

Curtain Call

THE OFFICIAL INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS MAGAZINE

**IF YOU
BUILD IT,
THEY WILL
COME**

**VICTORY FIELD'S 1996
OPENING DAY WAS NOTHING
SHORT OF MAGIC**

Pg. 26

PLUS

**NEW
FEATURES
AND UPGRADES
HIGHLIGHT
25 YEARS
AT THE VIC**

Pg. 55

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Curtain Call

THE OFFICIAL INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS MAGAZINE

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VISITING VICTORY FIELD?



The safety and well-being of our community, guests and staff is the main priority of the Indianapolis Indians and Victory Field. All guidelines and regulations set forth by the Marion County Public Health Department and City of Indianapolis will be strictly followed and enforced for all events at Victory Field.



TICKETING

- Tickets for all events will need to be purchased in advance at IndyIndians.com or by calling the Victory Field Box Office at (317) 269-3545.
- Seating options will be limited to allow for social distancing and to provide proper spacing between groups.



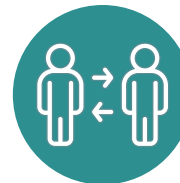
STADIUM REGULATIONS

- All fans over the age of 2 years old are required to wear a face covering per the Marion County public health order. Fans must wear masks when moving throughout the stadium and may only remove masks when actively eating or drinking in their seat location while maintaining social distance.



STAFF POLICIES

- All Victory Field staff and vendors on-site for events will be required to have their temperature checked and submit to a health screen upon arrival. Staff who interacts with registrants and guests will wear personal protective equipment appropriate to their job duties and tasks.



SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Walkways and concourses will have signage to direct guests to ensure proper social distancing, including one-way pedestrian traffic. Stanchions and spacing markers will be used for guests queued in lines.



All-Time 25 ROSTER



#16 - Nate McLouth
(Outfielder)



#15 - Josh Bell
(First Baseman)



#14 - Josh Harrison
(Second Baseman)



#13 - Aaron Boone
(Third Baseman)



#12 - Neil Walker
(Third Baseman)



#11 - Marco Scutaro
(Second Baseman)



#10 - Charlie Morton
(Starting Pitcher)



#9 - Corey Hart
(Outfielder)



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Summer is all about taking a break from school and having fun! It's the perfect time of year to promote healthy and physically active habits in your children. Here are some things you can do:

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- Decrease the amount of junk food you buy.
- Get them outdoors by going for a bike ride or a hike.

Helping your kids stay healthy may even help keep you in shape as well!

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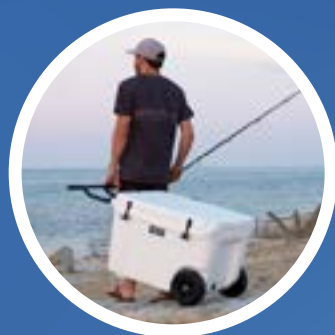
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AARON BOONE | 3B

BATS: Right **THROWS:** Right
HEIGHT: 6'3" **WEIGHT:** 205 lbs
BORN: 3/9/73 in La Mesa, CA

	G	PA	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	BA
MLB TOTALS	1152	4333	3871	519	1017	216	17	126	555	107	30	303	707	.263
IND TOTALS	229	949	849	141	232	50	6	29	120	31	11	74	156	.273

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

After being selected in the third round of the 1994 First-Year Player Draft by the Cincinnati Reds, Aaron Boone only spent three years in the minors before making his major league debut on June 20, 1997. During his time in the minors, Boone's only full season in an Indianapolis uniform came in 1997, when he was named both a mid and postseason All-Star.



During that 1997 campaign in which he was named Indy's Team MVP, Boone led the Indians with a .290 average, 22 home runs and 79 runs scored. He started out strong, being named the American Association Batter of the Week on May 11 after a standout performance four days earlier when he went 3-for-5 with a double, two home runs, three runs scored and four RBI in an 8-7 loss at Iowa.

Boone returned to Indianapolis to start the 1998 season but then once again got the call to join Cincinnati for 58 games. He found himself in Indy only once more in 1999 for a short 11 games before solidifying himself on the Reds' roster. Over his three seasons with Indianapolis, Boone stole 31 bases to lead all third basemen in the Victory Field era and trails only Neil Walker in home runs (29), doubles (50) and RBI (120) at the hot corner.

Boone spent most of his 12-year major league career with Cincinnati. He was a high-.200s hitter; his best season for average coming in 2001 when he hit .294. He was named to his first and only All-Star Game in 2003 with Cincinnati and was traded at the deadline to New York (AL). Between the two teams that season he hit .267 with 24 home runs – just two shy of his career-high mark the year before. He is best remembered for hitting a walk-off home run for the Yankees in Game 7 of the 2003 American League Championship Series against division-rival Boston.



Single-Season

PITCHING LEADERS

WINS, 14

DENNY HARRIGER (1999) AND HORACIO ESTRADA (2000)

In back-to-back seasons, two Indians pitchers led the International League with 14 wins, which continues to hold as a Victory Field era record. Denny Harriger's (pictured) 1999 mark was the most wins by an Indians pitcher in a single season since Tom Carroll recorded 15 in 1973. In the Indians 2000 run toward the postseason, Horacio Estrada won six games down the stretch and then finished out the Triple-A World Series vs. Memphis with a 9-2 win.



ERA, 1.87 (MIN 100.0IP)

TYLER GLASNOW (2016)

Five innings short of qualifying for the league ERA title – an honor he would have won by a significant margin as Lehigh Valley's Jake Thompson led the league with a 2.50 ERA – Tyler Glasnow finished one of the best starting pitcher campaigns in Victory Field history with an impressive 1.87 ERA (23er/110.2ip). The then-22-year-old's time in Indianapolis was interrupted thanks to his dazzling first half that led to his MLB debut, and a shoulder injury that sidelined him for a month.



GAMES, 78

MIKE WALKER (1998)

In 1998 with 78 appearances (three starts), Mike Walker set a record that no one has come even close to – within 15 games, to be exact – in the Victory Field era. In a season that saw the Indians play 143 games, Walker appeared in over half of them. His historic season set a new franchise record for games pitched, besting Douglas Corbett's mark of 69 in 1979.



SAVES, 34

BOB SCANLAN (2000)

In 2000, a season in which he closed out the Triple-A World Series in favor of the Indians, Bob Scanlan set a new franchise record with 35 saves in 38 opportunities. Since that historic season, only Blake Wood has flirted with Scanlan's record, recording 29 saves of his own in 2015. Scanlan also converted a Victory Field era record 24 consecutive save opportunities from May 12 to Sept. 1.



STRIKEOUTS, 140

TYLER GLASNOW (2017)

One year after finishing the season tied with the fifth-most strikeouts (133) in the International League, despite an injury interrupted campaign, Tyler Glasnow fanned 140 batters over 15 starts (93.1ip) in Triple-A to rank third in the league and set a Victory Field era record that still stands today. Paired with a 1.93 ERA (20er/93.1ip), 0.95 WHIP and .176 average against, that strikeout-dominant season also saw Glasnow lift the existing Victory Field era career record for 10+ strikeout games from two to nine.



