

# KELTNER'S HOT CORNER



## Ken Keltner Badger State Chapter

### October 2022 In This Issue:

- Upcoming Events
- [Recap Andy McCue Meeting - The Pilots' Journey to Bankruptcy](#)
- [Keltner Book Club](#)
- [Keltner Member Chris Zantow](#)
- [Get to Know](#)
- [Alesia Presentation at IWBC/SABR Convention](#)
- [DDD's Ruminations](#)
- [Schabowski Super Stumpers](#)
- [What was baseball like in Milwaukee before major pro sports arrived?](#)

### Upcoming Events

#### Time for Expansion Baseball with Maxwell Kates

Virtual, Wed - October 19 @ 7 PM  
Register [Here](#)

**In-person Chapter Meeting**  
Saturday, November 12th @ 11:30  
Stack'd Burger Bar - 170 S 1st St

**Keltner Book Club**  
with Author Thomas W. Gilbert  
*How Baseball Happened:*  
Thursday, November 17 @ 7 PM CST  
Register [Here](#)

**Chapter Holiday Gathering**  
Tentative, Saturday December 10  
TBD

**SABR 51**  
Chicago - July 5-9, 2023  
Direct questions or comments to:  
Dennis D. Degenhardt  
[bovine9@icloud.com](mailto:bovine9@icloud.com)  
262-339-9968

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Time for Expansion Baseball with Maxwell Kates

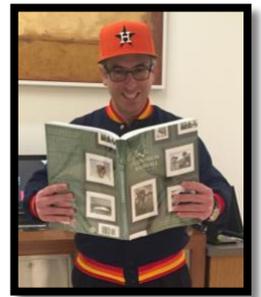
Virtual - Wednesday, October 19, 2022 @ 7 PM CDT

Here is another opportunity to enjoy a SABR 50 research presentation with Maxwell Kates discussing how successful each expansion team was, including our own Milwaukee Brewers.

From 1961 to 1998, Major League Baseball nearly doubled in size, expanding from 16 to 30 teams. Each team's initial roster was created by virtue of an expansion draft. Of the 14 expansion teams, whose draft was the most successful?

Using statistical analyses, "Time for Expansion Baseball" will answer that question. Metrics used in the analysis include the win-loss record for the first decade of each expansion team, the longevity of the expansion players, and how effectively they played based on wins above replacement. In the end, the 14 expansion drafts will be ranked for their effectiveness.

Register in advance [here](#). SABR will forward Zoom log-in info.



#### In-Person Chapter Meeting Saturday November 12 @ 11:30

[Stack'd Burger Bar](#), 170 S 1st St, Milwaukee

#### Mike Hauptert - SABR 50 Research Presentation

##### Salaries, Skinflints, and Scandals: The Cost of the Black Sox Scandal

The story of the infamous Chicago Black Sox is well known, but not particularly well understood. Groundbreaking research over the past several years has largely debunked many of the myths surrounding the incident. Despite the vast quantity of documents and research, the financial side of the story still remains murky in its details. Research has shown that Comiskey paid his players at least as well as most owners. But how well did any owners pay their players? Was Comiskey any tighter with a dollar than today's owners? Hauptert focuses on team revenues, salaries, and player performances, and what part they each played in the decision of players to threaten to boycott the 1918 World Series and then conspire to throw one the following year. A look at the degree to which players were exploited, and how that compared across teams, time, and other



occupations, sheds light on the decision to accept bribes and the longer run impact on the financial performance of the White Sox, and the treatment of all players in the wake of the scandal.

### Phil Sklar - National Bobblehead Museum

SABR member and co-founder of the [National Bobblehead Museum](#) will talk about the museum and its history tracing its start to 2002 when fellow co-founder Brad Novak starts receiving bobbleheads as a staff member with the Rockford RiverHawks. By 2012, the collection grew to 500. And that's just the start of the story, join us to learn more. Following Phil, we will tour the National Bobblehead Museum, just upstairs from Stack'd.



### SABR 50 Trivia Contest

And we can have more SABR 50 fun completing the Individual Trivia Contest. It is an interesting challenge, 40 questions with 20 minutes to complete.

### Discuss the Chapter Structure



### Recap Virtual Chapter Meeting with Andy McCue The First Ball Four Saga: The Seattle Pilots' Journey to Bankruptcy



Andy McCue, a SABR member for over 40 years, joined our chapter meeting on September 21st for an encore SABR 50 research presentation, *The First Ball Four Saga: The Seattle Pilots' Journey to Bankruptcy*. This was one of our best attended Zoom meetings with 35 in attendance.

