

# KELTNER'S HOT CORNER



## Ken Keltner Badger State Chapter

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### Upcoming Events:

Mar 14 - Emil Rothe Chapter  
SABR Chicago Book Fest  
DuPage Medical Group Field  
Joliet, IL



#### [SABR Analytics Conference](#)

March 13-15  
Renaissance Phoenix Downtown  
Phoenix, AZ



Opening Day - March 26  
Cubs vs. Brewers



Oldtime Ballplayers  
Spring Jamboree - April 8  
Klemmers Banquet Center  
West Allis



Ken Keltner Chapter Meeting  
May 9  
J&B's Blue Ribbon Bar & Grill  
5230 W. Bluemound Rd.



#### [SABR 50](#)

July 15-19  
Hyatt Regency Inner Harbor Hotel  
Baltimore, MD

### Ken Keltner - Emil Rothe SABR Day Joint Meeting

Over 50 members of the Wisconsin and Chicago chapters met on February 15<sup>th</sup> for the annual "SABR Day" Joint Chapter Meeting at the Brat Stop in Kenosha. It was a full day with seven presentations stretching past 4:00 PM.

We kicked off the day with Keltner member, Professor Mike Hauptert of UW-La Crosse with his excellent SABR 49, Honorable



Mention winning presentation *The Business of the Babe being the Babe*. He looked at how much Ruth earned and the sources. The Babe earned 21% of the total Yankee salaries paid from 1920 to 1934. Yet compared to the current salaries, he

was underpaid. Garret Cole's new contract is paying him \$36 million equal to 16% of the total Yankees salaries. With the Babe earning 21%, he would be worth \$44.6 million. Over his career, the Yanks paid him \$885,387 and he earned \$678,664 with endorsements of all kinds which Mike shared; he would do almost anything for a buck. And Mike had fun showing us what the Sultan of Swat would earn if he was represented by Scott Boras today. Comparing Anthony Rendon's new contract and career WAR to Ruth's at age 29, the Babe would be worth over \$97 million. Without free agency, TV sponsorships, and stadium revenue streams, the Bambino was paid more like Billy Hamilton than superstars like Cole and Rendon. The interesting topic generated many good questions, as expected from a SABR group.

After lunch, we had a [Ken Keltner](#) panel to enlighten our new members and friends from Chicago who our chapter name sake was. Ken son's, Randy, talked about his dad being proud of the being part of stopping Joe DiMaggio's hitting streak and the relationship he had with the him. He related how Ken's favorite ball player was an opponent, Ted Williams, who, noticing he was in a slump, suggested a change with his hands that quickly ended it. Ken thought Williams was a class act in doing so. Grandson Paul had a different perspective going to ballgames



Keltner Panel:  
Randy Keltner, Bob Buege Paul Keltner

with his grandparents and how grandpa was treated very special by the Brewers organization; getting special parking privileges,

entering through the old Gate X and along with his grandmother, being escorted to seats behind home plate while Ken went upstairs to enjoy the game with Bob Uecker in the broadcast booth. Paul also said, he never saw a full game as they always left in the seventh inning to avoid the traffic, just like many of our granddads did. We also learned that Paul is a movie star, bat boy in *Major League* and Reporter #1 in *Mr. 3000*; both filmed in the Brew City. And chapter guru, Bob Buege, shared meeting Ken at a card show and setting up an interview in 1989 for an article in the now defunct *Oldtyme Baseball News*. Bob talked about the best third baseman of the 1940s and the effort in the 1980s to enshrine Keltner in the Hall of Fame that was unsuccessful. The Q&A session that followed was engaging and informative.

The Rothe Chapter had a number of presenters including Krystal Lee an outfielder for the Rockford Starfires, a woman's baseball team playing at Beyer Field home of the Rockford Peaches. As a softball player, she spoke about the initial challenge of playing baseball but with hard work and lot of BP, succeeds. She also discussed the challenge of juggling work and family to play baseball. The season's highlight is in late August, the Peaches Orchard Classic with teams from all over the country wanting to play where the Peaches did. Greg Schwanke, the Starfires coaches who heads the efforts to preserve the ballpark, updated us with the progress made and what is planned with only the original ticket office remaining. They are making decent progress.



