

IT'S NO CRIME TO CLUB A SAUSAGE IN MILWAUKEE

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ALL STAR WEEKEND

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LATE SPORTS FINAL

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Sox pox scoop . . .

Dateline: The Dugout Line . . . The late George "Buck" Weaver, the Chicago White Sox third baseman who was banished from baseball during the "Black Sox" scandal in 1919, is resurfacing.

Sneed is told two elderly nieces of Weaver, who proclaimed his innocence amid accusations he and seven others threw the 1919 World Series against the Cincinnati Reds, are bringing their battle to clear their uncle's name to the All-Star Game next week.

Weaver, who contended he was no part of the fix, refused to take money and played exceedingly well during the series, never got over the decision by Judge Kene-saw Mountain Landis refusing to grant him a separate trial, thereby punishing Weaver for not squealing on his teammates.

Reportedly never believing his teammates would do it, Weaver died of a heart attack in 1956. But his heart never really healed after his censure from the sport he loved. The stigma of the Black Sox scandal stayed with him all his life.

Weaver's nieces—Patricia Anderson, 77, and Marjorie Follett, 89, who have been trying unsuccessfully to clear his name for decades and have been turned a deaf ear by Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig, decided to come to Chicago to clear their uncle's name.

They plan to urge people to sign a petition, which is listed on their Web site (www.clearbuck.com) urging Selig to reinstate Weaver to baseball.

A movie about the team titled "Eight Men Out," starring Evanston native John Cusack as Weaver—and Cusack's recently deceased father as the judge who refused to let Weaver have the separate trial he requested—was made in 1988 . . . but did little to influence the baseball commission.

The two women, who considered their uncle a hero, will be at the "Fanfest" at McCormick Place on Sunday night wearing neon green T-shirts emblazoned with "Clear Buck!" . . . and then head to U.S. Cellular Field on Monday night for the Home Run Derby and the All Star game Tuesday.

Weaver, who spent the rest of his life in Chicago after the scandal, married a vaudevillian named Helen Cook. The couple had no children, but he raised Patricia after her father died.

The baseball star, who was described by baseball legend Ty Cobb as one of the best third basemen he'd ever seen, wound up working as a florist and a race-track clerk.

The man who could never get baseball out of his blood played semi-pro baseball in Hammond and managed a girl's softball team.

And in a twist of cruel irony, Weaver once worked as a city day laborer who wound up painting the courtroom in which he had been tried and his career had ended!

The man who loved bread, good clothes, his dog "Goofy," his wife and his nieces, may have been tossed the worst foul ball in the history of baseball.



George "Buck" Weaver



Ruben Studdard

If I were Selig, I'd at least take a phone call from Weaver's womenfolk, who have refused to give up hope for the man now buried in Mount Hope Cemetery.

Paint & file . . .

American Idol Ruben Studdard and his family were spotted at Sunny's Salon & Day Spa on Superior Street on Thursday, getting manicures, pedicures and waxings. Then Ruben gave the staff an autographed picture of himself. Isn't that special.

Sneedlings . . .

Congrats to Bishop Timothy Lyne on being feted at the Metropolitan Club Wednesday night for his 60 years as a priest and 20 years as a bishop. Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary Ann McMorrow, Ald. Ed Burke (14th), Library Commissioner Mary Dempsey and attorney Phil Corboy were in attendance.

Today's birthdays: Richie Sambora, 44; Sela Ward, 47; Giorgio Armani, 69; Lil' Kim, 28, and Suzanne Vega, 44. Saturday's birthdays: Arthur Engeland, ageless; Joanne Ponzio, 57; Kristi Yamaguchi, 32; Jay Thomas, 55; Bill Cosby, 66; Cheryl Ladd, 52; Richard Simmons, 55; Christie McVie, 60; Topher Grace, 25; Lisa Nicole Carson, 34, and Mel Harris, 46.

Michael Sneed is seen at 5 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays on WMAQ-Channel 5.