CONSECUTIVE SCORELESS IP, 25.0

SCOTT STRICKLAND (4/6-5/23/06)

Reliever Scott Strickland began his 2006 season with 25.0 consecutive scoreless innings through May 23. He allowed just 14 hits and five walks through those 17 appearances with 27 strikeouts. Strickland's first run allowed came on May 26 at Scranton/Wilkes-Barre after he surrendered back-to-back two-out singles following a one-out walk. Strickland's scoreless streak is the highest by an Indians pitcher since 2005.



VICTORY FIELD IN THE SPOTLIGHT

REMEMBERING THE 2001 TRIPLE-A ALL-STAR GAME, A MIDSUMMER CLASSIC THE VIC HOSTED ON ITS FIVE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

by CHEYNE REITER

Only 10 months separate two of Victory Field's most memorable moments during its 25-year run as home of the Indianapolis Indians.

The first took place in 2000 after the Indians rolled through International League opposition en route to an 81-63 regular-season record and IL West championship. Indy, in its first of a five-year stint as the Triple-A affiliate of the Milwaukee Brewers, bounced Durham in the semifinals 3 games to 2, overcoming a 2-1 series deficit. The Indians again walked the tightrope in the finals against Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. On September 15 in a winner-take-all Game 5, Indianapolis held off the visitors 6-1 to seal the organization's second Governors' Cup title (also: 1963) and first league championship since winning the American Association in 1994.

The second memorable moment took place the following summer on the date of Victory Field's ballpark anniversary – July 11. Celebrating its fifth year, The Vic hosted the 2001 Triple-A All-Star Game. The midsummer classic pitted the Pacific Coast League All-Stars and IL All-Stars against one another.

With 15,868 fans in attendance – the sixth-largest crowd for Victory Field at the time – the PCL topped the IL, 9-5. Two Indians suited up for the home team, Brian Leshar and Mike Coolbaugh. Coolbaugh belted a two-run homer in the bottom of the ninth for the IL's third dinger of the game to complete the scoring.

The game was broadcast on ESPN2, with current Washington Nationals television play-by-play voice Bob Carpenter in the booth. Bud Selig, in his fourth year as Major League Baseball's official commissioner, was in attendance with Rollie Fingers and joined Carpenter momentarily on the broadcast. Selig then worked his way into Indy's home booth for an interview with the Voice of the Indians, Howard Kellman, who was on the radio call.

"It was an incredibly festive night, as All-Star games often are," Kellman recalled. "The mood was great, a sold-out Victory Field. On the air, Bud [Selig] couldn't stop talking about how beautiful the ballpark looked."

The game in downtown Indy not only featured Selig, who had traveled from the MLB All-Star Game held in Seattle, Wash. the night before, but it featured light-tower power from a



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Louisville RiverBat and a between-inning promotion that saw a fan win prize money.

To Cal Burleson, who was general manager for the Indians, a handful of moments stood out as he soaked in the opportunity to host the Triple-A All-Star festivities. The first involved Anderson, Ind. native Carl Erskine.

"I remember Erskine being the featured guest speaker at the Triple-A All-Star luncheon," Burleson said. "He talked about playing alongside and befriending Jackie Robinson and discussed the advances that Black ballplayers had made in the game. Carl then compared Robinson's legacy to his own son, Jimmy, who had Down syndrome and was striving for his own improved place in society."

Erskine concluded the speech by showing off his Brooklyn Dodgers 1955 World Series ring along with Jimmy's Special Olympics gold medal.

"In Carl's mind and to show the kind of person he is to this day, Jimmy's gold medal is a better achievement than his own World Series championship," Burleson said.

The second thing Burleson remembers most was getting to the finish line of a sellout. With a couple thousand tickets still available just a few days before the game, Burleson went rogue and made his own call to the bullpen – err, Indians' bank account – and dropped a last-minute \$5,000 on advertising.

"I had to make sure this place was sold out," Burleson laughed. "Mission accomplished."

When the game was off and rolling, Burleson recalled two more things.

The longest home run in Victory Field history, unofficially, was hit in the bottom of the first inning by Louisville's Adam Dunn, a former Texas Longhorn quarterback and future collector of 462 career major league homers. Dunn, a 6-foot-6, 235-pound specimen, sent a 1-1 pitch down the right field line to West Street. The ball bounced off the pavement on the fly at an estimated 450 feet, but to Burleson, Dunn's first round-tripper isn't done traveling.

**A CAR PULLED
OVER, THE DRIVER
GOT OUT AND
PICKED UP THE
BALL, HE GOT
BACK IN HIS CAR
AND DROVE
AWAY... SO, THAT
ONE'S STILL GOING.**

CAL BURLESON
FORMER INDIANS GENERAL MANAGER





“THE CROWD
ERUPTING WHEN
THE CONTESTANT
MADE HIS THIRD
THROW IS
SOMETHING I’LL
NEVER FORGET.”

CAL BURLESON
FORMER INDIANS GENERAL MANAGER

“A car pulled over, the driver got out and picked up the ball,” Burleson said. “He got back in his car and drove away... so, that one’s still going.”

Kellman remembers the first blast quite well, too.

“I called Dunn’s first home run, described it as being ‘majestic,’” Kellman said. “It was such a towering fly ball.”

Dunn wasn’t finished, either. With the IL trailing 3-2 in the fourth, the left-handed hitter used his extension and ripped a 1-2 offering off the plate, yanking it over the fence in right-center. That one only sailed an estimated 420 feet. Following Coolbaugh’s shot in the ninth, Dunn nearly got another but flied out to the warning track in right-center.

Burleson’s last vivid memory on the special night at the ballpark took place, at least for him, on the Victory Field concourse.

With ESPN having the television broadcast rights, IL President Randy Mobley was the Triple-A negotiator to secure a certain amount of time for the IL and PCL to have their own spots between innings. One spot Mobley locked in came between the fourth and fifth frames, when American Hole ‘n One covered the two baseball leagues for up to \$100,000 in potential prize money during a “target toss.” Contestant Brian Nelson won \$1,000 when he successfully threw the last of three baseballs from the mound through a 12-inch target at home plate.

“I was standing on the concourse watching the [ESPN2] broadcast which was on a slight delay,” Burleson remembered. “The crowd erupting when the contestant made his third throw is something I’ll never forget.”

July 11, 2001 is a day Burleson, the Indians front office and fans who attended will never forget. In the national spotlight, Victory Field looked every bit of an All-Star – majestic, some might say.

Twenty years later, it still does. ♥



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Kevin Kramer (7)
Outfielder/Infielder,
Indianapolis Indians

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VISITORS AT THE VIC



Columbus Clippers

**Cleveland Indians Triple-A affiliate since 2009, Midwest Division
June 1-6**

Get to Know 'Em: The Columbus Clippers were founded in 1977 and as an International League squad, didn't play Indianapolis until the Triple-A Alliance from 1988-91 and again from 1998-2019 when the Indians were in the IL as well. Indy has a rich history against Columbus-based baseball teams other than the Clippers, however, as it played the Columbus Senators from 1902-30, Columbus Red Birds from 1931-54 and Columbus Jets in 1963. Since 1988, Indianapolis is 212-234 (.475) against the Clippers, including a 109-107 (.505) record at home.