Andy talked about the reasons why the selection of Seattle for expansion was poorly done starting back in the 1950s when the Dodgers and Giants moved to the west coast. The American League missed opportunities to move west and were trailing the senior circuit in attendance and prestige. But the two leagues were not equal with how they did expand with the NL making better decisions and earning nearly double for the 1969 expansion teams. In selecting Kansas City, which had recently lost the

Athletics, the junior circuit had some good ownership groups they knew to work with. Unfortunately, they didn't have similar contacts in Seattle so they went to the baseball people AL President, [Joe Cronin](#) knew. But they were not well healed and in turn did not have those type of contacts as well locally, so they reached out to out of town investors that made up 60% of the ownership group. We learned in Milwaukee how well that worked with the Braves.

And that was just the start of the challenges with baseball's first foray into Seattle. Andy covers the full story which ends as we all know, the Brewers buying the Pilots out of bankruptcy a week before opening day 1970.

This presentation was drawn from McCue's *[Stumbling Around the Bases: The American League's Mismanagement in the Expansion Eras](#)*, published this spring. The winner in the drawing to win a copy of the book was Bob Buege.

To watch the meeting recording, click on the picture or [here](#). If you would like a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, contact [Dennis](#).

#### Keltner Hot Corner Archives

You can now view or download past copies of the Keltner Hot Corner at: [Ken Keltner Badger State Newsletters](#)

#### Use of Links

Links in the *Keltner Hot Corner* are used to enhance the articles with the majority going to players SABR [BioProject](#) and [baseball-reference.com](#) as well as other related sites.

Who is Ken Keltner? See his SABR [Biography](#).

## Keltner Book Club

### Virtual Book Club Meeting

Special Guest: **Thomas Gilbert, author of How Baseball Happened**  
Thursday, November 17th, 7 PM CST

“Outrageous Lies Exposed! - The True Story Revealed”



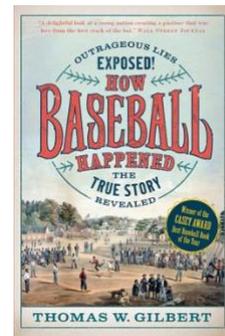
So claims the subtitle of this fascinating book! I never thought I was interested in 19th-century baseball until I read this compelling history of the game's evolution. We hope you can join us for an excellent presentation and discussion of *How Baseball Happened* with the author. Also, all attendees will be eligible to win a copy of the book.

According to venerable baseball historian John Thorn, “How Baseball Happened is a brilliant new approach to our game and its author tells a hundred stories you haven't heard before”

And more praise for the book:

“In *How Baseball Happened*, Thomas W. Gilbert brilliantly gathers hidden treasure long buried in newspaper accounts and diaries to present a rich and nuanced picture of American baseball as it grew and blossomed. Along the way, he explodes myths that have long shaped our understanding of this great game. This is a tart and funny trip through the raucous and aspiring culture that shaped baseball, with its volunteer firefighters, urban professionals, bloodstained butchers, and brawling gamblers.”

--Edward Achorn, author of [Every Drop of Blood](#), [The Summer of Beer and Whiskey](#), and [Fifty-nine in '84](#).



You can check out more info and lots of other good stuff about the book [here](#):

If you'd like to buy the book locally, in person or shipped, it's available at [Boswell Books](#)

As always, you don't need to read the book to attend. All are welcome, you just need to register in advance through SABR [Here](#). SABR will forward Zoom log-in information.

Hope you can join us!

Happy reading, Mary



### Keltner Member, Author Chris Zantow Passed Away in January

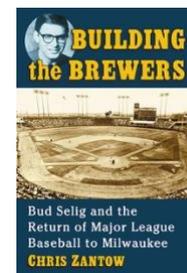


Maxwell Kates reached out to me about Chris Zantow's passing in January. He just started reading Chris's book, [Building the Brewers: Bud Selig and the Return of Major League Baseball to Milwaukee](#) and had questions for him when Max discovered that he has died.

Chris who passed away on January 25, 2022 was our special guest at one of our last Chapter meetings before COVID in November 2019 (we had only one additional meeting on February 29, 2020 at Broken Bat Brewery). Although the book initially was to cover the Braves leaving and Brewers arriving, he expanded it to include the Brewers early years up to when they started to win. His knowledge of the topic and joy to talk about it was captivating.

