

The Dallas Post

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Baseball owners thinking too small with extra charge for Little League uniforms

Many people were angered by word that Major League Baseball plans to tack \$6 per uniform on its license fee for Little League teams using Major League names. Given the state of mind shown by the owners' position in the baseball strike, the move really shouldn't have been a surprise. It's quite apparent that the current crop of owners is more interested in throwing their weight around than nurturing "America's Pastime." To them, fleecing kids of an extra six bucks offers more appeal than cultivating the next generation of fans, since most of the baseball czars probably will sell their teams at the first opportunity to make a killing.

So, rather than feigning shock at the owners' shameless behavior, I'm ready to suggest other ways they can raise their profit potential, whether or not there's a baseball season this year. (No, replacement players won't a season make.) Perhaps they've just been too bashful to propose these ideas themselves.

One angle would be to sell ads on the back of uniforms, and maybe the front and sides, too, kind of like the decals that are plastered all over race cars. Why not get Bengay to take the players' shoulders, Advil on the hat, Jockey in the crotch and, of course, Budweiser on the belly?

Preparation H would go on the seat of the pants, or better yet, on the owners' foreheads.

An added twist, and sure money-maker would be to find two more sets of sponsors and have the players change uniforms every three innings, like the rotating signs on stadium walls. Extra-inning games would be a bonus for the final set of sponsors.

For all their greed, team owners really haven't begun to tap the potential offered by a field measuring 300 or more feet down the lines and 400 to center field. How about a Marlboro man sculpted in the center field grass? This would be especially easy on artificial turf, since it would only need to be done once. Grass fields would take more maintenance, and perhaps ChemLawn would be a better choice. They'd probably do the work gratis. The owners should resist the temptation to sell right field to the Republicans and left to Democrats, since politicians are the only group of people on the American scene more money-hungry than they and the players are.

The actual bases are — forgive the pun — a diamond in the rough. First base could carry the logo of any bank with a name starting "First." Since every city in America seems to have the first bank, that would be easy. Second...hmmh, how about a consignment shop or a used car dealership? As for third, well, you figure that one out. Home plate would, of course, be coveted by the makers of condoms.

Bats and balls are a bit small to see from the stands, although television might be able to zoom in on the images. Replacement ball will be a help in this one, since the slow pitches and stagnant bats will be easier to keep up with. Speaking of television, there's no reason to exempt the announcers from all this; make them wear blazers festooned with sponsor names.

As you can see, the possibilities are endless. There's a danger, of course, that a gang of bean-counting owners will become so engrossed with finding more ways to cash in they'll forget what business they're in, although it seems clear they're already well down that road.