Players to Watch: Columbus' SS Owen Miller started off the 2021 season hot, batting .406 (26-for-64) with two home runs and nine RBI in the first 16 games. Those numbers led to his contract being selected by Cleveland on May 23. As a result, Indianapolis' attention turns to Bobby Bradley, who leads the Midwest division in home runs (six) and is tied with teammate C Ryan Lavanway, an IL midseason All-Star for Indy in 2018, for second in RBI (15). Cleveland's No. 7 prospect (Baseball America), SS Gabriel Arias, has started the season batting .255 (14-for-55) with two home runs and six RBI in 16 games for the Clippers.

League Championships (11): 1979, 1980, 1981, 1987, 1991, 1992, 1996, 2010, 2011, 2015, 2019 (International League)



Memphis Redbirds

**St. Louis Cardinals Triple-A affiliate since 1998, Southeast Division
June 15-20**

Get to Know 'Em: The Memphis Redbirds were announced as an expansion team of the Pacific Coast League in 1998 and have been the top affiliate of the St. Louis Cardinals ever since. In 2000, Memphis won the PCL championship and earned the right to play the Indianapolis Indians – the International League champions – in the Triple-A World Series held in Las Vegas, Nev. It was the first and only time in history where Indianapolis and Memphis have faced each other. The Redbirds had LF Albert Pujols in their lineup for all four games, but the Indians prevailed to win the Triple-A World Series, three games to one.

Players to Watch: 2B Jose Rondon signed a minor league contract with the Cardinals in December 2020 and has made a quick impact with Memphis this season, driving in 16 runs in the first 18 games to tie for first in the Triple-A East in RBI. No longer a prospect but a name Indians fans will recognize is switch-hitting utilityman Max Moroff, who was signed to a minor league deal by St. Louis this offseason and had his contract selected by the big-league club on May 14. He appeared in 258 games for Indy from 2016-18 and hit 29 home runs while driving in 120 runs. In seven games with Memphis, Moroff continued his dominant Triple-A hitting, batting .538 (14-for-26) with four home runs and nine RBI to earn his MLB promotion.

League Championships (4): 2000, 2009, 2017, 2018 (Pacific Coast League)



Iowa Cubs

**Chicago Cubs Triple-A affiliate since 1981, Midwest Division
June 29-July 4**

Get to Know 'Em: The Iowa Oaks were founded in 1969 and kept that name through the 1981 season. Then in 1982, Iowa adopted the Cubs nickname after becoming the Triple-A affiliate of the Chicago Cubs the year prior. Indianapolis and Iowa were both members of the American Association from 1969-97, but Indy joined the International League and Iowa went to the Pacific Coast League when the American Association disbanded ahead of the 1998 campaign. Since 1988, Indianapolis is 91-65 (.583) against Iowa, including a 50-27 (.649) record in Indy.



VISITORS AT THE VIC

Players to Watch: The Cubs farm system is led by LHP Brailyn Marquez (No. 1) who started the season on the development list and C Miguel Amaya (No. 3) who is hitting .226 (12-for-53) with Double-A Tennessee. Both Marquez and Amaya could be wearing an I-Cubs uniform, midseason, when Iowa comes to Indianapolis for the first time since 1997. Marquez made his MLB debut last summer and has touched 102 mph on the radar gun. During Indy's first series at Iowa, I-Cubs OF Rafael Ortega (3 HR, 4 RBI) and 3B Abiatal Avelino (1 grand slam, 5 RBI) led the offense.

League Championships (1): 1993 (American Association)



Omaha Storm Chasers

**Kansas City Royals Triple-A affiliate since 1969, Midwest Division
July 13-18**

Get to Know 'Em: The Omaha Royals were founded in 1969 and were named after their parent affiliate through the 1998 season. Indianapolis and Omaha played each other in the American Association after both joining the league in 1969. The two teams met in the American Association Championship Series four times, with the Indians winning in 1982, '88 and '89. Omaha joined the Pacific Coast League in 1998 and officially changed their name to the Storm Chasers in 2011. In 2013 and '14, Omaha won the Triple-A National Championship. Since 1988, the Indians own a record of 87-69 (.558) against Omaha, including a 55-23 (.705) mark in Indy. During Indy's first series at Omaha on May 25-30, the Storm Chasers swept the Indians, 6-0.

Players to Watch: Kansas City top prospects LHP Daniel Lynch (No. 2), RHP Jackson Kowar (No. 4) and OF Kyle Isbel (No. 6) could all visit Indy during the six-game series in mid-July. Kowar leads the starting rotation for Omaha with a 1.25 ERA (3er/21.2ip) in four starts. After spending most of April in the major leagues with Kansas City batting .265 (9-for-34) with three RBI, Isbel could lead the Omaha offense in the Circle City come July.

League Championships (7): 1969, 1970, 1978, 1990 (American Association); 2011, 2013, 2014 (Pacific Coast League)



Toledo Mud Hens

**Detroit Tigers Triple-A affiliate since 1987, Midwest Division
July 20-25**

Get to Know 'Em: Professional baseball in Toledo and Indianapolis has been intertwined for decades, with both organizations competing against each other in the American Association and International League for many years. From 1988-91 as part of the Triple-A Alliance, where American Association teams would play IL teams in regular-season crossover series, the Mud Hens and Indians renewed their rivalry. The two squads began playing each other annually once again when Indy joined the IL in 1998. Since 1988, the Indians own a record of 250-204 (.551) against Toledo, including a 140-93 (.601) mark in the Circle City. Indianapolis secured its first series win of 2021 winning five out of six vs. Toledo at Victory Field from May 11-16.

Players to Watch: After an abbreviated 2020 major league season that saw many of Detroit's top prospects reach the game's highest level, the question remains if the Tigers want those farmhands to receive some upper-level minors seasoning. As many as nine or 10 of Detroit's top 30 prospects (Baseball America) could find themselves in a Mud Hens uniform when Toledo revisits Indy later this season, including the likes of RHP Matt Manning (No. 4), 3B Isaac Paredes (No. 6) and LHP Joey Wentz (No. 12). When Toledo came to the Circle City in May, the Indians faced Manning twice. Indy took both contests by a single run, 4-3 and 6-5, the latter in walk-off fashion. Paredes also hit .333 (9-for-27) and recorded a hit in each game. RHP Drew Hutchison pitched for Indy in 2016 and '17 and could continue to anchor the back end of Toledo's rotation.

League Championships (7): 1969, 1970, 1978, 1990 (American Association); 2011, 2013, 2014 (Pacific Coast League)



Ballpark MEMORIES



Nathanael Saylor

Our first date was at Victory Field and as luck would have it, we appeared on the kiss cam. We sat uncomfortably as the crowd yelled "Awkward!" and we didn't kiss! Fast forward four short months, in the same seats, the same teams playing and with the help of the Indianapolis Indians, we again appeared on the kiss cam, where I proposed. We have been married for almost 8 years, and still love our Indianapolis Indians!



Diane Colson

We've been bringing our son David to the ballpark since he was 2. This is our final picture of him with Rowdie as an 18-year-old.

My son's first baseball game at Victory Field. It was Opening Day in 2014, so he was about six months old at the time. We sat out in the lawn so he had some space to move, and we were able to stay the whole game because he fell asleep.



