

From the Bullpen

“The People’s Newspaper”

For People Who Want to Know the Real Truth



The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have little. --**Franklin D. Roosevelt**

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek. --**Barack Obama**

It is amazing what you can accomplish if you don't care who gets the credit. --**Harry S. Truman**

It's all about pitching. --**David D. Ernst**

Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. --**John F. Kennedy**

Most importantly I never sent classified material on my email and I never received any that was marked classified. --**Hillary Clinton**

Let me say something that may not be great politics. And that is that the American people are sick and tired of hearing about your damn emails. --**Bernie Sanders**

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In the spirit of the season, let's talk a little bit of baseball:

- * How about that Giancarlo Stanton acquisition by the Yankees? Judge and Stanton in the same outfit? Come on. The Evil Empire strikes back, and I don't mean at the movie theater.
- * Will the Giants' trade for Rays' third sacker Evan Longoria lift them out of the cellar? Will Longoria miss playing at the beautiful Trop?
- * How will Joey Cora fare in Boston, that bastion of WASPdom? Does an Hispanic man have what it takes to lead a Major League ballclub? [FN1]
- * Jack Morris and Alan Trammell to be enshrined in Cooperstown? Damn straight. About time. Now, pull up the ladder rungs before a couple of mendacious ROID-head punks like Bonds and Clemens get in. Perish [FN2] the thought.

Alright, any thoughts or comments in regard to the above and foregoing? Anything I missed? Let's get busy on the HSL Message Board, lads--after all, it is the Hot Stove League season, for Pete's [FN 3] sake.

SCHEDULE OF 2018 EVENTS

A. Winter Meeting - January 27

As discussed and approved by a quorum of league members present for our holiday lunch last Thursday, December 14, the HSL Winter Meeting will take place on Saturday evening, January 27, at a place and time to be announced by the 2017 Champion, PAwesome. If BT has not yet sufficiently recovered from his combination 16-level spine fusion/male enhancement [FN 4] surgery by that date, we will have him participate by Skype or Proxy [FN 5], or maybe we will all just Uber it down to Lincoln to surprise Scott and Beth with a glorious movable feast.

B. The Draft - Saturday, March 17

This year's draft has been scheduled for Saturday, March 17, in Scottsdale, beginning at 9:00 a.m. cactus time, sharp. BT will secure the clubhouse at his condo village for the proceedings, so everyone should get busy making airline reservations. UBob and SloPay, you will want to check right away with Makeshift Airlines to secure your discount air fare flying out of McCook to Phoenix, with stops in Benkelman, Alliance, Arthur, Clay Center, Greeley and Lodgepole. I have heard that they have a 99-dollar special going on

right now, but you will have to leave on Tuesday, the 12th, and return on Thursday, the 24th. So worth it!

Seriously, our quorum of nine at the holiday lunch agreed that it would be outstanding if we could have our second triannual (quadannual?) Draft in the Desert this year, but only if the entire Baker's Dozen in the league can make it happen. So please do!

C. The Trip

Not yet voted on or even officially proposed, but take a peek at your calendars for the weekend of May 4-6, when the Texas Rangers host the Boston Red Sox in Arlington for a weekend series. As Stretch recently pointed out, we have not yet had an HSL junket to visit The Ballpark at Arlington, which is about to begin its penultimate year as the home of the Texas Rangers. [FN 6] Anyway, take a gander at May and put a hold on your calendar and we can discuss The Trip scheduling in more detail on January 27.

OH HENRY

While in Richmond, VA [FN 7] on business this past week, I had a chance to revisit Monticello on Tuesday for a guided tour (Fun Fact: While Thomas Jefferson was actually our sitting third president, there was an article in a Philadelphia newspaper scandalizing his illicit relationship with his "concubine" slave Sally Hemmings--had that been a 2017 revelation, he would be resigning or impeached. Hmm. Maybe not.), and then on Wednesday I visited St. John's Church in Richmond where Patrick Henry gave his fiery speech in March of 1775. Although I really only wanted to pop in for a quick look, the fast-talking salesman at the visitor's counter soon had me convinced to plunk down 6 dollars for a "reenactment" experience with some garrulous old fella named Ray. Little did I know when I shelled out my 6 shekels that I was to be the only participant in the event--save Ray. So Ray--dressed convincingly as a Patrick Henry replicate--strolled in to St. John's for the big show, together with . . . me. While our 20-25 minutes together as orator and captive audience was mildly awkward, it was at the same time entertaining and enlightening. For example, I did not know that Patrick Henry was a trial lawyer or that he had 17 children.

The best part of Ray's performance was when he got himself whipped into a lather as he recited the ending portion of Henry's famous speech, delivering it to me as if to a frenzied crowd of like-minded revolutionaries, as follows:

They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and in-

action? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance, by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable - and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

*It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace - but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, **GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH!***

So worth the six bucks.

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I had so much more to say (surprise, surprise), but the morning has gotten away from me and I need to head over to another office for a mediation. That said, here's wishing each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and the Happiest of New Years!

Skipper

^{FN 1} Simmer down, Stretch. Just trying for a reaction. I'm no Al Campanis. Unlike the Donald, I really do love Hispanic people.

^{FN 2} No, UBob, not Larry or Lance.

^{FN 3} Not Rose, who by any other name would smell a whole lot sweeter.

^{FN 4} Get your small minds out of the gutter, it's not what you're thinking. While in for his spine surgery, BT is also having calf implants placed, partly for functional reasons but mostly for aesthetics--Beth has always been a calf woman.

^{FN 5} Therefore establishing a certain league precedent.

^{FN 6} Our previous HSL misadventure to the City of Arlington was in 1990 when on the Ernst Family Vacation we visited the old Arlington ballpark and saw Nolan Ryan pitch after being misplaced in the No Alcohol Section. It might as well have been in a No Breathing Section, you know. Let's blame that one on my ex-wife.

^{FN 7} I actually stayed in a little suburb of Richmond curiously named Short Pump, VA, which is what Itchie's junior high school basketball teammates called him.