When Chris wrote his book, he submitted an abstract to McFaland. From that he created a chapter breakdown you can read [here](#), it's a great tease to read the book.

Here is Chris's [obituary](#), he was 53 years old.



#### Contribute to the Keltner Hot Corner

Do you have an article or topic you would like to publish in the newsletter? If so, that's great. Please contact [Dennis](#).

### Get to Know...Mike Kerry

Mike Kerry has seen a ballgame at every major league ballpark, over 50. In addition, he's attended games at well over 200 minor league ballparks. He's working on getting to the Yankees AA affiliate, the Somerset (NJ) Patriots, for a game or two which will be his last of the current minor league teams. With MLB capping the minors for eight more years Mike is limited to new ballparks with the next opportunity Richmond, Virginia's new diamond in 2025. Kerry is prepared, "they are on my list to visit then".

Mike Kerry was born on November 9, 1965 in the Chicago area, the oldest of three children. Mike's dad worked for Ryerson Steel and his mom was a homemaker before becoming a travel agent because she loved to travel. But the pay was poor so she went back to school becoming a CPA after graduating. She was the Defense Department auditor who found the \$1,000 hammers contractors billed the government but unfortunately her bosses let them get paid telling her it's not your money. Mike grew up in Chicago's northern suburbs until eighth grade when they moved to Minneapolis. After a couple of years in the Twin Cities, they moved again to the Milwaukee area, New Berlin, where Kerry finished high school at Eisenhower.



His parents had no interest in sports. Considering learning more important, they put PBS on TV for him to watch. Mike learned a lot like how to click from channel 11 to 9. In doing so, he discovered WGN where sports was a staple of their programming. Or as he says, "Jack Brickhouse became my teacher." That played a role in his earliest baseball memory, watching the Cubs versus Phillies in the early 70's. Other memories include his first in-person game to old Comiskey Park in 1974 between the Sox, White and Red, and then in 1975 his first trip to Wrigley Field for a Reds versus Cubs contest.

Growing up in the Chicago area, Mike was fortunate to have two favorite teams, the local Cubs and, of course, the Oakland A's as his American League team. It's easy to understand the local interest in the Cubs but why a team from the West Coast? As Mike explained, "Because one of his favorite players was [Reggie Jackson.](#)" Cub [Randy Hundley](#) was his other chosen player. That changed when [Charlie Finley](#) started dumping salary, trading away or not resigning the A's stars. Looking for a new AL team, Kerry settled on the Brewers who introduced their new logo in 1978 which worked out great a few years later when the Kerry's moved to Wisconsin.

And like many of us, Mike realized about age 12, when his best friend was making local All Star teams and he wasn't, that something had to change. As he saw it, "I needed a different way to get to the big leagues so I decided the journalist route."

As a kid, Mike also collected baseball cards and still has most of them. Plus, he collected autographs of players, getting most major leaguers who played in the early and mid 1980's. "I had many great interactions with the stars of the game back when there were only a handful of people who did that."

The journalism route became Communications and Business Administration degrees through the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, class of 1987. The university had great student run radio and TV stations which he was involved with and he related, "allowing me opportunities at real radio stations in Stevens Point and then Channel 7 in Wausau". Kerry moved out east to New Hampshire and Vermont working for radio station until mudding season. Or as Mike defined it, "they don't have spring as everything turns to mud." Having had enough, he returned home.

Because, "I wanted to watch and go to something other than local high school sports" Mike's occupation turned from working in TV and radio to the sales side of the business, first selling television equipment to broadcasters and then cable TV providers. The Oconomowoc resident has traveled the country since 1993 which worked with his passion for baseball. "I was fortunate to make my own schedule outside of conventions. So, if I had to go to Texas, I would look at schedules and pick the week when a team had games on the schedule if I could pull it off. Other times I would take baseball vacations and catch games in Montana or Pacific Northwest." He added, "People thought I was nuts going to see Brewer minor league teams in Ogden, Utah and Butte and Helena, Montana. But I was able to see Tyrone Taylor when he was just drafted by the Brewers. I am curious to see how much longer he sticks around."