Samuel Snideman

The July 4th game is my favorite day of the year to watch the Indians play. Tickets sell out early, the stadium is packed, there is a palpable enthusiasm in Victory Field. Former Indians manager Dean Treanor put it best, "I think it's the one day we talk about baseball and family and tradition and that stuff," he said. "Having pie or whatever. Going to a game on July 4, I think that's America."



Andy Cowen

Every spring and summer, my friends and I spend as much time as we can going to games and having a good time. I haven't missed an Opening Day yet in a decade because my birthday is usually around then, too! Go Indians!



Paige Hannum

I was lucky enough to watch the Triple-A debuts of Tyler Glasnow and Josh Bell at Victory Field after driving 400-plus miles with the woman I would later marry. That game is one of our favorite baseball memories ever.

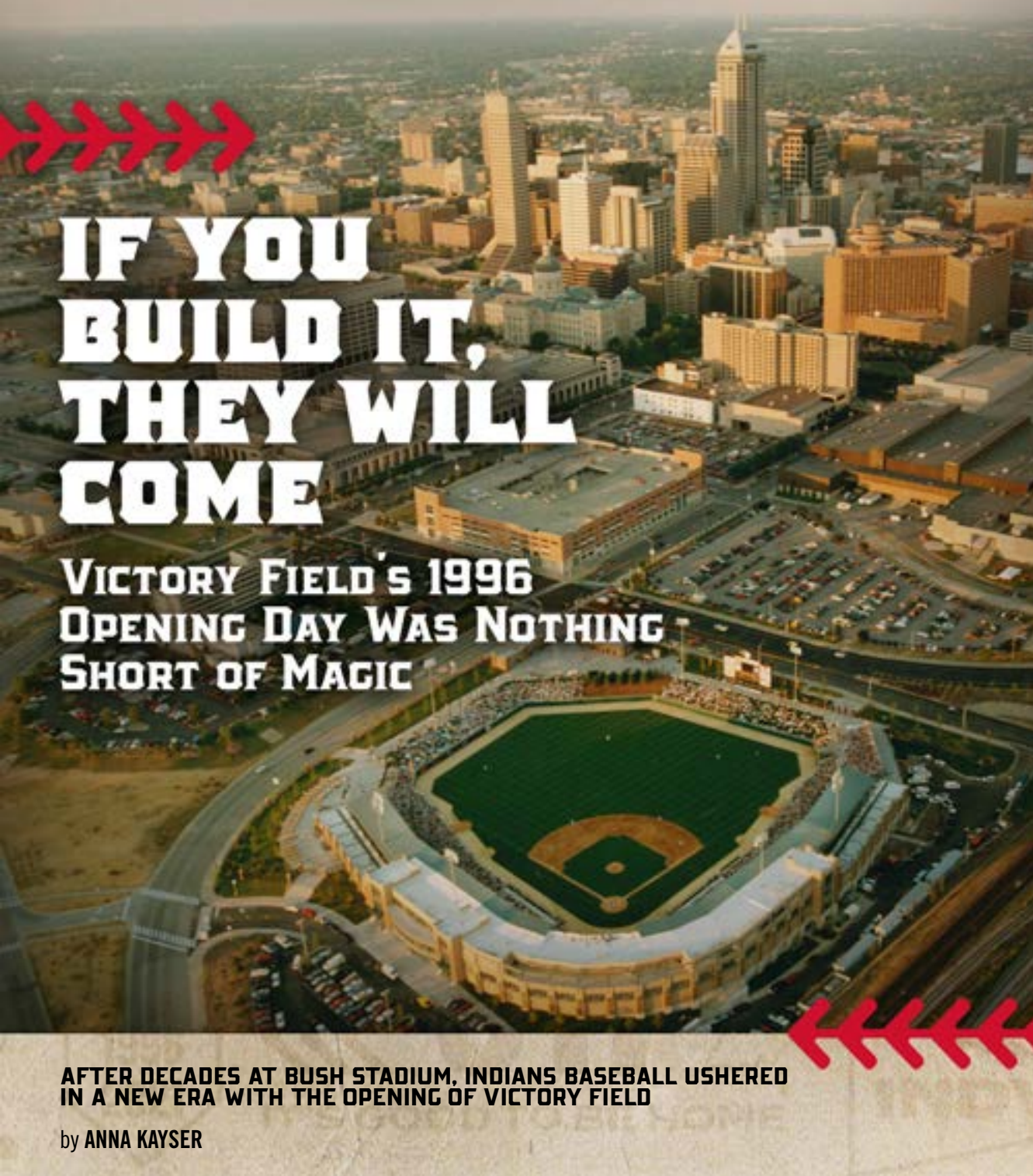


Christopher Gaudis



Hanna Yaeger Busch

Teachers' Treasures has always valued our partnership with the Indians! This is a picture of me the first summer I worked for TT at our Teacher booth at an Indians game. It downpoured for about 10 minutes before the game, and it was the 10 minutes I had to spend setting up our table. Luckily, the skies cleared up and we got to play ball. We passed out pencils and prizes to students and helped teachers learn more about our program and how we can help their classrooms! And, of course, we got beer and a pretzel because it was a baseball game after all! Thank you for all you do to help teachers, students and Teachers' Treasures!



IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME

VICTORY FIELD'S 1996
OPENING DAY WAS NOTHING
SHORT OF MAGIC

AFTER DECADES AT BUSH STADIUM, INDIANS BASEBALL USHERED
IN A NEW ERA WITH THE OPENING OF VICTORY FIELD

by ANNA KAYSER

If you're a fan of baseball, especially the kind of small-town, hot summer, true America's pastime that can only be found amid miles and miles of Midwestern corn fields, you probably recognize this common misinterpretation of a line in a famous 1989 film about a man who hears voices while working on the family farm.

If you build it, they will come.

That line could never have been more representative of a ballpark opening than under a clear blue sky at 7:31 PM on July 11, 1996, in downtown Indianapolis. With the atmosphere of a major league-caliber stadium in a minor league city, 14,667 fans filled the seats at Victory Field to open what would become known over the years as one of the best minor league stadiums in the country.

It wasn't necessarily an easy road to first cracking open the gates at 5 PM that night, with construction delays pushing Opening Day back from April of that season to immediately following the All-Star break. It wasn't well received all around, either, with longtime fans holding tightly to memories and loyalty at 1501 West 16th Street, the site of Perry Stadium, Victory Field and Bush Stadium, — one single ballpark that had a pair of name changes — home to the Indians since 1931.

But, despite one final coat of paint probably being applied somewhere in a pre-gates rush in nod to the chaotic nature leading up to the opening, and the hesitancy of fans who weren't quite ready to let go of the past, IndyStar columnist Bill Benner said it best.

"To be there for its unveiling, to watch it fill to capacity with fans, to see the picnickers gather on their blankets on the grassy berm beyond the outfield walls, to watch dusk settle over the yard and, finally, to witness the gradual illumination of the downtown skyline to the point where it sparkled like a tiara over the lush green expanse, well, some things are just too wonderful for words."

The movie "Field of Dreams" tells the story of Ray Kinsella, a farmer in rural Iowa with a deep connection to baseball rooted in his family history. While working in the cornfield one night, his wife and daughter on the porch swing just beyond the edge of their crop, a voice tells him: 'If you build it, he will come.'

