SPORTS

Baseball strike brings back memories of Senators

"Sports Illustrated" in their July 6 issue printed the following letter to the editor:

As a long-time Washington, D.C. area resident, I can sympathize with the baseball fans in other parts of the country who are now suffering through an empty summer. I can also understand their bitterness toward players and management. Many of us in this area felt the same way 10 years ago when our beloved Senators were taken away despite our unwavering loyalty. Nobody cared about the fans then, and nobody cares now.

Joe Kasell Alexandria, Va.

That letter was written by a baseball fan who, despite the fact that his favorite team and hero, slugger Frank Howard, were taken away from him when he was ten years old (Kasell is now 20 and a junior at George Mason University), he is still a baseball fan.

He understands how the rest of the country's fans feel now that everyone's baseball games and baseball heroes have been taken away. Even though he was young when Senator's owner Bob Short moved the team to Texas to become the Rangers, Kasell doesn't hold any long-term grudges against the game.

kim adams

"I still like baseball and I followed Frank Howard's progress with the Rangers," Kasell said. "But, as I grew older and realized the reasons behind the move, I developed a deep resentment of all the owners. I feel the owner was responsible then for the Senators being moved and now for the baseball strike. I realize that the owners don't care that much about the fans."

Kasell said that there were lots of letters to the Washington papers which proved that other fans share his sentiments. One, in particular, came from a one-time Senator fan: "Soon the baseball strike will be over and everyone wil! have their baseball back, but not us."

Carl Kasell, Joe's father, was also a Sen-

Sadness, apathy and sarcasm – baseball strike stirs local sentiments

BY CLINTON WEAVER

With the baseball strike now over a month old, local sentiment is running towards a combination of sadness, apathy and sarcasm, according to a local survey. Some people miss Saturday afternoons tuned in to NBC, others couldn't care less that those addicts aren't getting their weekly fix, and a few are just making fun of a totally satirical situation.

Edward A. Brecht, 70, said, "I think it's a sad thing. I hate to see it go. Baseball is a wonderful thing. It might be helpful to find out that this country can survive a year without baseball."

"The players should have the right to negotiate and should have bargaining powers," loel Sheer said. "The owners view it strictly as a dusiness. The fans are ultimately hurt as a result of the strike and as a result of the settlement. The only good thing about the strike is that is will teach 8-through 10-year-olds about collective bargaining." John Clark, 73, of Chapel Hill, said, "Most of the people around my place really miss it. It puts a lot of people out of work." Erma Mallory, age 22, of Plymouth, N.C., said "It doesn't affect me near as much as other people since I'm not as avid a baseball fan as other people. But I don't think it's fair to other people or to television because of all the major screw-ups it has caused. Just think of the armchair athlete who must placate himself by watching reruns, old movies, etc."

Pat Graham, 27, a Chapel Hill resident, echoed similar sentiments concerning the effect the strike has had on her. "It doesn't affect me at all. As far as sitting and watching it on T.V., I don't like doing that at all. It's a shame they are trying to get more money when it could be used for much more important things."

Ron Kane, 25, of Chapel Hill, offered some insights into the negotiations. "It's starting to be right now that the owners are trying to use the strike as a tool. The players are losing a lot of money. The owners are breaking even with the minor leagues."

Kane ended his comments with a statement most of us, fans or not, could relate to. "I'll miss the World Series coming up," he ator fan when the team was moved. He said the move hit the city with a shock.

"No one believed that we'd every really lose the Senators," he said. "Who could ever imagine the nation's capital without the nation's pastime?"

And probably not many people ever believed the whole nation would ever lose the nation's pastime, but look at us now.

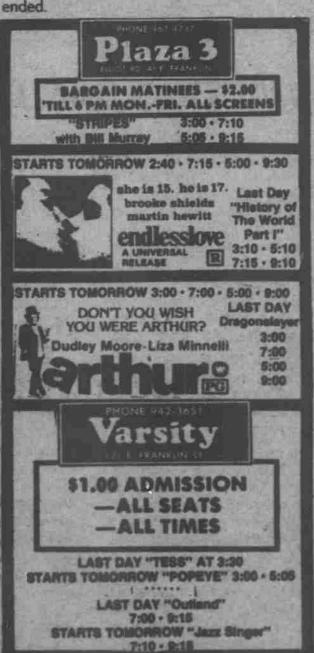
"We lived by the promise by Bowie Kuhn that we would be getting a team back in Washington," Carl Kasell said. "Kuhn likes to talk about how he used to run the scoreboard in old Griffith Stadium and since the Griffiths used to be involved with the Senators, he thought that we'd believe that he wanted to get a team back here." "There has even been talk of building a stadium between Baltimore and Washington so that there really would be a joint team between the two cities," Kasell said.

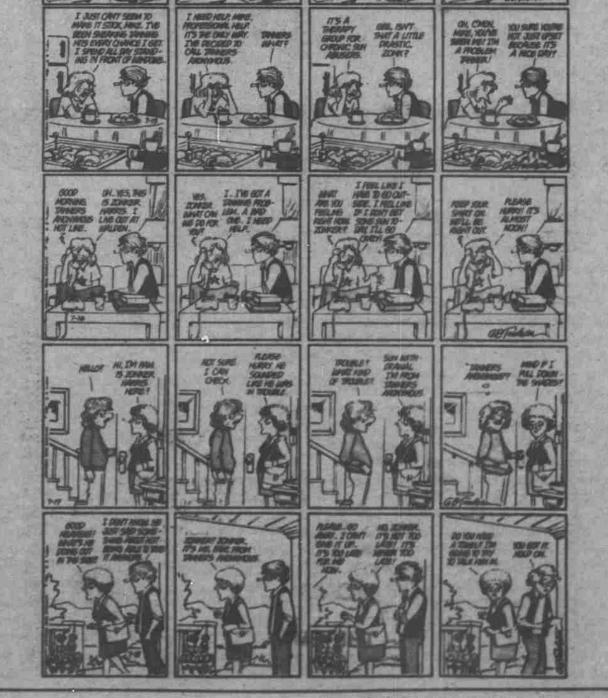
"But, we've finally come to realize that it will take a minor miracle to get at team back in Washington and Mr. Kuhn isn't very well thought of around here."

Now all the baseball fans are living by the federal mediator, Kenneth Moffett and the players' representative Ray Grebey, waiting for any glimmer of hope that there might be another major league game played this summer. So far that's all there have been glimmers of hope. It would sure be a shame if major league baseball went the way of the old Washington Senators.

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