

110TH ANNIVERSARY **PARKHURST FIELD**

AMERICA'S ORIGINAL FIELD OF DREAMS

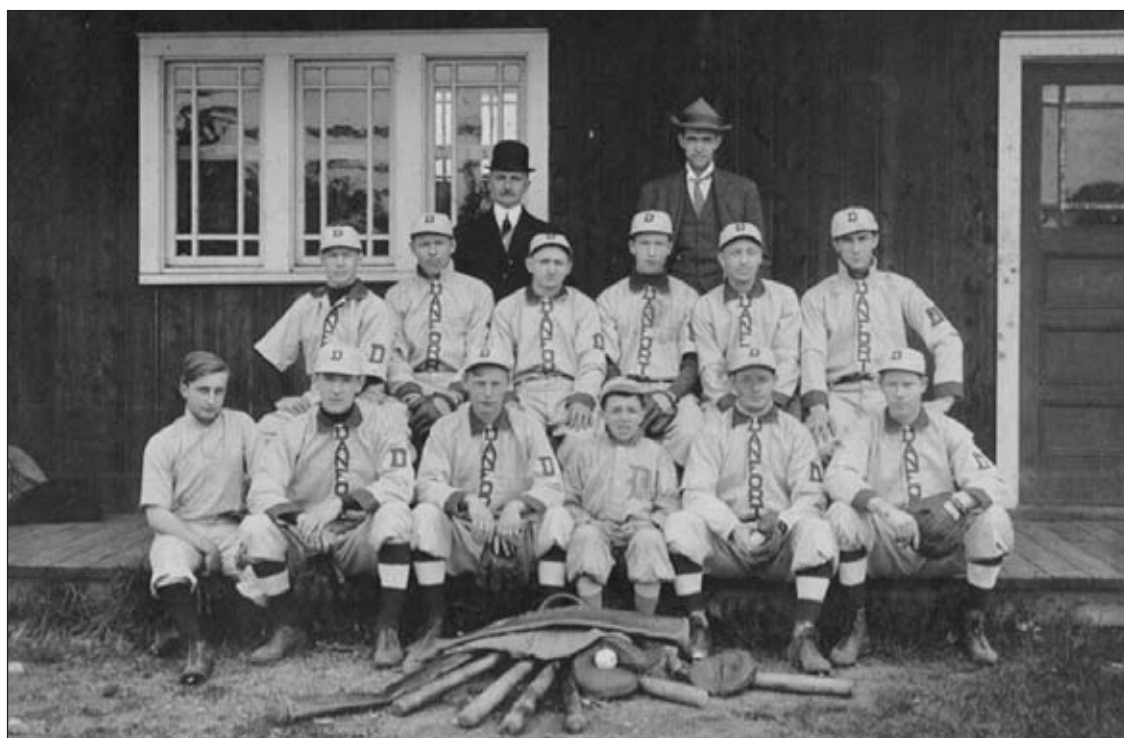


JULY 2016

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO

The Leader-Herald

Parkhurst Field in Gloversville has rich history



The 1910 Danforth Club at AJ&G park, which later became Parkhurst Field.

GLOVERSVILLE — Many local residents are familiar with the Gloversville Little League park as a place where youths play baseball games for a few months each year.

What people may not realize is the rich and extensive history of the park, known as Parkhurst Field.

They may not know the Harrison Street grounds were once the home of a minor league affiliate of a major league professional team, or that baseball clubs used to travel between cities via railroad and stop at the field to play games. They may not know Negro league teams and women's teams played there, or that famous players such as Cy Young, Honus Wagner and Joe Birmingham once stepped foot on the field. Even A. W. "Moonlight" Graham, immortalized in the movie "Field of Dreams," played at the Gloversville field as part of the Scranton Miners in 1906 and 1907 while pursuing his dream of making it to the big leagues.

According to the Parkhurst Field Foundation, the field is one of the oldest continuously used baseball grounds in America.

Parkhurst Field, which celebrates its 110th anniversary with an event at the field July 10, has a storied history, one that's being preserved and retold by the Parkhurst Field Foundation, a local group that's created a museum at the park and wants to revamp and develop the field into a destination for Little League and travel teams from around the country.

The foundation plans to launch a capital campaign at the start of next year in an effort to raise \$2.3 million to improve the park.

Dave Karpinski, executive director and founder of the Parkhurst Field Foundation, and Mike Hauser, vice president of the foundation, both said they began researching the park about

six years ago because they wanted to be able to tell the park's story when asking for donations for Little League. What began as a modest effort to uncover some historic facts about Parkhurst Field turned into an extensive research project.

The effort is "probably more than 10,000 man-hours of research and late-night online articles and websites and contacting professionals in the industry, who have helped us along the way," Karpinski said.