Kinsella, an unwitting accomplice to the will of a voice in his head, comes to his own conclusion that the step forward is to build a baseball field in the middle of his crop. His wife and



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daughter are supporting figures in what comes next. The rest of the town, not so much.

When Max Schumacher, then-president of the Indianapolis Indians, proposed plans to build a new ballpark to draw attention as a potential Major League Baseball expansion site way back in the 1960s, he was shut down. History repeated itself in the late '70s to early '80s before the RCA Dome broke ground.

Early in the 1990s, Max tried again. At the time, the ballpark known as Owen J. Bush Stadium had been used by the Indianapolis Indians since 1931, when the United States was only two years into the Great Depression. It sat just outside of the city hub, and it wasn't evolving nearly as quickly as the times.

Seeing the success other teams around the country had to moving downtown, including but not limited to higher accessibility rates to fans and a boom in traffic to the surrounding areas, it became a no-brainer where the Indians wanted to be.

"There's a reason the JW Marriott was built with glass and left people a nice view of the ballpark. White River State Park has taken off," Bruce Schumacher, Max's son and now-CEO and chairman of the board for the Indianapolis Indians, said. "I think we played part in that development, and I feel good about that."

The plan, approved by then-mayor Stephen Goldsmith, was to move the Indians from the outskirts of the city hub to one of three locations in the center of downtown. The first was near where Market Square Arena — home of the Indiana Pacers from 1974-99 — sat just east of Monument Circle. The second was the current location of Lucas Oil Stadium.

One day following work at Bush Stadium in the early 1990s, Bruce took his car to the third location, a gravel parking lot at the corner of West Street and Maryland Street near White River. He pointed it toward the north-northeast, the way a ballpark should be built to account for the sun, and looked up. The skyline of downtown Indianapolis was spread out in front of him.

“Well, it’s got to be here,” Bruce remembers thinking to himself. “How could it be anywhere else?”

Moving from Bush Stadium to Victory Field wasn’t easy. Bush Stadium had been home to countless championship teams – the Indians won four consecutive American Association Championships from 1986-89 with Bush Stadium as their home – and countless memories outside of the white lines.

There was a different kind of connection to the old ballpark, one some fans weren’t quite ready to let go of.

“We had fans who said, ‘I don’t want to go to a new ballpark; I love Bush Stadium.’ Dad and I always talked about that because, as emotionally attached as they were, we were pretty emotionally attached to Bush Stadium as well,” Bruce said. “I grew up as a little kid there. Dad would take me out to the field and shag fly balls during batting practice.”

But even for those who called Bush Stadium home, those who grew into fan favorites on that field, knew that Victory Field would usher in a new era of baseball to downtown Indy.

“I’ll miss Bush Stadium,” all-time Indians favorite Razor Shines said on Victory Field’s Opening Night, as chronicled in the IndyStar. “But I’ll get over it.”

With the amount of hesitation there was, the level of excitement could replace it thousands of times over. According to an IndyStar article published ahead of Victory Field’s opening, long-term leases on all 25 luxury boxes sold quickly following the announcement of the new park. The season-ticket base more than doubled, and when single-game tickets went on sale in the month prior to the opening, demand was high.

If you build it, they will come. Right?



“THERE’S A REASON THE JW MARRIOTT WAS BUILT WITH GLASS AND LEFT PEOPLE A NICE VIEW OF THE BALLPARK. WHITE RIVER STATE PARK HAS TAKEN OFF. I THINK WE PLAYED PART IN THAT DEVELOPMENT, AND I FEEL GOOD ABOUT THAT.”

BRUCE SCHUMACHER,
INDIANS CEO AND
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

LET'S



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Bruce Brantingham was on the telephone for more than an hour waiting to order his tickets for Opening Day when they went on sale in June 1996.

When he finally got through, he was left with the choice of lawn tickets just outside the outfield wall or looking into the stadium from beyond the fence. His hopes were low on the quality of the view from the lawn, but at least it would get him through the gates.

He spread his blanket out on the lawn on Opening Night, and it didn't take long for his disappointment to subside. As chronicled in the *IndyStar*: "Oh my," he said, looking at the field right below him, so close it seemed he could play the outfield from where he sat. "I don't mind this at all."

As the voice inside Kinsella's head guided him away from the past, it also led him toward the future he was unknowingly building. The same feeling developed over the night on July 11, 1996.

The gates opened at 5 PM that night, two hours before first pitch, to allow for fans to explore the new ballpark. Benner wrote: "The game was sold out, and sidewalks around the park were packed long before first pitch. Cars backed up for more than a block waiting to park in nearby lots. Scalpers on street corners added to the atmosphere; one said he had sold \$7 lower-deck reserved seats for \$45."

It was the second Opening Night festivities the Indians had that season. Governor Evan Bayh, Mayor Goldsmith and Capital Improvement Board President Patrick Early threw out ceremonial first pitches. Former Brooklyn Dodger, teammate of Jackie Robinson and Indiana native Carl Erskine performed the National Anthem on his harmonica. The game was nothing memorable — the Indians lost, 5-3, in a game that Oklahoma City never trailed — but no one cared.

"We had all spent so much time at the new Victory Field trying to get it ready from when it was just a hole in the ground up to when it was finally finished," Bruce said. "It was special to see it fill up with fans on July 11, after so many people did so much work for so many years."

On July 11, 2021, when the sun sets on that breathtaking Indianapolis skyline from over the stands on Victory Field's third-base side, the quarter-century mark will have passed on the night where no one remembers anything about the baseball game and everything about the history and significance of being in that place at that time.

The shine has faded just a little bit over those 25 years. The ballpark has changed, with the bleachers out in right field paying homage to Bush Stadium replaced with a patio. Suites have been removed to make way for the Elements Financial Club, the park's newest premium space, and now fans have more ticket options than they ever could have dreamed of.

But through the years, Victory Field has also rooted itself in Indianapolis' sports culture as the city's home for professional baseball. Other things never really change. The skyline still sparkles like a tiara as the sun sets over the lush, green outfield grass.

"What we have here is not just a place to watch baseball, but to feel baseball," Benner wrote on Opening Night. "It is wonderfully modern in every way, but it has an old-time look, like it's been there for years. Indeed, it's difficult to comprehend that just 18 months ago, the land on which Victory Field now sits was a weed-infested parking lot littered with trash and broken glass.

"The grandstands angle toward home plate, and the fans, from nearly all seats, are not only close to the action, but seem to envelope it.



“WE HAD ALL SPENT SO MUCH TIME AT THE NEW VICTORY FIELD TRYING TO GET IT READY FROM WHEN IT WAS JUST A HOLE IN THE GROUND UP TO WHEN IT WAS FINALLY FINISHED”

BRUCE SCHUMACHER,
INDIANS CEO AND
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BILL BENNER,
FORMER INDYSTAR COLUMNIST



“This is a Triple-A version of Baltimore’s Camden Yards or Cleveland’s Jacobs Fields. Add another 30,000 seats and put Indianapolis in the major leagues, and the national baseball poets soon would be spinning verse about our Victory Field.”

