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Timberjacks add dimension to area football

There's no question that Twin City residents like their football. While the Green Bay Packers, Detroit Lions, University of Wisconsin, Michigan or Michigan State may be the favorite among most fans, other teams have their local followers, too. When it comes to the three local high schools, fan support is contagious, in good times and in bad.

This season, one more team joined the local football club. The M&M Timberjacks, a semipro team, was admitted to the Wisconsin State Football League, a circuit that was started in 2003 by Michael Rzepkowski. The concept of the new league was to involve each team in the decision-making process, and have a voice in the day-to-day operation of the league. The league has had

OUR OPINION

remarkable success and growth since it was created.

Brothers Shane and Jason King, Twin City natives, were playing for the Bay View Beasts while living in the Milwaukee area. They conceived the idea of organizing their own team in the summer of 2004. When Jason moved to Green Bay in 2004, the brothers made their dream a reality. They came up with a \$1,000 per year franchise fee and other necessary money to start a team, and worked with local public officials for a home field and other related require-

ments to put a team on the field.

The Timberjacks opened their season the same weekend as the Menominee Waterfront Festival, and played to a large and supportive crowd, who liked what they saw. The roster of the Timberjacks includes former Marinette, Menominee and Peshtigo players. A few had a shot at small college football. All of them, however, have a love for the game and were not quite ready to hang their old jerseys in a closet. The age of the players runs from the late teens to a couple of key contributors who are in their early 40s and still play a pretty good brand of ball.

The 'Jacks play at home (Spies Field) Saturday evening against the Fox Valley Force, and close out the regular season at home Oct. 13 against the Saukville

Demons. The kickoffs are at 7 p.m. The Saukville game happens to be the same date as the annual M&M Game high school outing, so local football enthusiasts will have a grand day of football entertainment.

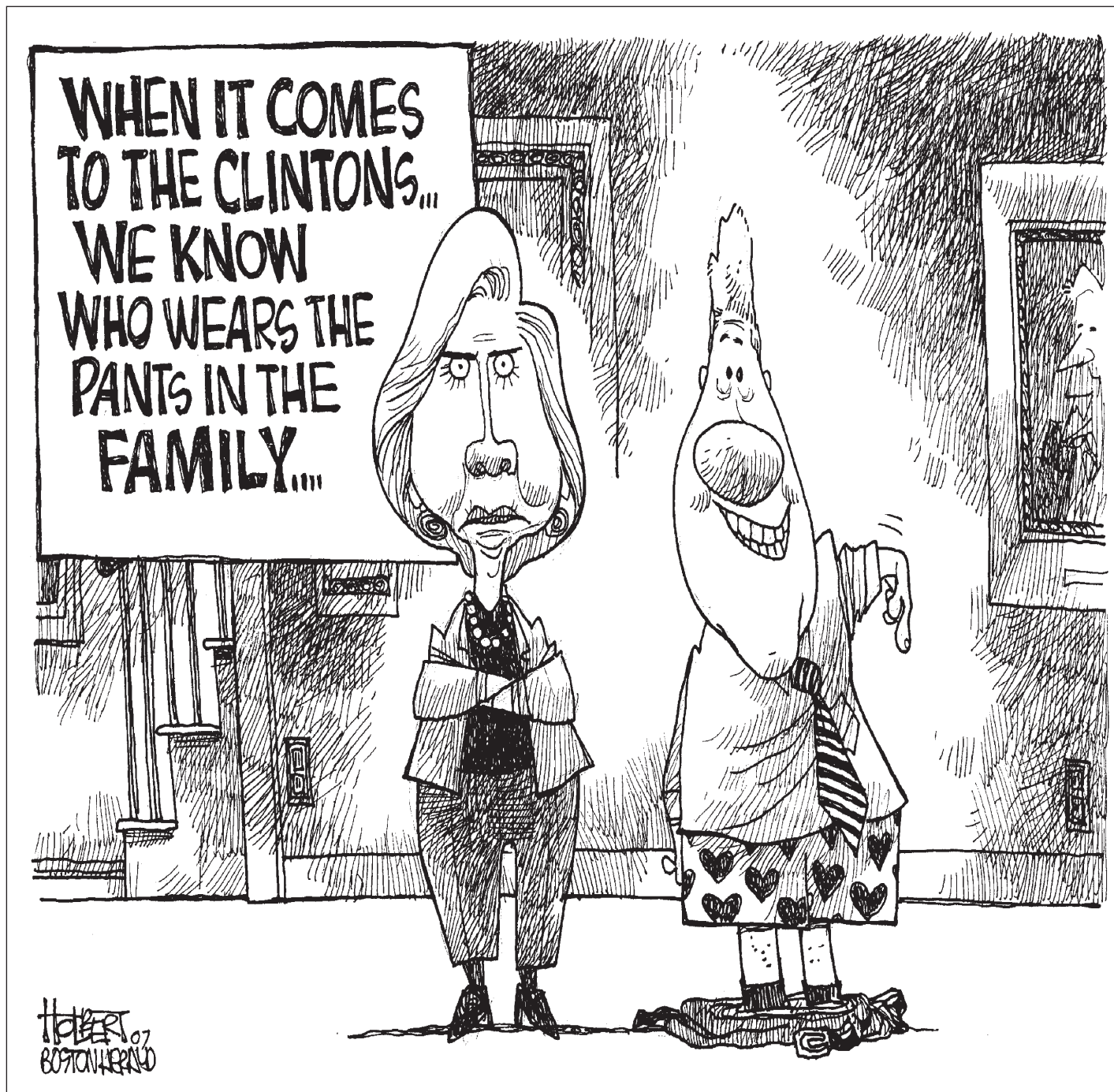
The 'Jacks are doing well in their first season. The team is competitive and is giving a good account of itself on the field. And the atmosphere is good, too. A catering service handles the hot-dogs, bratwurst, popcorn and other snacks and soft drinks that are a part of a home football game. And, yes, even the customary arm-chair quarterbacks show up to make the outings more interesting.

