distinct number."

The collectible coins will be available while supplies last and will be sold during the World Series.

To order a coin, send a check payable to the Junior League World Series to 22667 Maplelawn, Taylor, MI 48180. Include \$2 per coin for shipping and handling. Donations and contributions can be sent to the same address.

Orders also will be taken by phone at (734) 287-8836.

For the rest of the story on the new lights, click here: <http://www.cityoftaylor.com/node/20976>

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