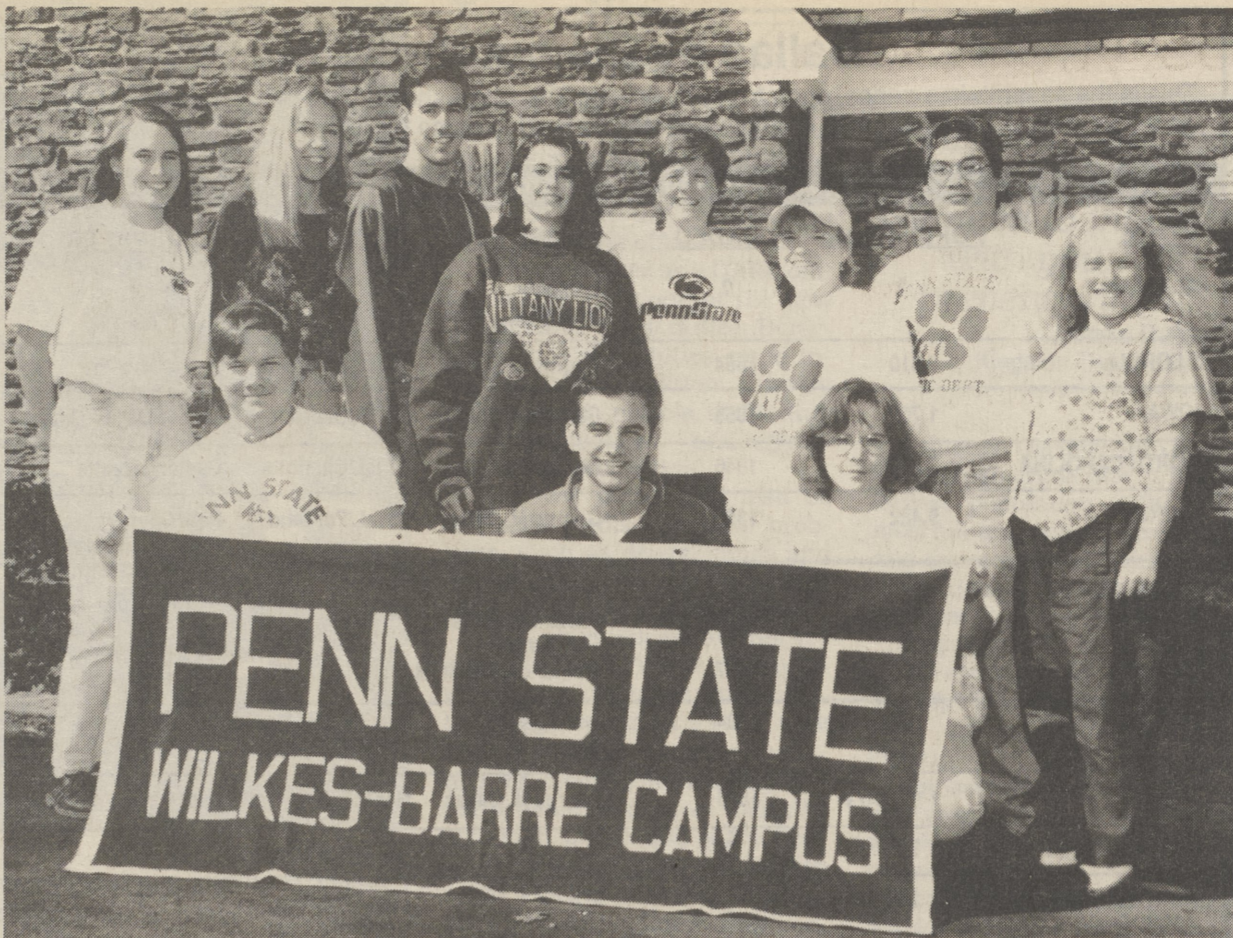
And about those Little League uniforms...Major League baseball should lower the fees as long as 9-year-olds agree to advertise all the stuff that appears on the big leaguers' duds.

There you have it, the solution to the current crisis in Major League baseball. With all the money they'll rake in from sponsors, the teams will be able to pay even more astronomical salaries to mediocre players, as both sides line their pockets at the expense of fans. After all, it's the American pastime, isn't it?

...

I joined the Concord Coalition last year, and have received several publications from them which illustrate the great peril the U.S. faces because of our huge public — and private — debt. One booklet, *A Visual Guide to America's Real Leading Indicators*, graphically illustrates the startling decline in Americans' real income, which combined with sharply rising consumption has driven the savings rate to the lowest point in memory. In 1965, Americans saved \$1 for each \$5.38 we spent. In 1991, we saved \$1 for each \$31.96 we spent. The world leader in savings is Japan, with a spending to savings ratio one-ninth the size of ours. It's not just the government's fault; the private sector savings rate is now about half what it was 30 years ago. We aren't getting as much for our money, either. We spend nearly twice as much per person on health care, but have a lower life expectancy than most developed nations, and even a few less-developed ones.

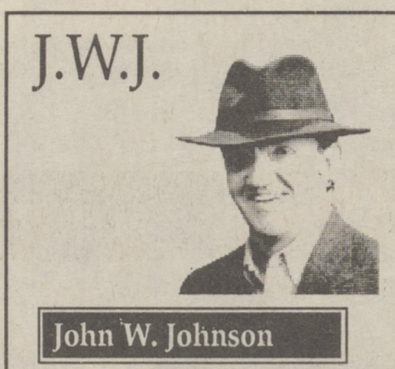
It will not be easy or painless to get our nation back on its economic feet, and there has been precious little serious discussion of doing so from either major party. The longer we wait, however, the more drastic the measures will have to be; just look what happened in Mexico last month. I hope we can face up to our responsibilities soon, or our children's lives will be considerably more difficult than our own.



PSU students help Georgia flood victims

Nine students at Penn State Wilkes-Barre from the Circle K Service Organization and one faculty member will be traveling to Albany, Georgia on their spring break, March 4-11, to assist with flood relief work in the areas devastated by the '94 flood. Their work will include painting, putting up drywall, spackling, removing flood mud, putting in flooring, doing yard work and removing the remaining debris.

Members are from left, first row, Joe Pudlosky, Jason Getz, Missy Szymanski; second row, Kim Kowalik, Nicole Steltz, Sean Reynolds, Richel Perreti, Anne Holmes, instructor in health and physical education; Heather Jones, Wai Yuen and Heather Adams.