The Twin Cities haven't had a semipro football team since the M&M Hornets played before sizeable crowds in the 1950s. The

Timberjacks are the latest in a line of sandlot or semipro teams that have represented the twin communities for more than a century, the team members all products of area high school football.

The King brothers have done a good job of bringing semipro football back to the Twin Cities. The task of putting a team together, a coaching staff and all of the other numerous requirements and details to make a successful showing was nothing short of remarkable. We hope they will be able to continue next season and beyond.

In the meantime, local football fans have at least two more games to see the area's latest football team in action. We think you will like this brand of football.



How's your 'technical' track record?

Not too long ago my friend — we'll call her Geri — finished taking her final college exams. She's earned her degree one or two classes at a time. Her grandchildren are very proud.

That's right — grandchildren. Geri is 61.

"I may be the only graduate who has to use a cane to walk across the stage to get my diploma," said Geri, who, if the truth is told, is probably further away from using a cane than I am. "But I am going to get it. Finally."

And if you think that sounds as though Geri just scarped by in her college studies, think again. Her college transcript looks like a "Sesame Street" lesson on the letter "A." That's why she was so surprised when her instructor told her how she had done on her last final exam.

"Twenty out of 75."

Geri was stunned. She couldn't remember ever missing 10 questions on a test, much less 20. "I can't believe I missed 20 questions," she said.

"You didn't miss 20 questions," the teacher said. "You got 20 out of 75 correct."

Geri was speechless. She had never performed that poorly on a test, and she knew that she was well-prepared for this one. She looked at her professor, numb and dazed.

"Don't worry," he said. "I think I know what happened."

He pulled out her test paper, which



Joseph Walker

was one of those computer-scanning, fill-in-the-little-circle-with-a-number-two-pencil jobs — you know, the kind where it takes longer to log in your name than it does to fill out the entire test.

"You see," the professor continued, "you got the first 20 questions right, and then right over here ..." He pointed to a place on the test form "... it looks like you skipped a row. From what I can tell, it looks like you got the right answers, you just put them in the wrong places."

"So what does that mean?" Geri asked as thoughts of one more semester to re-take a failed class flashed in her mind.

"It means that, technically, you failed the test," the professor said. "But I've been looking at your previous work, which has been excellent. There is no reason to believe that you would be any less prepared for your final than you've been for every other test and assignment, so as far as I'm concerned ..." He took out a red pen and wrote a big "A" on the page.

So Geri graduated because her track record made it possible for her teacher to give her the benefit of the doubt. But what if she hadn't had

that kind of track record? What if her college career — especially her experience with that teacher — had been riddled with mediocre effort and a litany of excuses? My guess is her final test score would have reflected that history, regardless of how accidental her final mistake may have been.

And that makes me wonder how I'm doing, track record-wise. I mean, stuff like that happens. We give our best effort to something Very Important — a project, an assignment or maybe even a relationship — only to find that a simple mistake or misunderstanding somewhere along the way has undermined our success and made our best effort look bad. We get on the wrong line, we take a wrong turn, we mark the wrong box, we push the wrong button and all of a sudden we're feeling like Geri: stunned, speechless and confused.