Krystal Lee  
Rockford Starfires

In addition, two representatives of the Chicago Salmon talked about their vintage baseball team; baseball cartoonist Carl Skanberg displayed and discusses his work; and Shawn Anderson and Lou Olsen discussing their Hall of

Very Good and weekly podcasts (over 200) with interesting baseball related individuals. We wrapped up the day with Bruce Allardice looking at the preseason predictions including how well the prognosticators (baseball websites, pundits and other experts) did in 2019; all were about 50-50 on division champs. He then discussed what the "experts" foresee in 2020; Milwaukee's picked to finish between second and fourth in a competitive NL Central race; the 'sperts all indicated they have underestimated the Brewers the past three years.

As usual, the staff with the Brat Stop were gracious hosts making the annual trip well worth it with good food and beverages. We have tentatively booked the Brat Stop for our next Joint Chapter Meeting on Saturday, February 20, 2021.

## Del Crandall's 90th Birthday Celebration



Open House to honor Del Crandall's 90th Birthday

Date: March 21st

Time: 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Place: Sunrise Senior Living

26151 Country Club Drive

Mission Viejo CA 92691

Snacks and Birthday Cake will be served

If you are unable to attend, please use your cellphone to record a short "Happy Birthday" video to Del. He would love to hear from you. Send your video to [crandallnumber1@gmail.com](mailto:crandallnumber1@gmail.com)



## Bonus Ken Keltner Chapter Meeting Saturday, February 29<sup>th</sup>

Special thanks to Mary Shea for organizing and running a second Bonus February Keltner Chapter Meeting at Broken Bat Brewery in the Third Ward on Leap Day.

Thanks to a special relationship with AAGPBL veterans, Sister [Toni Palermo](#) and [Joyce Hill Westerman](#), Mary, working with the baseball themed Broken Bat Brewery, organized the meeting to have the veteran ballplayers talk about their careers in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. And an interesting story they had to tell.



Mary Shea  
Joyce and Sister Toni

Sister Toni spoke the most being more outgoing. She was one of the players the AAGPBL could not locate because she went into the convent at age 19 and was known as Sister Mary Concepcion, not Toni Palermo until the late [Mary Froning O'Meara](#), a former South Bend Blue Sox, also living in Madison, asked Sister Mary if she ever played professional baseball in 2003. She replied yes. Sister Mary, Toni, was not aware of the movie *A League of their Own*. She joined the league at age 15 playing for the Chicago Colleens and the Springfield Sallies as a speedy shortstop. She played games in Yankee Stadium, where Phil Rizzuto told her she was an excellent shortstop and Ebbets Field. At age 19 in the South Bend Blue Sox camp, she heard the call of the covenant and left the team knowing that her passion for baseball would interfere with becoming a nun which worked out fine, 65

years as a sister. She related how the teams traveled nights played almost daily with double headers getting in late and never getting enough sleep yet no one complained, they were living their dreams. Although Joyce, a left-handed hitting catcher and an eight-year league player was nervous speaking (until she got going), agreed with Sister Toni that they didn't see it as a grind and loved playing baseball. Her granddaughter Tracey asked her about her favorite story and she talked about how some of the women would sneak out and go to the local establishments in violation of the rules to dance and have fun, she never did so. Joyce was in the 1992 movie as an extra and one of the actual players at the end of the movie. And she was featured in the article that follows published in SBNation on the AAGPBL 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

To learn more about the All-American girls Professional Baseball League, visit: <https://www.aagpbl.org>

Mary also asked SABR member Peter Wilt, a professional soccer team owner, who shares our love of baseball to talk about the hobby he shares with other SABR members, like Stew Thornley and Rex Hamann, Baseball Grave Stalking as he calls it. Why does he search for baseball player graves? To honor those in danger of being forgotten.