Having heard about SABR for many years but not having the time to join, an article about the SABR convention in Washington DC caught his attention, "I had to find out more about the local chapter." Kerry joined in June

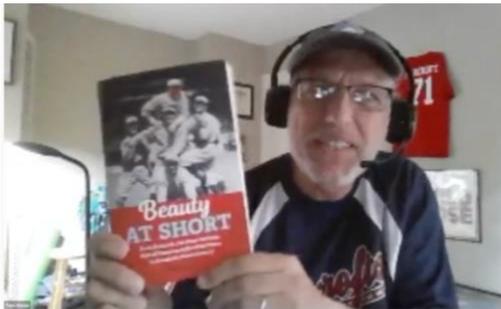
2010. Since then, he has been active locally and at national events including the [Jerry Malloy Negro League Conferences](#) and ten national conventions, missing only New York. In addition, he has attended five or six Fall League conferences which are his favorites because it's often a smaller group and you get to meet the VIP speakers. "I met and talked with people like [Bob Welch](#), Bob Stocker, [Roland Hemond](#), Ron Davis and others that were so giving with their time to talk baseball with a fan like me who watched them play as a kid."

If Mike could have a time-machine moment or three, what would he go back to see? His reply, "That is easy for me; after all the books I've read. I would love to go back to the 50's and see games at the three New York City ballparks. Some call it the golden era of baseball."

We usually like to close asking if there are any final words of wisdom? Mike talked about one of our favorite places, "So many great memories at County Stadium, from ballgames to chasing autographs and seeing history with the 82 Brewers and attending all the post season games and even getting to celebrate on the field. Going three nights in a row to see [Robin Yount](#) get his 3,000 hit to [Paul Molitor](#) in the on deck circle ending his hitting streak." Thanks, Mike, many of us share those fine memories as well.



## Tom Alesia's Presentation at the 2022 SABR/IWBC Women in Baseball Conference



2022 SABR/IWBC Women in Baseball Conference: Tom Alesia

Keltner member Dave Alesia gave a presentation on Sunday at the 2022 SABR/IWBC Women in Baseball Conference. We know well his passion and here is the info on his appearance.

Which Hall of Famer managed the most games in the AAGPBL? [Max Carey](#), right? Or, um, [Jimmie Foxx](#)? It's Dave Bancroft, who spent nearly four full seasons with the inaugural Chicago team, South Bend Blue Sox and Battle Creek Belles. Bancroft, a 15-year star shortstop who played in four World Series, also guided an American women's team on a historic two-month Central and South American tour in winter 1949.

Bancroft's association with women's baseball didn't begin when he coached AAGPBL teams in his late 50s and early 60s. As a teen in his Sioux City, Iowa, hometown, Bancroft played several times against the Boston Bloomers.

With Chicago, South Bend and Battle Creek from 1948-1951, Bancroft served as a strong advocate for women's baseball with his players and among the national press. The author's new book, *Beauty at Short: Dave Bancroft, the Most Unlikely Hall of Famer and His Wild Times in Baseball's First Century*, is a popular and acclaimed hit that features two chapters devoted to his work and adventures in the AAGPBL.

Learn how a protege of fiery [John McGraw](#) and four-year player-manager in Boston dealt with female players and how he was influenced by the support of his wife, Edna, of 60-plus years. A Superior, Wisconsin, resident his whole adult life, Bancroft became a Hall of Famer in 1971 at age 80. He died one year later — almost exactly 50 years after this fall's conference and 100 years after his second World Series title with the New York Giants.

Tom's presentation is excellent with many interesting stories and pictures. **Click on his picture to watch.**

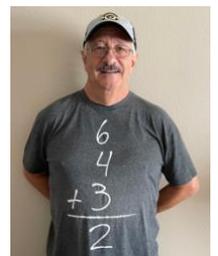


## DDD's Ruminations

Chapter leaders' meet quarterly and we met twice in Baltimore during SABR 50. In doing so, one of our bigger topics is chapter structure. A number of chapters have by-laws with regular officer elections, different committees and responsibilities. Others are similar without the by-laws. And there are groups like ours which generally have one person without much formal structure (or succession plans) similar to us.

This has me thinking about our Ken Keltner chapter, long term. I am not complaining and enjoy my chapter role. But should we have more involvement instead of mostly one person's ideas. An excellent example is Mary's chairing the Book Club. She's done a great job finding interesting books and often having the authors join the meeting. How can we get others involved?