"Through the research on Little League, it led us deeper into the history of the overall park," he said.

One of the first pieces of history he stumbled across was an old newspaper story about the Reds coming to the park in the 1920s for an exhibition game, and the story mentioned Honus Wagner had been at the field 20 years earlier.

"There were clues in that first article we found the history ran much deeper than we expected. From there, it became a compelling story," Karpinski said.

"That park is a piece of significant baseball history in America," he said. "It is truly a compelling national story."

He points out Negro leagues and women's teams played at the field in an era when blacks were discriminated against and women had fewer rights than men. Regardless, Gloversville welcomed the players and the games.

"[This] speaks to the history of Gloversville as much as the history of baseball," he said.

Other than the cultural diversity, one of the most significant parts of the field's history, Karpinski said, may be what happened in July 1907. During that month, the Boston Americans came to the field with Cy Young, then

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A JAG (Johnstown-Amsterdam-Gloversville) player at the park.



Bud Holmes, who played at AJ&G park.

Photos courtesy of the Parkhurst Field Foundation



The 1904 JAG team.

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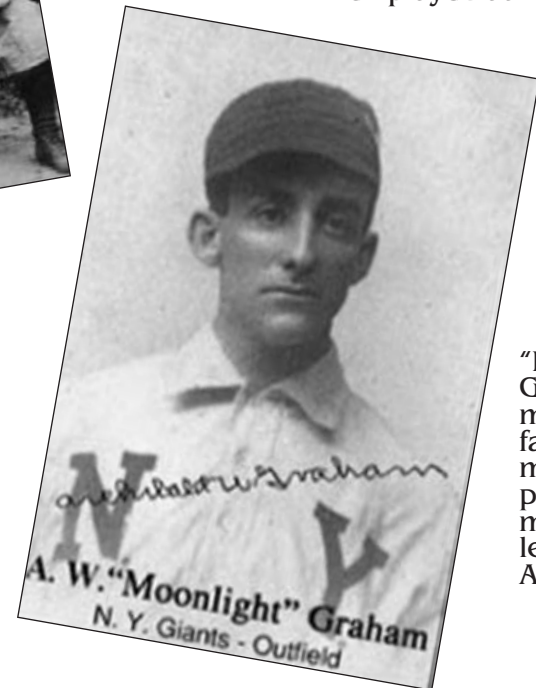
Photos courtesy of
the Parkhurst Field Foundation



The 1907 AJ&G team.



The 1912 Danforths team,
which played at AJ&G park.



"Moonlight"
Graham,
made
famous by a
movie,
played as a
minor
leaguer at
AJ&G park.

Parkhurst first opened as AJ&G park

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"Moonlight" Graham played a game there, and then Honus Wagner played a game with the Pittsburgh Nationals on the field.

Karpinski calls it "the best 30 days of baseball ever."

Hauser said when he and Karpinski started researching the history, it was "really hard to believe such ... legendary figures in the early history of baseball had deep roots and ties to the ... park."

He doesn't want the history of the park to be forgotten.

Hauser also has a personal connection to the park's history. His great-grandfather's brother, professional player George Burns, was a player for the Cincinnati Reds. In 1923, Burns, who had previously lived in Gloversville, convinced his team to play an exhibition game at the field against a local Elks Club team.

Park history

Parkhurst Field opened on July 12, 1906, as the AJ&G Baseball Park and home of the professional New York State League's JAGs (Johnstown-Amsterdam-Gloversville), a minor league affiliate of the Brooklyn Superbas.

The park was owned by the FJ&G Railroad and would become a popular stop on the railroad line (now the Rail Trail) located just beyond the left field wall of the grounds. JAG Park was designed by F.L. Comstock and built by E.A. Satterlee for \$3,088 on six acres of land leased from C.W. Judson on Harrison Street, midway between Gloversville and Johnstown. Sam Lucas, a Gloversville native, built the actual baseball diamond and later was asked to take charge of the New York Giants' Polo Grounds. He also built the grounds at Forbes Field in Pittsburgh in 1909.

JAG Park once featured a grandstand that accommodated 1,500 spectators, and its location was convenient for major league players and many of the world's premier teams to play barnstorming exhibition games.

The Boston (Red Sox) Americans played a game at the park en route to Detroit on July 5, 1907, with their player and manager, Hall of Fame pitcher Cy Young.

On July 24, 1907, Hall of Fame great Honus Wagner and the Pittsburgh (Pirates) Nationals played on the grounds.