Some of the grave sites he has visited include [Pete Reiser](#), [Chuck Klein](#), and [Al Simmons](#) (and Alan Kulwicki also in St. Adalbert's Cemetery). Negro League greats [Oscar Charleston](#), [Rube Foster](#), and [Goose Tatum](#). In Phoenix, he saw the grave of [Jocko Conlan](#) and the outside of the cryogenic building where [Ted Williams](#) head and body are under ice. Keeping with the AAGPBL theme of the meeting, Peter visited the graves of [Dottie Kamenshek](#) a ten-year veteran of the Rockford Peaches, seven-time All-Star and all-time batting leader with a .292 BA. Also, [Margaret Wenzel](#) a nine-year vet, 1945-1953, a teammate of Joyce Hill in 1945. In addition to the graves, Peter spoke about each of the players and the last player discussed [Wally Pipp](#), he had a very interesting fact. Because the Yankees thought highly of Pipp's abilities and his good eye for talent, they used him for scouting including Columbia in New York, yes Lou Gehrig's university, his replacement. His goal is to visit all eight graves of the banned Black Sox and has two to go to complete that journey.

Special thank you to the [Broken Bat Brewery](#) for their wonderful hospitality with a neat baseball and beer theme. Although the parking around Broken Bat Brewery is a challenge, it is a location that would be good for some of our meetings, more get-togethers to talk baseball, or discuss book club entry's etc. They don't have food onsite at this time (Shake Shack is across the street) but they will be moving to a bigger location in a few months with a food truck and more space.



Should The Keltner restart a book club? Who would like to take the lead?

## Women’s baseball trailblazers reflect on the league, 75 years after its founding

*“A League of Their Own” was just a story. The real story of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League was one of sacrifice and pure love of the game.*

By Nicole Haase, May 30, 2018

When 16-year-old Shirley Burkovich joined the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, she thought she would play baseball for the rest of her life.

The league was in its fifth year of existence and Burkovich was a wide-eyed, if naive, teenager who had been offered the job of her dreams. The AAGPBL, founded in 1943, was still near its prime; based on ticket sales and attendance, 1948 was the height of the league’s popularity and success.

“When I went into the league, I thought that was going to be my career,” Burkovich says. “I planned on playing forever. I had no plans to do anything else. I made no arrangements for attending college to get a degree to do anything else.”

Three years later, she was working for the phone company.



Sophie Kurys, star of the Racine Belles of the All-American Girl's Professional Baseball League, slides into the bag. *Bettmann Archive*

Burkovich joined the league midway through its 12-year run. Sources estimate that 450 to 500 women played on teams based in 14 different cities over the league’s lifetime. But its decline was quick and sharp.

“When you plan something — when you plan a career and then have it just gone,” Burkovich trails off. “I know it was hard for a lot of the girls to have to give up something you loved. It was here and then all of a sudden it was gone.”

Burkovich may have been naive, but also she had been given an opportunity to do something no women have been given in this country since. Playing baseball was going to be her life, and there was no reason to believe otherwise.

Thanks to the movie “A League of Their Own,” the story of the AAGPBL is familiar to many. The movie

tells a dramatized version of the real-life story of hundreds of women, those like Burkovich, who fought and struggled and broke barriers.

But while “A League of Their Own” went on to achieve acclaim and success, ultimately it is just a story. The *real* story of the league — whose players association will celebrate the 75th anniversary of its first pitch on May 30, 2018 — was much different from fiction, and meant so much more.

Yes, the AAGPBL gave women opportunities they’d never had before, but it certainly wasn’t perfect. It wasn’t *really* a league of their own. The players themselves had little to no autonomy over their lives while they played. They experienced grueling conditions and demanding schedules and they didn’t complain because often, they said, they were just so happy to be doing something they loved.

The AAGPBL may have been the stuff of fantasies for players, but for the owners, it was a business venture, plain and simple. While the men were away at war, the baseball stadiums stood empty, and owners needed to make money somehow.

Though the league was the brainchild of Philip Wrigley, he was not the only owner of the AAGPBL. Chicago ad executive Arthur Meyerhoff took over the league from 1945 to 1951 before the teams became self-governed. During that time, the league itself owned the players. Players didn’t sign contracts with teams, but with the league, which meant that they could be traded and moved at will.

“Our league, they were the bosses,” said Viola Thompson Griffin, who played in the AAGPBL from 1944 to 1947. (She died on Dec. 31, 2017.) “We didn’t have any unions or any say in anything. The managers were

former major league Hall of Famers that were teaching us. They took care of all the business. They told us what to do. You couldn't and wouldn't last long if you let what they said about you get to you. We stuck it out instead of going home."