Technically, like a failure. But it seems to me that if we've established a personal history of integrity, honesty, hard work and fair play people will tend to give us the benefit of the doubt when we occasionally fall humanly short of perfection. We may not always end up with an "A" as Geri did, but at least we won't feel so much like a failure.

Technically or otherwise. Joseph Walker, a resident of American Fork, Utah, is a weekly contributor to this page.

Lessons learned from Little Rock

It's difficult to imagine that such hateful activity could take place in such a magnificent and beautiful setting.

As I stood on the sidewalk along Park Street in front of Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., on a peaceful Tuesday morning, I tried to imagine what Elizabeth Eckford, a 15-year-old black girl, felt at this exact spot 50 years earlier to the day and hour.

Eckford was the first black student to attempt to enter Central High on Sept. 4, 1957. She was supposed to arrive at the school with eight other black students, but she did not get the message to assemble with them. She arrived at the school alone.

Eckford was met by National Guard troops ordered to the scene by Arkansas Gov. Orval Faubus. The troops were ordered by Faubus to deny black student access to the school based on what he said was his desire to prevent violence. Faubus said he sought peace, not segregation.

After being confronted by the troops, Eckford continued to walk down Park Street to a bus stop on the corner. During this short walk when she was subjected to racial slurs, taunts and shouting by white students including Hazel Bryan, the most recognizable tormenter in a famous photo of the incident. Eckford and Hazel Bryan Massery later reconciled and made joint appearances 40 years later. But the image of Bryan screaming at Eckford remains etched in history.

Bryan and other whites in Little Rock became enraged at the thought of sharing Central High with blacks. The most popular justification for that position at the time was that there were "separate, but equal" facilities for blacks. The problem with that thinking was the Supreme Court ruling three years earlier on May 17, 1954 that state laws mandating segregation were unconstitutional. The famous Brown versus Board of Education decision sparked segregationist demonstrations nationwide, but the epicenter of the movement was in Little Rock.

After Faubus refused to remove the National Guard troops blocking black students from Central High, President Dwight Eisenhower deployed 101st Airborne troops to Little Rock to escort black students into Central High. On Wednesday, Sept. 25, 1957, the nine black students entered the school.

Little Rock's evening newspaper at the time, the Arkansas Democrat, has this to say in its lead story that day:

"A bomb scare emptied Central High School at 11:05 a.m. today, less than two hours after the armed might of the United States Army had integrated the institution."

We have, thankfully, moved a long way toward racial equality in the last 50 years. Army paratroopers are no longer required to make sure black students can attend high school with white students.

As we remember the 50th anniversary of the integration of Central High, we should note that more work is required to ensure racial equality in public education.

The U.S. Department of Education reports that the average reading ability for fourth- and eighth-grade black students in Wisconsin is the lowest of any state in the country. The department also reports that the reading gap in Wisconsin between blacks and whites is the worst in the nation.

Our debt to the Central High nine is great. Minnijean Brown, Elizabeth Eckford, Ernest Green, Thelma Mothershed, Melba Pattillo, Gloria Ray, Terrance Roberts, Jefferson Thomas and Carlotta Walls ushered in a national movement to provide a free public education to all.

We need to make sure that their sacrifice and courage continue to inspire us toward equality and fairness.

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Stan Milam

EAGLEHERALD FILES

100 YEARS AGO: One of the concluding events at the Stephenson Township fair was the boxing tournament given in Music Hall. More than 300 men saw the two bouts, many being from Marinette and Menominee. The big event was between Will Bresnahan and Tug Wilson, two Menominee heavyweights.

50 YEARS AGO: Teamsters Union Convention delegates rejecting corruption charges against James R. Hoffa, overwhelmingly voted him president of the giant truckers' union. Hoffa won by nearly a 3-to-1 margin, receiving 1,208 delegates' votes and 140 for Thomas Haggerty.

25 YEARS AGO: A task force hunting a "random murderer" who killed seven people by placing cyanide in Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules is following up leads. Illinois Attorney General said suspects include, "malcontents... and weirdos who don't act right or did something extremely out of the ordinary."

FIVE YEARS AGO: John Nygren has been a busy man since becoming president of the United States Jaycees in January. He has traveled to 36 states and four countries to meet fellow Jaycees and motivate them to get more involved in the organization's programs. Just this week he returned home from Japan.

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