If you’re a fan of baseball, especially the kind of heart-stopping, one-strike-away, win-or-go-home, true America’s pastime that can be found across the country in the dead summer heat, you probably recognize this famous monologue in a famous 1989 film about a man who brings people closer together by building a ballpark in the middle of a cornfield.

The speech, performed by James Earl Jones in the role of Terence Mann, foreshadows the final scene in “Field of Dreams” where cars line up for miles to attend a game at the field Kinsella built. It reads:

People will come, Ray... They'll find they have reserved seats somewhere along one of the baselines, where they sat when they were children and cheered their heroes. And they'll watch the game, and it'll be as if they'd dipped themselves in magic waters. The memories will be so thick, they'll have to brush them away from their faces.

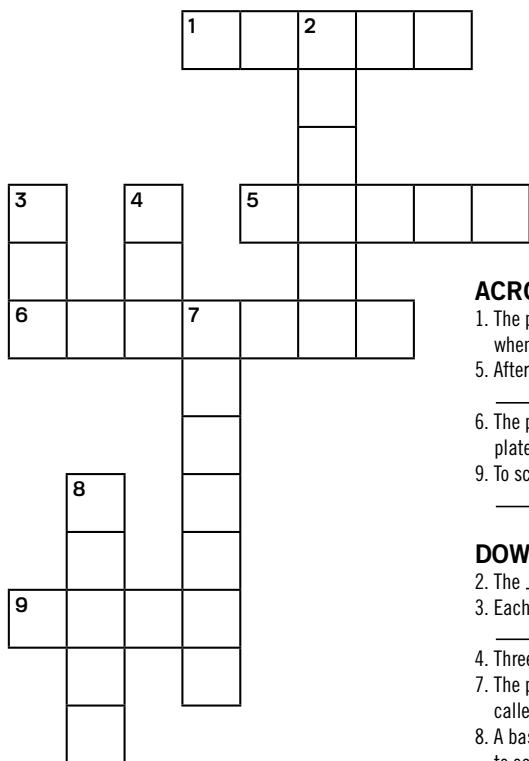
America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It's been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt, and erased again. But baseball has marked the time. This field, this game—it's a part of our past, Ray. It reminds us of all that once was good, and it could be again.

And, well, there's just no better representation of Victory Field on July 11, 1996, or over the past 25 years, than that. ❤️

Kids ACTIVITIES

CROSSWORD

Use your knowledge of baseball to solve the puzzle



ACROSS

1. The pitcher stands on the pitcher's _____ when he throws the baseball.
5. After the batter hits the ball, he runs toward _____ base.
6. The player who throws the ball toward home plate for the batter to hit is called the _____.
9. To score a run, the player must touch _____ plate.

DOWN

2. The _____ calls the balls and strikes.
3. Each baseball player wears a baseball _____ on his head.
4. Three strikes and you're _____!
7. The player who crouches behind home plate is called the _____.
8. A baseball player wears a _____ on his hand to catch the ball.

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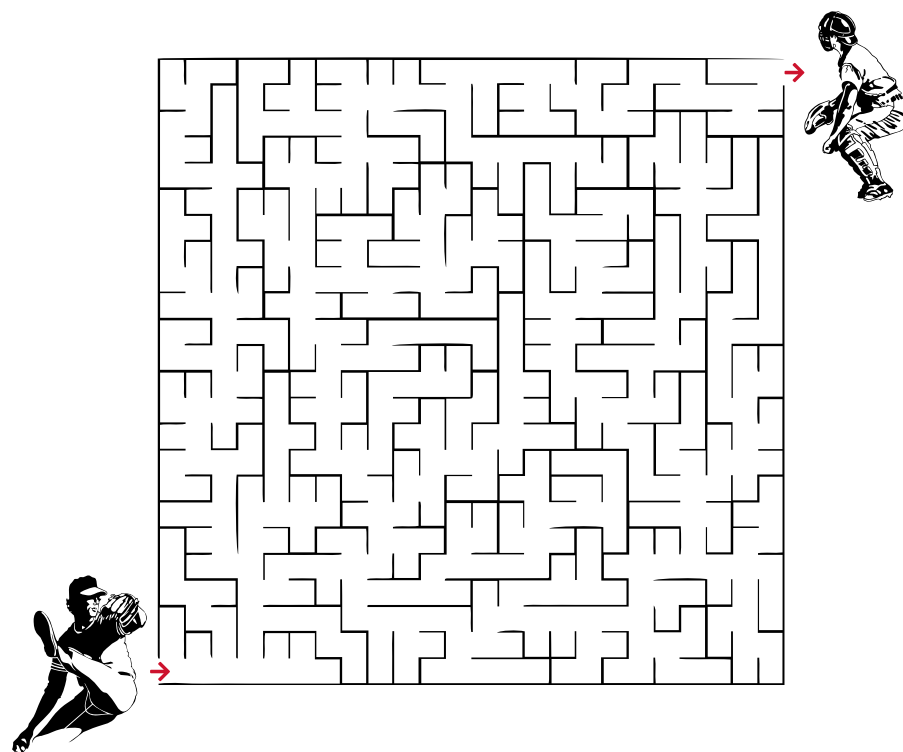
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ON SELECT SUNDAYS



Kids ACTIVITIES

INDIANS MAZE

Help the pitcher get the ball to the
catcher at home plate.



Top 5

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

CHRIS SHARPE

- 1 GOING OUT ON THE BOAT
- 2 GOING OUT IN BOSTON WITH FRIENDS
- 3 GOLFING
- 4 HIKING WITH MY GIRLFRIEND AND HER DOG
- 5 BEACH DAYS

BRAEDEN OGLE

- 1 HUNTING
- 2 FISHING
- 3 SPEARFISHING
- 4 GOLFING
- 5 GOING TO A SANDBAR

JOE HUDSON

- 1 SPENDING TIME WITH MY DOGS
- 2 WATCHING MOVIES
- 3 VISIT NEW RESTAURANTS WITH MY WIFE
- 4 FISHING
- 5 SPENDING MORE TIME WITH MY DOGS

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**INDIANAPOLIS INDIANS CHARITIES AND ELEMENTS FINANCIAL
TEAM TOGETHER TO ASSIST OUTREACH STUDENTS, STAFF**

by **CHEYNE REITER**

Kathleen Bloxsome is one of roughly 20 full-time staff members at Outreach, Inc., a local nonprofit with the mission to equip and empower homeless teens and young adults to achieve stability and life transformation. Bloxsome and her husband have been involved with Outreach since 2006, first joining as volunteers before she recently came on full time. When the pandemic hit in March 2020 and shut down businesses, nonprofits and everything in between, Bloxsome, now Outreach's Director of Donor Relations, led the charge in ensuring the youth and young adults they serve would not be forgotten.

"Our youth typically hang out at a coffee shop or public libraries, any place that has access to internet," Bloxsome said. "When those places closed, [our students] had to scramble and 'couch surf' from home to home to seek shelter, safety and security."

Amidst the pandemic, another basic need for Outreach students – who fall between the ages of 14 to 24 – was food. Bloxsome and her team quickly assembled a food delivery team and found where many of the youth and young adults they serve were staying.

Having food on the table every night is a simple luxury many take for granted, but not those who Outreach serves on an everyday basis.