Conditions for the players were less than ideal on good days, and beyond difficult on bad days. While many of the players did earn more money playing in the league than many of them could have made in the "real world" during that time, they also worked incredibly hard to earn it. And according to Joyce Hill Westerman, who played in the league from 1945 to 1952, in the later seasons there were a few times when players didn't know whether there would be enough money for them to get paid.

"We didn't have all that much freedom, but we didn't have time, anyway. (We were) practicing when we weren't playing, but we played most every day. Sometimes we'd pray for rain because we didn't have much time off." —Viola Thompson Griffin

Westerman, who grew up on a farm in southeastern Wisconsin, had a long career in the AAGPBL compared to many of her teammates. And her childhood prepared her for the tough conditions of the league. Her parents lost their home during the Great Depression, and the family lived in a dilapidated house on land her uncle owned, where Westerman and her six siblings shared four rooms with their parents. There was no running water, no heat, no electricity, and no refrigeration, Westerman says. She was used to hard work, long hours, and doing whatever needed to be done.

Even with that upbringing, she remembers the summers playing baseball as long and arduous. Every player interviewed for this story talked about the demanding and seemingly never-ending schedule. Games were played six or seven days a week. Sundays and holidays were for double-headers. Players stayed with families or in rooming houses, traveled overnight on buses before playing in new towns the next day, played through injuries without team therapists or doctors, and had to do so with perfect hair and makeup, smiling, and in dresses.

Looking back, Westerman says she can't understand how they weren't all exhausted. It was hard work, but in the moment, they didn't notice; they were just glad to be playing baseball.

"(We) would have played in the league for nothing if it had come to that, and I think that was true because we loved it so much. It was a dream come true," Westerman says of her days in the league.

If the players were on the road, they'd start the day with breakfast and a team meeting to talk about their opponents. Each player and team's experience was slightly different, but Griffin said they'd talk about pitcher and batter tendencies and go into detail about how to approach the evening's game.

"Each team had their own rules," Griffin said. "If we had a bad game, made a few mistakes or errors in the night game, the next morning we could pretty well be assured practice would be called. And we could practice one play until we got it perfect. That might be an hour, it might be 15 minutes. We had to know that play until it came automatic to us.

"We didn't have all that much freedom, but we didn't have time, anyway. (We were) practicing when we weren't playing, but we played most every day. Sometimes we'd pray for rain because we didn't have much time off."

That schedule was compounded by a need to be "presentable," according to Westerman — a concept she wasn't all that familiar with. She'd wake up early to put pin curls in her hair then head to practice, where she'd become sweaty and unkempt. She'd return home and have to fix herself up all over again before heading to the game in the evening.

"You had to love baseball to do all that," says Westerman, who played in just a handful of games her first season. "A lot of girls would come and get discouraged and leave in a year or two."

Westerman counts back into her memory, and estimates that at least 125 women — or about a quarter of all women who played in the league — played one year or less. (It's nearly impossible to get an accurate



Dorothy Harrell, star shortstop of the Chicago Collens, spears a line drive during spring training in 1948. *Bettmann Archive*

number because the records from the league are incomplete.) Thinking back, Westerman wonders if playing as long as she did was her biggest accomplishment in the sport.

In the waning years, constant shuffling of teams and players seemed to signal that the league wasn't quite as stable as it had been early on. When Meyeroff sold the league and the teams became self-governed in 1951, there was no longer centralized promotion or publicity. In addition, attendance dwindled in the post-war, bounce-back economy, as Americans turned their attention to their cars and televisions. The ballpark was no longer one of just a few entertainment options available to the public.

Burkovich and her fellow players noticed that the AAGPBL was in its final days, but didn't want to talk about it. Talking about the league's demise would have made it real.

"I could tell by my third season (1952) that the league wasn't going anywhere," Burkovich says. "It was getting harder and harder to draw people and you could just tell that the league was on the verge of something. I had an opportunity at that time to get a job and that had to be one of the biggest decisions I ever made in my life, up to this day, to decide whether to stick it out with the league or to take this job."