One of the reasons I suggested a change in leadership in 2019 was because Rick was involved in both the Old Time Ball Players and the Milwaukee Braves Historical Society. All good but we need SABR [Continue on page 9.](#)



## Schabowski's Super Stumpers

By Rick Schabowski  
October Trivia

Rick has some fun and challenging questions this month around the Brewers post season play. How did you do? Did any of these bring back good memories?

1. What high school did Ken Keltner attend?
2. After his major league career ended, what semi pro team did Keltner play for?
3. What was the name of the restaurant that Keltner had on South Howell Avenue?
4. The Toronto Blue Jays made the 2022 playoffs under a manager, John Schneider, who was hired during the season. Name the team, year, and manager that last accomplished this feat?
5. On September 29, 2022, Angels player Shonei Ohtani struck out ten Oakland Athletics, and also had an RBI. Name the two other pitchers who have also accomplished this performance?



Do you have a baseball trivia question or two, heck even 12, to stump Our Stumper? If so, send your brilliance to [Rick](#) to see if you can trip him up and he'll include it in a future *Keltner Hot Corner* giving you credit - bragging rights - for your stumper(s).

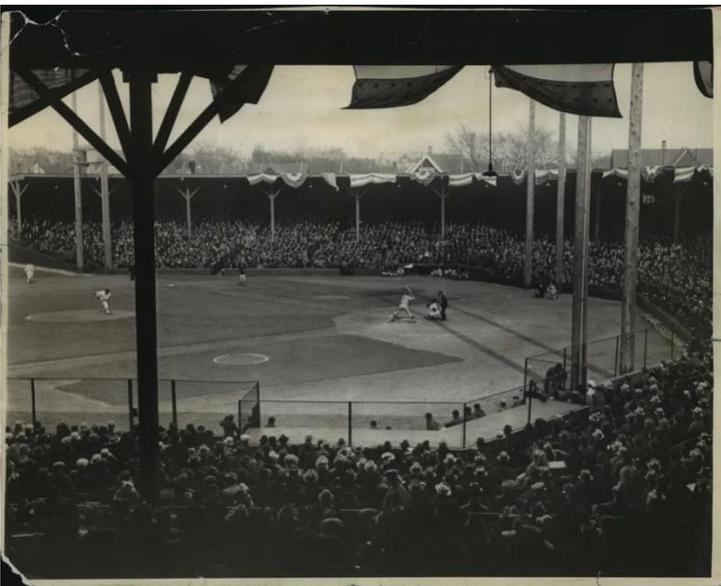
Trivia Answers are [here](#)



## What was baseball like in Milwaukee before major pro sports arrived?

JR Radcliffe, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, September 29, 2022

[The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* has a feature named "What the Wisconsin" where readers ask questions about uniquely Wisconsin items like drinking fountains called bubblers, why we have fish fries and the like. This is an article about Milwaukee before major professional sports including quotes from our friend, Bob Buege. I included many links on ballplayers famous and unknown that you may find interesting as well, DDD]



A full house watched in chilly weather as the minor-league Milwaukee Brewers opened their American Association season at Borchert Field on April 16, 1937. Journal Staff Photo, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

Milwaukee is a baseball town. From the dedicated fandom for the World Series champion Milwaukee Braves to the way a small-market Milwaukee Brewers team stands among the 10 best attendance draws year after year, the city often has had a big spot in its heart for its representative in the American or National League.

But before (and even after) a major professional team set up shop in the Menomonee Valley, Milwaukee had company baseball leagues and now-defunct fields that were home to high-level play.

We're exploring this rich history as part of What the Wisconsin? — where reporters take on questions about our state, our communities and the people in them.

"What people forget, or never knew, is that in the 1920s and '30s, nearly everyone played baseball," said Bob Buege, author of "[Borchert Field: Stories From Milwaukee's Legendary Ballpark](#)" and one of the top baseball historians in Milwaukee.

"They formed neighborhood teams and church teams. Sometimes they wore uniforms, but sometimes they wore the clothes they wore that day at the factory. Mothers and fathers played when they got

home from work or after dinner. They played in the vacant lot down the block or in the street. Baseball was truly America's pastime.

"The municipal recreation department sponsored numerous leagues at all levels of ability — AAA Major, AA Major, Minor League, Minor Group One, Group Two, Junior Group A, ad infinitum. The Antlers beat the North Avenue Civics, the Conklin Pianos beat the Block Buffets. You get the idea."