Outreach youth and young adults come from all walks of life, most who have experienced traumatic life events and challenging upbringings. A significant number of youth and young adults in its program have aged out of foster care and are too young to go to adult shelters, and many have been abused, abandoned, trafficked or endured homelessness throughout their young lives. Some find Outreach by word of mouth and some learn about the nonprofit on social media. Students also find Outreach through their respective school counselors and the Advocacy, Relationship and Case Management in High Schools (ARCH) program at Pike, Lawrence and Washington Township schools.

No matter the background or backstory, Bloxsome and the Outreach staff preach one simple message to anyone who walks through its doors...



FOR THE INDIANS TO LOOK AT OUR PROGRAM AND THE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS WE SERVE AND SAY, 'WE WANT TO COME ALONGSIDE YOU ON THEIR JOURNEYS AND BECOME A KEY PARTNER,' THAT WAS SO TOUCHING.

KATHLEEN BLOXSOME
DIRECTOR OF DONOR RELATIONS, OUTREACH, INC.



He knows your name.

“Our focus is on building relationships and being intentional when we do that,” Bloxsome said. “We can say you are wanted, you are loved, you are cared for.

“We want our youth and young adults to know that God knows your name, always.”

Outreach’s doors were not closed very long, and Bloxsome called it “God’s blessing” when its main program center on East New York Street reopened in July last year, providing youth and young adults – approximately 500 individuals annually – access to internet to complete their classwork. Masks and temperature screenings became the norm, but Outreach got back to business in short order because of the vulnerable population it serves. Its youth and young adults only had one request – more accessibility. Outreach expanded by building a second program center called Impact Old Southside on South Meridian Street.

On May 23, Outreach hosted its inaugural Walking for Dreams event to raise funds and awareness for the nonprofit. Over 150 walkers participated, and Indianapolis Indians Charities (IIC) was listed as a supporter on t-shirts worn by walkers. That gesture is just one of many ways Outreach and IIC will express their partnership over the coming months.

IIC recently donated \$10,000 to Outreach, and those funds will impact the youth and young adults in a big way. The monetary donation will go toward the purchase of gift cards, bus passes for transportation to work and job training programs, work appropriate clothing and technical/trade equipment for Outreach’s high school graduates.

“I remember when Indianapolis Indians Charities first reached out to Outreach a couple years ago, and everyone on our staff was so excited,” Bloxsome said. “For the Indians to look at our program and the youth and young adults we serve and say, ‘we want to come alongside you on their journeys and become a key partner,’ that was so touching.”

Outreach had 28 graduates in 2020 and will see another 15 individuals graduate high school this year. One of the 15 from the 2021 class has already earned a full ride to college, another is planning to join the military, and most are seeking secondary education or

vocational opportunities. The success stories of those who have found Outreach are endless. Bloxsome and her husband attended the graduation party of Tiffany Nmose. Tiffany had been homeless since turning 21 years old. As a young child, she attended 12 different elementary schools, three middle schools and two high schools. She never had stability and changes at home forced her into a life on the streets. Tiffany found Outreach and worked with a Youth and Young Adult Coach regularly. She went on to college, is now married and lives comfortably on her own. Today, she gives back to the community as a teacher of young children and shortly after graduation, she supported youth and young adults experiencing mental health issues.

Another Outreach student is a graffiti artist, whose artwork is proudly on display inside the main program center. His art tells a story with the holy cross in the background of each panel, a subtle reminder of one thing to those who need Outreach’s services...

He knows your name.

Another partner of the Indians, Elements Financial, has had an ongoing partnership with Outreach for the last five years. Elements Financial supplies Outreach students and staff with financial education workshops, a relationship manager and access to an online financial education center. A handful of financial wellness workshops have been scheduled, ranging from “Finding the Right Loan for Your Home” to “Risks and Rewards of Credit Cards.”

“We have helped Outreach students complete their FAFSA information when they are planning to go to college,” Jake Engel, a brand strategist at Elements Financial said. “We have also donated sleeping mats, built bicycles and created care packages for Outreach youth, but we wanted to provide them with more.”

Thanks to IIC’s involvement with Outreach and the cohesive partnership between both nonprofits with Elements Financial, the three are a perfect blend to ensuring youth and young adults at Outreach have basic needs to stay on their feet.

If you would like to volunteer or donate to Outreach, please visit outreachindiana.org. ♥

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Through THE YEARS

There have been many memorable moments at Victory Field over the last 25 years. Enjoy the timeline as we reflect on 25 of The Vic's greatest memories through the years.

OCTOBER 2010



Find Comfort in The Cove

Thanks to the success of Victory Field's seating patio in right field, the organization saw a similar opportunity for the left field corner and added the Captain Morgan Cove (known today as The Yuengling Landing) to The Vic's premier seating options.

MAY 31, 2015

Varsity Performance vs. JV

On a Sunday afternoon at Victory Field, 2011 American League Cy Young and MVP winner Justin Verlander made a rehab start for visiting Toledo. The Indians touched up the right-hander for three runs on six hits, two walks and a hit batter in his 2.2 innings pitched.



FEBRUARY 4, 2012

Super Bowl Bubble

With Super Bowl XLVI in Indianapolis, Victory Field participated in the festivities by hosting DirecTV's Celebrity Beach Bowl and Super Bowl Saturday Night, a daylong event that featured pop band The Fray and singer-songwriter Katy Perry.



JUNE 27, 2015



Super Hero Saturday

The first Super Hero Night at Victory Field debuts with an appearance by The Dark Knight.

AUGUST 23, 2012

Winners of the Wild, Wild, West

The Indians clinched the International League West title for the first time since 2000 when they defeated Louisville, 6-1.

Ring the Bell

Down 4-1 in the bottom of the eighth, the Indians rallied with four unanswered runs – three coming in the ninth – to force a winner-take-all Game 5 against Columbus in the Governors' Cup finals. Josh Bell homered for Indy's first run and capped a brilliant 4-for-4 performance with a walk-off single.

SEPTEMBER 18, 2015



Through THE YEARS

APRIL 2, 2016

Welcome to The Show

Victory Field hosted its first MLB exhibition game with the Pittsburgh Pirates and Cincinnati Reds squaring off in front of 14,352 fans.

Hi-Def Ballpark Experience

The Indians announced plans to install a new 35-by-50-foot HD video board in right field ahead of the 2017 season. The organization added two ribbon boards as well, both 135 feet long, which are on the façade of the upper deck down each baseline.



OCTOBER 2016

Leading the world's transition to **greener, smarter** energy, right here in Indianapolis.



Reliably serving our customers for the last century, IPL was acquired by AES in 2001. Together, we're utilizing digital technology advances to make our energy systems smarter right here in Indianapolis – so that our community can enjoy reliable, affordable and sustainable energy that powers our lives and energizes the next generation of innovators.

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aesindiana.com/hellofuture

aes Indiana

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- Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth.
- Install water-saving fixtures and appliances.
- Water your lawn only twice a week.

Find more water-wise, money-saving tips at
CitizensWaterWise.com.