The women of the AAGPBL were required to look their best whether on or off the field, and received "charm school" training to teach them how to maintain a feminine look. *Bettmann Archive*

For years after the league folded, the players lived in obscurity. Many didn't even tell their families about the time they'd spent playing baseball.

"I didn't talk about it because there wasn't anybody to discuss it with that thought it was that good, or that big," Griffin said. "They'd always say, 'Oh, you mean softball.' It wasn't until the Hall of Fame [induction in 1988] until things sort of exploded for us and then the movie, of course, and then all of the sudden we were celebrities."

This is where "A League of Their Own" made its most important contribution. The movie has been an integral part of shaping the way decades of young women see themselves and their opportunities, and it shined a spotlight on the women who played in the AAGPBL — many of whom's stories had been unknown before it premiered.

However, at the time they played, not one of these women thought about breaking barriers. Baseball was as integral a part of their lives as breathing. Putting on a dress and

playing baseball didn't feel like a revolutionary act — it felt like fun. But 75 years later, it's easy to see a direct line from the AAGPBL to increased participation in sports for girls and to Title IX. The women who played in the AAGPBL did something unprecedented and extraordinary, and they opened the door for the rest of us.

Westerman, particularly, seems unable to really synthesize what all the fuss is about. But her eyes still light up when talking about a particular teammate or roommate, and she still smiles brightly when recounting not only her experiences, but her awe at having, essentially, been in the right place at the right time.

"To start with, who would have ever dreamed they'd start a league," Westerman says. "And all that evolved from that, it's just unbelievable. What a great time to have lived."

Originally published in SBNATION, <https://www.sbnation.com/2018/5/30/17407798/women-baseball-trailblazers-reflect-aagpbl-75th-anniversary>

**Save the Date**  
**Ken Keltner Badger State Chapter Meeting**  
**Saturday, May 9, 2020**  
**J&B's Blue Ribbon Bar & Grill**

## WISCONSIN PLAYERS GIVING BACK TO THE GAME - COACHING

By: Ron Kading

I would imagine that every member of SABR has dreamt, at least once in their life, that they could be a major league baseball player. This dream has certainly come true for many young men from Wisconsin. The list of Wisconsin natives making the major leagues is long, and distinguished. It includes several Hall of Famers, such as “Bucketfoot” Al Simmons and Burleigh “Ol’ Stubblebeard” Grimes. But many of these players found another calling after their careers ended. Coaching.

As a member of the Wisconsin Baseball Coaches Association, I have researched Wisconsin major leaguers, and found that many of them became coaches, either at the high school or the collegiate level. Some of them made a career coaching at the professional level. This is a partial list of those that have given back to the game.



From Appleton, [Matt Erickson](#) has followed in the footsteps of his illustrious father, Bruce. Bruce was one of the most successful high school baseball coaches in the history of Wisconsin baseball, and is a member of the WBCA Hall of Fame. After Matt’s short major league career, he became a coach. As of 2020, Matt was the manager of the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers, a minor league team in the Milwaukee Brewers’ system. An interesting note; Matt’s only major league hit came off of Hall of Famer Greg Maddox. His son, born shortly after this event, was named “Maddox”.

Also from Appleton, [Don Werner](#) was a catcher for the Cincinnati Reds and Texas Rangers. After spending parts of seven seasons in the majors, Don became a successful minor league and major league coach.

[Thornton Kipper](#) attended Bagley High School in southwest Wisconsin. Bagley High School later became West Grant High School, and is now known as River Ridge High School. Kipper played in three seasons for the Philadelphia Phillies. After his career he became a noted pitching clinician.

[Joe Vavra](#), from Chippewa Falls, was a career minor leaguer, who spent at least 10 years coaching in the major leagues for the Dodgers and Twins. Prior to that Joe was the head coach at UW-Stout.

[Scott Servais](#), from Coon Valley, attended Westby High School. After an 11-year career in the majors Scott became front office material. After a stint as the General Manager of the Los Angeles Angels he became the manager of the Seattle pilots, a position he still holds.