### At the heart of it all: Borchert Field

At the epicenter of Milwaukee's baseball ecosystem was Athletic Park, built in 1888 and renamed in 1927 for [Otto Borchert](#), the Milwaukee Brewers (the American Association version) owner who had recently died. Construction of the I-43 freeway wiped the site of Borchert Field off the map in 1963, but the wooden "Borchert's Orchard" at 8th and Chambers streets welcomed some of history's greatest baseball players through its turnstiles.



People lined up at the ticket booth on the last opening day at Borchert Field on April 16, 1952. Borchert Field, at 3000 N. 8th St., opened as Athletic Park in 1888. *Milwaukee Journal*

Olympic hero and NFL Hall of Famer [Jim Thorpe](#) played left field and led the league in stolen bases for the [Brewers in 1916](#) (though he struck out a lot against the curveball).

[Babe Ruth](#) and [Lou Gehrig](#) appeared there as barnstormers in 1928, with 8,000 fans turning out to see them despite freezing temperatures. (Ruth hit a game-winning home run.)

Future Hall of Famers to play for Milwaukee included [Rube Waddell](#), [Ray Schalk](#), [Ed Walsh](#), [Eddie Mathews](#) and [Al Simmons](#) — the latter of whom emerged from Milwaukee's sandlots to become the "Duke of Mitchell Street" and perhaps the finest ballplayer the city has ever produced.

Among the kids trying to get a glimpse of play through the Borchert Field fences was [Bob Uecker](#), the legendary voice of the Brewers who rode a bike eight blocks from his school to catch what was left of that afternoon's contest.

But baseball in Milwaukee wasn't just the Milwaukee Brewers (again, the first version, not the franchise that started in Seattle and brought pro baseball back to Milwaukee in 1970).

Borchert Field also served as home to the Milwaukee Bears in their only season in the Negro National League, in 1922. In 1944, it was home for the Milwaukee Chicks in their lone season with the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. The two teams were both coached by Hall of Famers — [Pete Hill](#) and [Max Carey](#), respectively.

And there were others.

"The Milwaukee Red Sox played in the Wisconsin-Illinois League, which usually had either six or eight teams," Buege said. "This league played in Borchert Field and included former big leaguers like [Hippo Vaughn](#), one of the pitchers who hurled a double no-hitter in 1917 for the Cubs and the Reds. One of the interesting things about that league is that, although the major leagues were strictly segregated and would remain so for decades, the Wisconsin-Illinois league had two Black teams.

**The American League was born in what's now a parking lot, and it's not the only bygone landmark**

Baseball in Milwaukee [wasn't restricted to Borchert Field, either.](#)

The Lloyd Street Grounds, located at 17th and Lloyd streets, stood for less than a decade, but the Brewers played their one season of major-league ball in 1901 at that field before jumping back to



A combination of a cold wind and a long week end apparently was responsible for a very small crowd at the junior American Legion baseball game at Mitchell Park in 1950. File Photo

American Association as a minor-league team. A park on Oklahoma Avenue between 17th and 20th streets and the Wright Street Grounds at 11th and Wright also served as hotspots. The latter had a porous wooden fence.

The American League initially came into existence during a meeting at the Republican Hotel (at what is now King Drive and Kilbourn Avenue), an area that's now a parking lot for the former Milwaukee Journal Sentinel building.

Mitchell Park, roughly where the Mitchell Park Domes stand now, offered a sunken field, and people could gather overlooking the field for a free Depression-era activity. Buege said crowds could get up to 10,000 for those games.

### **There were other names to know, including Kuenn and Uecker**

[Happy Felsch](#), a Milwaukee native among the "eight men out" banned from Major League Baseball for their role in the 1919 Black Sox scandal, remained a popular draw in his hometown. In 1933, 15,000 fans came to see his Bucher Brews team in a sandlot triple-A clash against Ziemer Sausage. Stars like [Tony Kubek](#) played for teams named after local businesses like Al's Custard.

Uecker, meanwhile, pitched (and eventually caught) for Rohr Jewelers in the County Major League, the top amateur league in the city.

"Usually, at the end of the year, it was Rohr Jewelers against Wisconsin House, which was another good team," Uecker said. "It seems like every year we wound up playing against each other for the championship."

They played in spots that might be more familiar to modern Milwaukeeans: Wick Field at Vliet and 50th streets, Humboldt Park in Bay View, and Simmons Field near Pulaski High School on Oklahoma Avenue and 22nd Street, which eventually got the lights that once belonged at Borchert.