Pittsburgh was en route to Philadelphia for a game the next day after

playing a game in Boston the day before. Fourteen members of the team, including other future Hall of Fame players Fred Clarke and Vic Willis, and Hall of Fame owner Barney Dreyfuss made the trip to Gloversville and were taken to the Kingsborough Hotel on South Main Street in Gloversville for dinner after the game.

Joe Birmingham, a player on the JAGs' 1906 team, went on to play for the Cleveland (Indians) Naps and eventually managed "Shoeless" Joe Jackson as part of that team.

Minor league players, including "Moonlight" Graham, the ballplayer/doctor immortalized in the film "Field of Dreams," played at the Gloversville park as part of the Scranton Miners in 1906 and 1907 while pursuing their dream of making it to the major leagues.

Home of the Danforths

The park became home to the Danforth Baseball Association semi-pro team over the next decade and continued to host exhibition games featuring premier teams, including the Cuban Giants, Brooklyn Royal Giants and Philadelphia Colored Giants (Negro League teams) and the all-women's

Continued on Page 4



The Gloversville High School baseball team in 1909.

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The 1935 Elite Club at the park.

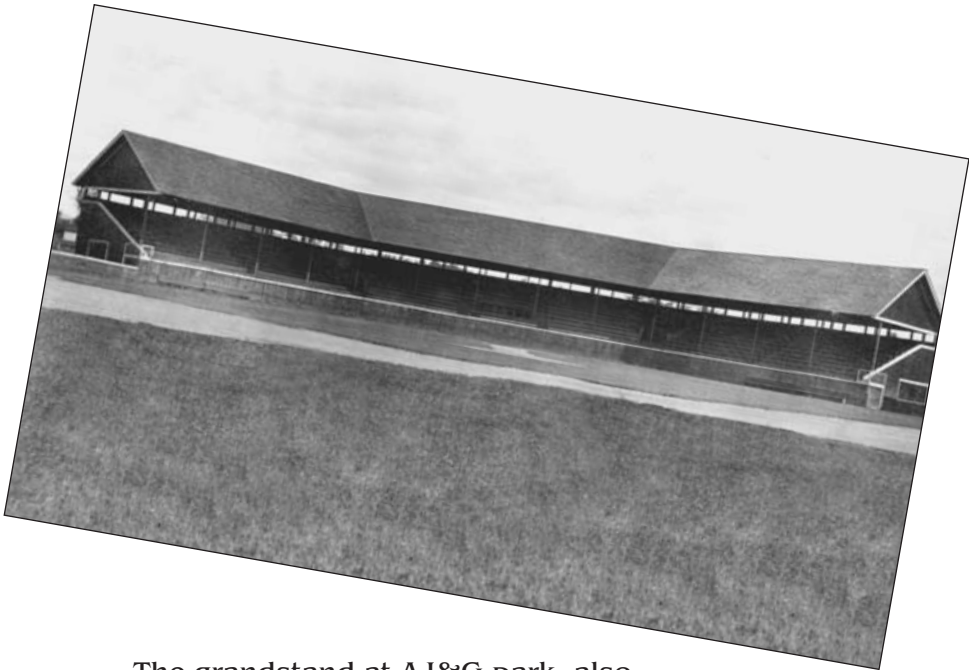


Parkhurst Field in 1926.

Photos courtesy of
the Parkhurst Field Foundation



The Knox Gelatins in the early 1920s.



The grandstand at AJ&G park, also
known as JAG park.

Family bought grounds in 1918

Continued from Page 3
team, the New York Bloomer Girls.

On Oct. 13, 1913, two days after winning the World Series as a starting pitcher with the Philadelphia Athletics, Hall of Fame pitcher Chief Bender played on the Gloversville field.

Parkhurst family buys grounds

In 1918, the FJ&G railroad company gave up its lease on the property and the Parkhurst family purchased the baseball grounds.

On Aug. 14, 1923, when local baseball legend Burns (New York Gi-

ants, Philadelphia Athletics and Cincinnati Reds) came to town with the Reds to play a game against the local Elks team, he brought future Hall of Fame great Edd Roush with him.

For the next 30 years, Parkhurst Field continued to host games until the Parkhurst family allowed the newly formed Gloversville Little League to begin playing on the grounds in 1955.

Little League has played on the grounds since. Over the years, various improvements have been made, including the construction of a softball field and, more recently, T-ball fields.



JAG park opening ceremony.



The 1960 Gloversville Little League all-star team.
Little League started playing on the grounds in 1955.

Photos courtesy of
the Parkhurst Field Foundation



The Garlock team in 1947.



Clubhouse work in 1961.



The Gloversville Little League all-star
team in 1956.

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Vintage game, hall of fame inductions planned

GLOVERSVILLE — The Fulton County Baseball & Sports Hall of Fame will hold its 2016 inductions July 10 at Parkhurst Field between innings of a vintage baseball game.

