

# Little League's his passion



RICHARD GREEN/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN

Ralph Flores, president of King City Little League, stands in front of the fire truck he drives for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection at the Bear Valley Station on Highway I-25 on Nov. 26.

## Ralph Flores runs the whole King City program

By CHRISTOPHER ORTIZ  
The Salinas Californian

A passion for helping kids is why Ralph Flores donates his time to baseball.

Flores, who works for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, has been the president of the King City Little League for the past six years. He also coaches youth basketball and soccer for the King City Recreation Department and freshman football for King City High School.

Flores first became involved with Little League in 1983 as a coach. His first team won a

championship.

He said he volunteers his time with Little League because he believes it can help keep youngsters on the right path.

"It's a proven fact that kids who play sports stay out of trouble in general and stay in school," Flores said. "We want to keep the kids busy, keep them out of trouble."

Flores, who grew up in King City, has spent most of his life near a baseball diamond.

He and his six brothers played for King City Little League, and now his own family is continuing the tradition.

All three of his children play baseball and his wife, Joy, is the secretary for the league. They are all also San Francisco Giants fans.

"We try to go (to games in San Francisco) at least five

### RALPH FLORES

■ **AGE:** 44

■ **YOUTH INVOLVEMENT:** President of King City Little League.

■ **WORK:** Fire apparatus engineer for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

■ **EDUCATION:** Graduated from Hartnell College in Salinas and Allan Hancock College Fire Academy in Santa Maria.

■ **PERSONAL:** Lives in King City with wife, Joy; sons, Marc, 14, and Mathew, 12; and daughter, Megan, 7.

times a year," he said.

He said the appeal of baseball is its simplicity and accessibility.

"It's simple to pick up and

play," he said. "It's a cheap sport to play. There's not a lot of cost in playing baseball."

As league president, Flores said, his responsibilities include administration work and making sure everyone, from coaches to players to parents, follows the rules.

"I oversee the whole league," he said. "I'm pretty much in charge of everything. I make sure everything runs smoothly. There are quite a few kids and coaches I'm in charge of."

The league includes about 325 players, giving him 325 reasons to donate his time and energy, Flores said.

"I do it for the kids," he said. "I help because I want to keep them out of trouble. It keeps them strong and healthy. It teaches respect."

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