In fact, Wick Field served as the scene of a turning point in Uecker's career.

"I knew scouts were looking at me every once in a while (as a pitcher), so I come down (to County Stadium) and I'm working out with [Johnny Cooney](#), the pitching coach for the Braves at that time," Uecker said. "So I'm throwing for 15-20 minutes and he's standing next to me and says, 'All right let me see your good fastball now.' I said I have been throwing my good fastball."

"And he said, 'I recommend you get a job.' "

So Uecker went back to the Rohr team, and on one particularly bad day at Wick, began criticizing his catcher, who not-so-politely invited Uecker to try catching himself if he thought he could do better.

"So he took the gear off and I asked the managers, 'Can I do it?' " Uecker said. "So I did it, and I liked it."

Uecker, of course, went on to become a big-league catcher with the Braves, Cardinals and Phillies. During his time with Rohr, he shared a field with [Ken Keltner](#), a former major-leaguer for Cleveland. Keltner's claim to fame was making a pair of slick defensive plays on July 17, 1941, to retire [Joe DiMaggio](#) and help end his legendary 56-game hitting streak.

"Cutler-Hammer, (Pawling &) Harnischfeger ... they all had teams," Uecker said. "And they had guys they were paying or giving jobs to play."

In those days, you also could find a 19-year-old [Harvey Kuenn](#) helping his West Allis Highways team to the muni triple-A title in 1950 — three years before he became the American League rookie of the year with the Detroit Tigers in the first of eight all-star seasons (and decades before he managed the Brewers to the World Series).

Once Milwaukee County Stadium opened and the Braves moved in from Boston for the 1953 season, the Milwaukee Brewers were no longer, and Borchert Field lost its place as the beating heart of Milwaukee baseball.

"When the Braves came here from Boston, you're talking about the first season drawing (close to) 2 million people," Uecker said. "New York, Brooklyn, the Giants, they didn't draw 2 million. It was here, in Milwaukee. It was huge."

From 1953 to 1958, the Braves led Major League Baseball in attendance.

### **Slow-pitch softball blossomed later but has a major place in ESPN history**

As for slow-pitch softball, Milwaukee experienced a boom after the Braves left Milwaukee in 1965, particularly with the Big Eight Classic league in Milwaukee County.

Crowds of 3,000 to 4,000 people came to Sherman Park to watch the teams in action, including some that were regarded among the best in the nation.

"We'd drive our bikes up and stack picnic tables on top of each other to watch the Big Eight games," said Rick Weiterman, who was a 21-year-old slow-pitch pitcher when his Milwaukee Schlitz team [became part of the first live sports broadcast on ESPN in 1979](#).

The Schlitz defeated a team from Kentucky for the American Professional Slowpitch Softball League championships in a best-of-seven showcase in 1979.

### **What's What the Wisconsin?**

*Is there something about Milwaukee or Wisconsin that's been puzzling you? We've got experts who know how to find answers to even the smallest (and sometimes the most interesting) questions. When we can, we'll answer with stories. Submit your question below or at [bit.ly/whattthewisconsin](http://bit.ly/whattthewisconsin).*

### **Schabowski's Super Stumpers**

October Answers:

1. Boys Tech
2. Rohr Jewelers
3. Hob Knob
4. Jim Tracy-2009 Colorado Rockies
5. Sandy Koufax- 1965, Hal Newhouser- 1946

**Return  
Pg 1**

**Return to Trivia Questions**

### **Ruminations Continued from page 5**

representation at these meetings as well. With COVID and my moving to Arizona it wasn't an issue with the virtual meetings, but now that meetings are occurring again, we need local leadership. What does that mean?

Also, do we need a Committee of some type to help with planning new ideas for meetings, community involvement so we have more ideas besides one person. How do we do that?

This is to start to having the conversation. I would appreciate your thoughts and ideas. And I think we should discuss these in future meetings deciding what works best for us. Your ideas will be greatly appreciated.

### **One other item:**

I anticipate that SABR will open requests for local grants, supporting chapter ideas soon. What would we like SABR to help us do? Some thoughts on my part, a Keltner website. Is this a place to house a Wisconsin born player site (now up to 254 players) and other stuff? Or, scholarships for grade/high school or college baseball research. Or what other ideas are out there that we should consider. Thoughts? Ideas?

[Return to Page 5](#)