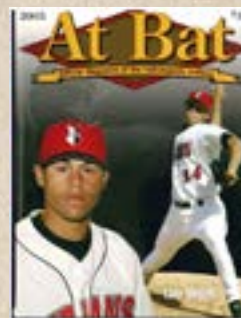


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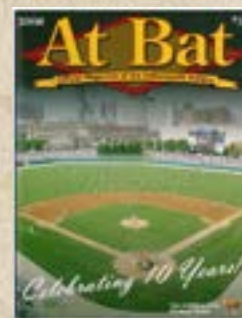


Victory Field PROGRAMS

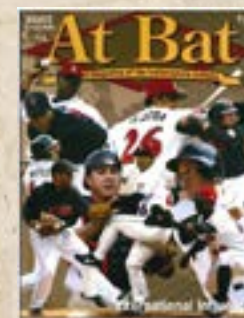
Game day programs at Victory Field have evolved over the years, but one thing remains the same – they are the perfect commemorative souvenir for your game day experience. Click on any of the covers below to enjoy feature stories from those issues!



2005



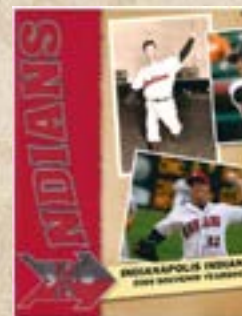
2006



2007



2008



2009



2010



2011



2012

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LOCATION:
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HOME PLATE



Yuengling Landing

RESERVED SEATING:
DEDICATED 4-PERSON TABLES
OR BARSTOOL AND DRINK RAIL
SPACE AVAILABLE

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GET FOOD AND DRINKS DIRECTLY
TO YOUR SEAT

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ACCESS TO EXCLUSIVE FOOD ITEMS,
COCKTAILS AND CRAFT BEER

**MINI-PLANS, GROUP OUTINGS AND
SINGLE-GAME TICKET PACKAGES AVAILABLE**

by EMILY REESE

Over the past 25 years as the home to professional baseball in Indianapolis, Victory Field has evolved to keep up its status as one of the best minor league ballparks in the country.

From new patio areas to accommodate a growing number of group outings to a new premium club space with a bar in the shape of home plate, Victory Field has grown from the place fans gather to take in America's pastime to a year-round facility for events of all shapes and sizes.

Victory Field was built in 1996 and hosted its first Indians game on July 11 that summer vs. the Oklahoma City 89ers in front of a sold out 14,667 fans. After 10 seasons of baseball that saw a Governors' Cup Championship Series in 2000, Triple-A All-Star Game in '01 and Ian Snell no-hitter in '05, the Indians front office discovered that fans' tastes were evolving into a demand for premier seating. Following the 2006 season, renovations began.

"When Victory Field was built, there were aluminum bleachers in the right-field corner," Indianapolis Indians CEO and chairman of the board Bruce Schumacher said. "What we found out was that they were always the last seats to sell, and the picnic area we had in left field, which was the only premium area we had other than suite level, was full most of the time."

When the fans spoke, the Indians listened. The aluminum bleachers past the right field foul pole were replaced by the ballpark's first premier seating space: the Coors Light Patio. Known today as the Corona Premier Patio, the new seating space was unveiled in time for the 2007 campaign and is a popular destination for fans still to this day.

Once spectators had a taste for premier seating, they wanted more. The right-field patio sold out quickly and thanks to its success, the Indians front office saw an opportunity to add another new

"SO, WE REMOVED THE BLEACHERS, PUT IN A RIGHT FIELD PICNIC AREA AND IT STARTED GETTING BOOKED UP ALL THE TIME. WE GOT TO A POINT WHERE WE WANTED AN IN-PARK BAR. THAT BECAME WHAT IS NOW THE YUENGLING LANDING."

- BRUCE SCHUMACHER, INDIANS CEO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



"WE KNEW THERE WOULD BE A DEMAND FOR THE ELEMENTS FINANCIAL CLUB BEHIND HOME PLATE, THE PUBLIC HAS AN EVER-INCREASING APPETITE FOR THAT KIND OF SPACE; A PREMIUM, HANG OUT WITH YOUR FRIENDS OR CO-WORKERS COMMUNAL SPACE."

- BRUCE SCHUMACHER, INDIANS CEO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

feature to the ballpark right across the diamond.

"So, we removed the bleachers, put in a right field picnic area and it started getting booked up all the time. We got to a point where we wanted an in-park bar" Schumacher said, "that became what is now the Yuengling Landing."

After the 2010 season, the organization added Captain Morgan Cove, now known as Yuengling Landing, to the Vic's premier seating options. Fans could enjoy all the game day features included in a specialty ticket, including wait service, specialty menus, and open seating at the bar, pub tables and drink rail.

With technology advancing since Victory Field was built in 1996 and fans wanting more of an immersive experience than just sitting back to watch a ballgame, two more expansive renovations began. One, to improve the at-home and in-park viewing experience, and the other to create a home away from home within the stadium.

Ahead of the 2017 season, the Indians announced plans to install a new 35-by-50-foot HD video board in right field. The organization added two ribbon boards as well, both 135 feet long, which are on the façade of the upper deck down each baseline. Other upgrades that offseason included the ability to broadcast games in HD for the first time, the center field marquee transitioning to a full-color display, and all audio systems in the ballpark going from analog to digital technology.

Following the 2017 season, renovations began on the Impact Suite Level. Thirty-plus suites were outfitted with new amenities including heat induction warmers in the countertops, furniture, big-screen TVs and retro jerseys honoring famous former Indians. To keep the Indians theme, the lobbies were adorned with new furniture and large-scale photos of former Indians players, and the first-base suite hallway features a historical timeline dating back to the early 1930s. Each suite is named after a former Indians player or coach.

Two years later, the suite level underwent another, even bigger change. On the outside looking in on premium spaces offered at venues like Bankers Life Fieldhouse and Lucas Oil Stadium,

the Indians inserted themselves into the luxury, premium seating game that now doubles as a public events venue.

"We knew there would be a demand for the Elements Financial Club behind home plate," Schumacher said. "The public has an ever-increasing appetite for that kind of space; a premium, hang out with your friends or co-workers communal space."

The front office saw an opportunity for premier seating in the best spot in the stadium, right behind home plate. Renovations began on the Elements Financial Club, Victory Field's newest premium seating area, following the 2019 season. The spacious EFC features new furniture, big-screen TVs, a full-service bar in the shape of home plate, a 37-foot retractable glass wall system, and outdoor seating including 10 private four-person loge boxes.

The new Elements Financial Club is not only available to use during Indians games, but it can also be used for other events such as weddings, receptions, banquets and several other kinds of parties and events.

The construction for the club meant moving the press box, control room and radio booths for both home and visiting teams. With the area already undergoing construction, the Indians front office felt it was time for a full makeover of the office space.

"We also knew we needed more office space. When we moved down [to Victory Field], we had 15 full-time employees and now we have over 40 and have added several more interns," Schumacher recalls. "We were stacked on top of each other, so we expanded our offices on the second floor and built the Elements Financial Club on top of them on the third floor."

A new wing was constructed on the second floor down the first base side, which added several new offices so staff could spread out to complete their jobs efficiently to give fans and players the best experience at Victory Field.

"As great a ballpark that Victory Field was on July 11, 1996, we have continued to make it an even better ballpark," Schumacher said. ♥



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