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Busy Garvey keeps focus on Dodgers



By MARCIA C. SMITH
 COLUMNIST
 THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER
 masmith@ocregister.com

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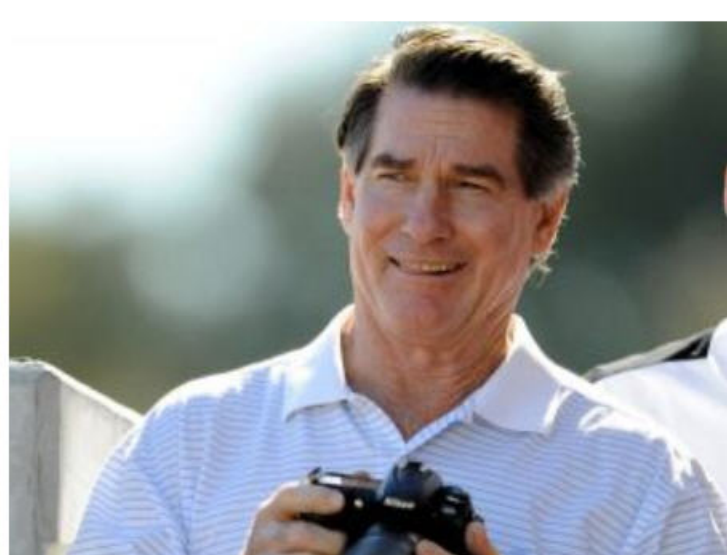
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Former Dodgers All-Star Steve Garvey ought to be wearing his glove and spikes to cover all his bases.

Between watching his son, Sean, 12, the youngest of his seven children, play for the Desert Longhorns in this week's Cooperstown (N.Y.) All-Star Village National Championship, Garvey, 62, fielded calls about, well, everything.



Former Dodgers first baseman Steve Garvey watches as son Ryan Garvey takes batting practice during the fifth annual Southern California Invitational Showcase held by the Major League Baseball Scouting Bureau at the MLB Urban Youth Academy in February in Compton. Garvey will hold a celebrity softball game after Sunday's Dodgers-Angels contest at Angel Stadium.
 AP PHOTO

"Hold on a second, I've got to sign a baseball," said Garvey by phone from Cooperstown, where he joined Little League families on a private tour Monday of the Baseball Hall of Fame.

"I'm here in the mountains of Cooperstown, my son just hit a home run, I'm at Angel Stadium on Sunday, the All-Star Game on July 12 and Dodger Stadium after that. Baseball is *the* life."

The popular 10-time All-Star, four-time Gold Glove winner and 1974 NL MVP is getting his former teammates – and Freeway Series rivals – together for what he called, "a mature guys – not Old Timers" celebrity softball game set to begin after Sunday's Dodgers-Angels contest at Angel Stadium.

Garvey, a year into his new hip, will reprise his role at first base. He has retired shortstop Bill Russell and catchers Steve Yeager and Todd Zeile back for the Dodgers, and former All-Star second baseman Bobby Grich and 1993 AL Rookie of the Year outfielder Tim Salmon leading the Angels.

Sports and entertainment celebrities, among them NFL quarterback Vince Young, former All-Star slugger Jose Canseco and "61*" actor Thomas Jane, round out the lineups for the three-inning game that raises funds for Lou Gehrig's Disease (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis).

The neurodegenerative disease for which there is no cure attacks the body's motor functions, progressively rendering muscles, both voluntary and ultimately involuntary, paralyzed.

"It has hit close," said Garvey, who saw his former Michigan State football teammate Charlie Wedemeyer succumb to ALS in June 2010. "I've seen how serious and debilitating it is on a person and his family."

While waiting for Olympic gold medalist Liza Fernandez to call him back with teammates/"fresh legs" to add to his rosters, Garvey monitored the continuing organizational implosion of the Dodgers, which, in case you haven't heard, he would like to buy.

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... at age 7, this son of a Greyhound bus driver fell in love with the batboy at 1956 spring training in Tampa, Fla. He sat on a dugout bench beside Jackie Robinson, Pee Wee Reese and Gil Hodges. In 1968, the Dodgers drafted him in the first round, 13th overall.

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