A Democrat friend remarked recently: "Well, it looks like the flag-wavers are back in town."

He was, of course, referring to the November takeover of Congress by the Republican Party, and the GOP's historic tendency to be more fervent in public displays of citizenship, i.e., flying the flag.

And it's been the GOP which several years ago sponsored so-called flag-burning amendments designed to punish those who in any way desecrate the flag; all such attempts to have such an amendment have never gotten off first base.

It was former President Richard Nixon who said it quite clearly: "If the day comes when (citizens) refrain from desecrating it only because of the law or some dimly remembered custom, it will have truly become an empty symbol."

It would, indeed, be a serious mistake to erode the right of free expression. To have a flag burning amendment would be sort of like the tail waving the dog.

In any event, our forbears were smart enough to make it difficult for us to mess with our basic charter. Any proposed amendment — must first be approved by two-thirds of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Then it must be ratified by 38 state legislatures.

And it's not likely that, even if such an amendment passes the House and Senate (at this writing it has passed the House), it will then pass citizen muster.

Flagwaving doesn't show others we're good citizens

At the same time, was the Democrat friend right? And what about this symbol, this flag of ours? There is cause to be concerned about not only its worship particularly in the hands and minds of those who find the strength of citizenship to be more one of symbol than of substance.

It was Abraham Lincoln who said during the Civil War: "This nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

And, of course, the symbols waving during that most perilous time for us as a nation were the American and Confederate flags. Uttered in 1863 by Lincoln in his now famous Gettysburg speech, we would do well to also remember that the freedom Lincoln spoke about, and which is depicted by our flag, is not present in the hot dogs we will eat this summer, nor can it be found in our browning in the sun, nor in mouthing the word before the recently played Super Bowl, nor in our gazing skyward next July 4 to see man-made glories go bump in the night.

Freedom is not a commodity for installment plan purchase, nor can it be found at summer auction or yard sales, and it can't even be inherited as a birthright.

Freedom is not present in any manner simply because we wish it to be so.

Freedom is not material. It is an idea which requires nurturing and affirmation through the free flow of information and ideas. It needs an informed, involved citizenry to grow and remain vibrant. And it must be protected at least as strenuously against those who would crush ideas as against any nation's military.

Freedom thrives with us as people through expressions of

sentiment and desire, and in us as a nation through the ideal that all humans are created equal with liberty and justice for all.

Those words remain just words in the mouths of those who are idol (or idle) flag wavers, and the cloth just pieces of fabric in the hands of those who wave them without really knowing why.

For those who not think it more appropriate to display the flag, where was it before?

Conversely, do the constant flag wavers, leave reason to believe that we have learned little from the past when our flag waving "in the dawn's early light" was the only reason needed to go to war and snuff out lives?

Waving the flag is said to be symbolic of patriotism. Patriotism (call it loyalty) should not mean blind submission to the flag or any other symbols. Independent though, nurtured by the free press flow of information and ideas, is the cornerstone of this country. Loyalty is not a down-with-Hussain placard written in haste to join the crowds on television, a knee-jerk reaction to a complicated issue.

Loyalty—call it patriotism—means a dedication and extension to others of the constitutional provisions of liberty and justice. Patriotism should mean more than the convenience of a bumper sticker flag.

And finally, patriotism/loyalty—call it citizenship—means taking the time to fully appreciate the responsibility of one's actions, and not taking for granted that the force historically implied in flying the flag is all there is, or all there should be.

If belief in the strength, character and human beauty of this nation is not found within us as citizens, then it cannot be found in a flag, nor, will the nation which believes so, prosper.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - Mar. 8, 1935 BORO TO CURB MAIN STREET SPEEDERS

Stringent regulations to curb reckless driving, which results in a number of accidents on Main Street, Dallas, during periods of heavy summer traffic, will be recommended by a committee of borough officials who were designated as a public safety committee. It is probable that for the protection of pedestrians and at least one traffic light will be erected on Main Street.

As an expression of their appreciation for the work of Mrs. Della Parrish, worthy matron, members of Dallas Chapter, Order of Eastern Star, sponsored a dinner last Friday night at Colonial Tea Room in Fernbrook.

The Post has received letters opposing and agreeing with the gentleman from Fernbrook who proposes renaming Dallas New York.

50 Years Ago - Mar. 2, 1945 AREA FRIENDS MOURN REV. AUSTIN PRYNN

Faced with a quota 20% higher than last year, Red Cross workers in the Back Mountain area yesterday opened their campaign to raise \$5,250 within the next four weeks. "Keeping the Red Cross at the side of every soldier, sailor, and Marine is the responsibility of every American, for the American people are the Red Cross," said Mrs. Charles Wheaton Lee, co-chairman of the drive.