Greenwood’s [Cy Buker](#) pitched one season in the majors for the Brooklyn Dodgers. In 1945 he went 7-2-5 on the mound. Cy then began a high school coaching career that lasted 23 years. He coached at Sturgeon Bay, Sevastopol, Greenwood, Whitehall, Shullsburg, Eau Claire, Loyal, and Rib Lake. In 2002 Cy was named to the WBCA Hall of Fame for his outstanding career.

From the small town of Gresham came [Dan Neumeier](#). After a three-game career with the White Sox, Dan went back to his hometown and coached baseball.

[David Gassner](#), from Hortonville, won his only major league decision with the Twins. David returned to the Fox Valley Association to coach at Appleton West High School



[Tom Klawitter](#) pitched briefly for the Twins in 1985. He was teammates with Twins legends such as Kirby Puckett and Kent Hrbek. Tom became one of the most successful high school basketball coaches in the history of Girls Basketball in Wisconsin. His teams at Janesville Parker won several State Championships. Tom Klawitter was named a Wisconsin Hall of Fame basketball coach. He currently serves as a coach for the highly successful UW-Whitewater baseball team.

Kenosha gave us a legendary coach in [Ray Berres](#). A light-hitting catcher, Ray managed an 11-year career in the majors. He became a major league coach, a career that lasted over 20 seasons. He was a coach for the 1959 “Go Go Sox”.

Kenosha must have some coaching in their blood, as [Dick Bosman](#) spent many years coaching in the major leagues after a solid 11 season career. In 1974 Dick hurled a no-hitter for the Indians.

[Jerry Augustine](#) played at Kewaunee High School and UW-La Crosse, before a 10-season career spent exclusively with the Milwaukee Brewers. Prior to his current career as a Brewers announcer, Jerry served as the head coach of the UW-Milwaukee Panthers.

For many years La Crosse was the “baseball capital” in Wisconsin. La Crosse gave us [Chuck Hockenbery](#), who had a short career with the Angels. He later coached Legion Baseball in nearby Onalaska.

[George Williams](#) also called La Crosse his home. After playing parts of four seasons with the Athletics and Padres, George became a baseball coach at UW-La Crosse.

From Luxemburg came future Minnesota Twin [Terry Jorgensen](#). Terry got into 91 games, during three seasons, with the Twins. He then went home and became the baseball coach at Luxemburg-Casco High School.

A small school hotbed in the 50’s, Marion gave us [Bert Thiel](#). He played one season, 1952, with the Boston Braves, just missing out on a chance to pitch in his home state. As a professional coach, he had a stint as manager for the Appleton Foxes.

[Gary Varsho](#) was one of the best pinch hitters in baseball during his career. The Marshfield native spent time as a coach for both the Pirates and Phillies after his career.

[Eric Hinske](#), from Menasha, had a very fine career in the major leagues, that parlayed into several coaching jobs at the major league level.

[Tom Wiedenbauer](#) posted a .667 career average for the Astros, (4-for-6). From Menomonee, he later managed four seasons in the Astros farm system.



Milwaukee has, without any question, sent more players to the major leagues than any other city in Wisconsin. You would think that Wisconsin would have gotten a large number of coaches from this group. Not true! The only major league player that I can find from Milwaukee that later became a coach is [Bob Mavis](#). If anyone had a “Moonlight Graham career”, it was [Bob Mavis](#). In his one, and only, major league appearance Bob got to pinch run. That’s it! Bob later had a long and distinguished career as a major league scout and coach.

[Dennis Sommers](#) had a very mediocre career as a minor league catcher. However, the New London native was a good student of the game. He was a minor league manager for 12 years, and then spent many seasons as a coach for the Cleveland Indians.

[J.T. “Beaver” Bruett](#) spent parts of two seasons with the Twins. The Oconomowoc native then served as an assistant coach at UW-Milwaukee.

From Oconto Falls, [Bob Wickman](#) was a major league All-Star pitcher. After his 15-year career he moved to Spring Green, where he became the head baseball coach at River Valley High School.



[Bill “GoGo” Gogolewski](#) hailed from Oshkosh, playing for WBCA Hall of Fame coach Harlan Quandt. He had a reasonably successful career with the Senators, Rangers, Indians, and White Sox. Perhaps Bill is best noted for recording the save in David Clyde’s major league debut. He later became the baseball coach at Oshkosh Lourdes High School.