The death last Friday of Rev. Austin L. Prynn, pastor of Dallas Methodist Charge, brought grief to the community and to his many friends throughout the Wyoming Conference, who had waited for some word of hope and encouragement during his months of illness.

40 Years Ago - Mar. 4, 1955 BANK BRANCH OPENS AT SHAVERTOWN

The Back Mountain Branch will be the third office of the Wyoming National Bank of Wilkes-Barre. The new branch bank, located at Shavertown, will have ample off-the-highway parking spaces and its proximity to food, hardware, dining and other businesses provides convenient one-stop shopping.

Building permits amounting to more than \$38,000 were issued Tuesday at the meeting of Dallas Borough Council at the Borough Building. Largest for \$20,000 to Daddow-Isaacs Post American Legion for its new home now under construction at the intersection of Center Hill Road and Memorial Highway.

30 Years Ago - Mar. 4, 1965 PFC. SHEEHAN EARNS ARMY AWARD

Pfc. John F. Sheehan, Dallas, was recently awarded the Serviceman of the Month trophy at the U.S. Army Main Recruiting Station Columbus, Ohio, for outstanding personal appearance and military knowledge.

Postmaster Ed Buckley said he has been instructed to extend all possible consideration to all involved in the Treasury's School Savings Program.

You could get - Boiled ham, 85¢ lb.; eggs, 2 doz., 79¢; pork chops, 29¢ lb.; lettuce, 2 hds, 29¢.

20 Years Ago - Mar. 6, 1975 JACKSON TWP. GETS TEEN CURFEW

A 10 p.m. curfew for all children under 18 years of age was adopted at the regular meeting of the Jackson Township Supervisors, held Tuesday night at the Jackson Fire Hall.

The overwhelming threat of danger to our school children in the Back Mountain area through exposure and participation in "The Drug Culture" was vividly described by Sgt. William Pugh of the Kingston Township Police, when he spoke to Dallas Kiwanis Women's Club recently at the Irem Temple Country Club.

Saturday, March 1, saw the George M. Dallas Lodge #531 bring to a close a day that had special significance for the 900-plus members. It was the 100th Anniversary celebration of the Lodge, appropriately observed by a full afternoon and evening of activities.

Library news

Historic kids' room painting is now lighted

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library invites neighbors, friends, patrons and the general community to stop in the library on Saturday, March 4 between the hours of 10 and 5 to help celebrate our first 10 years in the new building on Huntsville Road. We will have punch, cake, cookies, and a festive atmosphere in our peach color scheme for the occasion.

One super accomplishment in the first 10 years; our sheep have finally seen the light! The large painting of sheep hangs in the reading room of the new library; having hung in the children's building over the fireplace in our old building on Main Street. The painting is rather dark and was flooded with lights in the annex; and now, in the new building, they are no longer dark. This painting was given to the library in memory of Howard Risley by Frank Slaff many years ago and is a special part of the library history.

Our green jar campaign will change from 'pennies for periodicals' to 'money for maintenance' on March 1. This is a 'Friends of the Library' support project and is well received by our patrons. Children especially love to hear the coins drop in the green jar.

Our Valentine project netted the library \$125 which money is appreciated and will be used for special non-budget needs for the library staff.

Advance notice! The 49th annual library auction will be held from Thursday to Sunday, July 6, 7, 8, and 9, 1995 on the auction grounds behind the library. Donations are now being accepted for the book booth and the odds and ends tent. These may be brought to the library any time during regular hours. Community support is appreciated.

The library is conducting a bookmark contest in connection with the Luzerne County Library System during National Library Week, April 9-15. The object is to

design a bookmark about your library: why you use it, what you like about it, what you borrow, or whatever you'd like to tell others to 'check out' about the library. There are three categories: K-5th grade; 6-9 th grade; and 10th-adult. There will be 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes for each category. Entries will be displayed at the library, winners pictures will be featured in the local newspapers. Complete information is available at the library. Entries must be received at the library by Saturday, March 18. Call the library with questions.

New books: "McNally's Trial" by Lawrence Sanders is a combination of irrepressible detective, sultry setting and screwy circumstances that makes the story such a blast.

"Bloodstones" by Evelyn Anthony tells of a new mine in north Russia yielding a rare gem, red diamonds called 'bloodstones'. Ruthless intrigue surrounds the glittering bloodstones.

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