Also from Oshkosh, [Dave Tyrriver](#) had a 4 game career with the Indians. He did not coach, but his son Reed eventually became the baseball coach at Oshkosh Lourdes.

[Clarence “Pants” Rowland](#) called Platteville his hometown. He never played in the major leagues, but had a four-year run as manager for the Chicago White Sox. In 1917 his White Sox won the World Series. He managed thru 1918, when he was fired. The next year, 1919, the White Sox became legendary as the “Chicago Black Sox”, the team that threw the World Series.



Racine native [Todd Frohwirth](#) had a nine-year career in the major leagues. He was a stellar relief pitcher. His submarine style proved very effective. Todd later served as a pitching coach for UW-Milwaukee.

[Vinny Rottino](#) attended Racine St. Catherine’s High School, as well as UW-La Crosse. His career consisted of several “cups of coffee”. As his career was winding down, Vinny became a player-coach at the minor league level.

After his major league career, [Jack Taschner](#) began a career in law enforcement. Jack attended Racine Horlick High School. Jack was named head baseball coach at Neenah High School in 2019, where he attempts to balance his career in law enforcement with that of a baseball coach.

[Vern Geishert's](#) only appearance on a Topps baseball card was as a Cincinnati Red. Vern never played for the Reds, but did manage an 11-game career with the Angels. Vern was originally from Richland Center. After his playing days were over, Vern served as the baseball coach at Richland Center, and later at tiny Ithaca High School.



Tiny Webster, Wisconsin gave major league baseball [Jarrod Washburn](#). Jarrod not only won over 100 games at the major league level, in 2002 he was the ace of the California Angels' World Series Champions. Jarrod returned to Webster after his playing career, and became the high school baseball coach. He led Webster to back-to-back State Championships, and also had the opportunity to coach his sons who may someday follow in Jarrod's footsteps.

And finally, we give you [Harvey Kuenn](#), from West Allis. After a 15-year career, with a .303 average, Harvey became a major league coach and manager. Milwaukee will be forever grateful for "Harvey's Wallbangers".

I may have missed some players who made their mark in the coaching profession. But this is a pretty good group, and an indication that baseball was more than a game to these men. They made their mark, and had an influence on many young men. They definitely gave back to the game.

*SABR Member Ron Kading is the unofficial historian for the [Wisconsin Baseball Coaches Association](#)*

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### **Milwaukee Author Seeks Your Memories of County Stadium**

McFarland Publishing, a North Carolina company specializing in academic books, has added Milwaukee County Stadium to its list of historic ballparks highlighted in a series.

Of all the ballparks in the world, Milwaukee was lucky to have a park associated with such storied teams as the Milwaukee Braves and Milwaukee Brewers.

Jim Cryns, a Whitefish Bay native and editor of the new volume, said it's a ballyard close to all of our hearts.

"I think this is a special opportunity for Milwaukee and all its fans," Cryns said. "This book is different from the other five as I worked in this park, I know a lot of people that worked in the park. Most of the players, managers and key people involved with County Stadium are still alive. Bud Selig is writing the Foreword. I'm waiting to hear back from Hank Aaron for his contribution. I have the assistance of some very respected individuals with the Brewers as well as former employees of the ball club."

Cryns needs your help. More specifically, he needs your memories.

"I'm looking for personal stories that took place at County Stadium for *any* event," Cryns said. "It could have been a Packer game, Braves or Brewers game, a WWE, a rock concert."

Cryns said he's not looking for a one-sentence summary. Rather, he's looking for a snapshot of your life that happened to take place at the park. He wants to know why it was special? He wants readers to know why you still recall the event.

"The book will cover everything from inception, blue prints, funding to demolition. There will be a section for memories from former players, managers, employees of the teams. There will also be a fan memory section and that's where you come in."

Cryns said there is no compensation other than your name being cited next to your memory and credit given to you for your photo.

"I urge you to be part of this celebration of the old tin stadium. For some of us, myself included, it holds an era of baseball that Miller Park can't duplicate."

Join the Facebook page: [The History of Milwaukee County Stadium](#). Contact Jim with a memory or photo or any questions at [jimcryns@gmail.com](mailto:jimcryns@gmail.com)