The event celebrates the 110th anniversary of Parkhurst Field, which initially opened on July 12, 1906, as AJ&G Park.

The 2016 Hall of Fame induction class will feature local baseball legends Russell “Bud” Holmes, Myron “Moose” Grimshaw and “Prince” Hal Schumacher.

Holmes was a Gloversville native who spent 11 years in professional baseball, including the 1915 season with the Boston Red Sox, where he was a teammate of future Hall of Famers Babe Ruth, Tris Speaker and Herb Pennock.

Grimshaw was a Canajoharie native who spent 14 years in professional baseball, which included three seasons in the major leagues with the Boston Nationals (Red Sox), where he was a teammate of future Hall of Famers Cy Young and Jimmy Collins. He would bring the Boston team to play an exhibition game at AJ&G Park (Parkhurst Field) in 1907, and then spent two seasons at Parkhurst Field playing for the Danforths when his major league career was over.

Schumacher, a Dolgeville native, pitched for the New York Giants from 1930 to 1942, and 1946. He was a member of the 1933 and 1936 National League All-Star teams and pitched in both the 1933 and 1936 World Series. He was a member of the 1933 world champion New York Giants. Representatives of all three players’ families will be in attendance to receive their Hall of Fame plaques.

Two games will be played that day, with the first being a vintage baseball game using the Major League Baseball rules in place in 1886. The game will be between the Whatley Pioneers of Western Massachusetts and the local AJ&G team. The AJ&G team will be composed of former Gloversville Little Leaguers who once played at the historic Parkhurst Field site. Both teams will be wearing turn-of-the-century-style uniforms, while using period authentic gloves, balls and bats.

The second game will be a throw-back game between the Gloversville Glovers and the Johnstown Buckskins playing for the Parkhurst Cup following the vintage game. The Gloversville Little League majors all-star team will be wearing throw-back Gloversville Glovers uniforms to honor the professional team that played in Gloversville from the mid-1930s until 1951, while the Johnstown Little League majors all-star team will be wearing throw-back Johnstown Buckskins uniforms to honor the professional team that played in Johnstown in the late 1800s. They will be competing for the traditional Parkhurst Cup.

Event co-chairman Mike Hauser said, “We are excited to be honoring one of upstate New York’s most accomplished professional baseball players with the induction of Schumacher, and two of the most accomplished early 20th-century players with deep connections to Parkhurst Field in Holmes and Grimshaw. It is even more exciting to be able to include them on the same day we celebrate the 110th anniversary of this historic baseball site, of which all three players are connected with.”

At the conclusion of the vintage game, representatives from the Fulton County Museum will be on hand to help unveil the next Fulton County Sports Historical Society road marker, which denotes the sports history site in Fulton County. The Parkhurst Field Museum, which chronicles the history of the facility since 1906, will be open to the public all day.

Admission to the game is \$5, which goes to the HOF Fund.

Gates open at 11:30 a.m., with the Hall of Fame inductions and vintage game beginning at noon.

Parkhurst Field/Gloversville Little League is located at 50 Harrison St.

For more information, visit www.fchof.com or contact Mike Hauser at 725-5565. You can also visit the Parkhurst Field or Fulton County Baseball & Sports HOF Facebook pages.



A 1975 Gloversville Little League majors team.



Parkhurst Field in 1988.

Photos courtesy of the Parkhurst Field Foundation

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The 1973 Gloversville Little League all-star team.



The 1983 Gloversville Little League all-star team.



Work on the Gloversville Little League softball field in 1994.



The 1995 Gloversville Little League softball all-star team.

Photos courtesy of the Parkhurst Field Foundation

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Dedication of
the AJ&G Park
marker at
Parkhurst
Field. Former
Major League
Baseball
Marlins
manager Jack
McKeon is
shown second
from right.

Photo courtesy of
Parkhurst Field
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Parkhurst Field today



A field at
Groversville
Little
League.

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The Leader-Herald/Bill Trojan
Little League players at Parkhurst Field.



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Little League softball players at Parkhurst Field.

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Photo by Bill Trojan

Gloversville Little League opening day at Parkhurst Field in 2012.



The Parkhurst Field Museum at the park.

Photo courtesy of Parkhurst Field Foundation



Photo courtesy of Parkhurst Field Foundation

Recent improvements at the field.



The Leader-Herald/Bill Trojan

The main buildings at Parkhurst Field between the majors and minors fields.



Photo courtesy of Parkhurst Field Foundation

The Parkhurst Field Foundation presents its research to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.



The Parkhurst Field sign at the park.

Photo by Bill Trojan
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Vision for park's future: 'economic diamond'

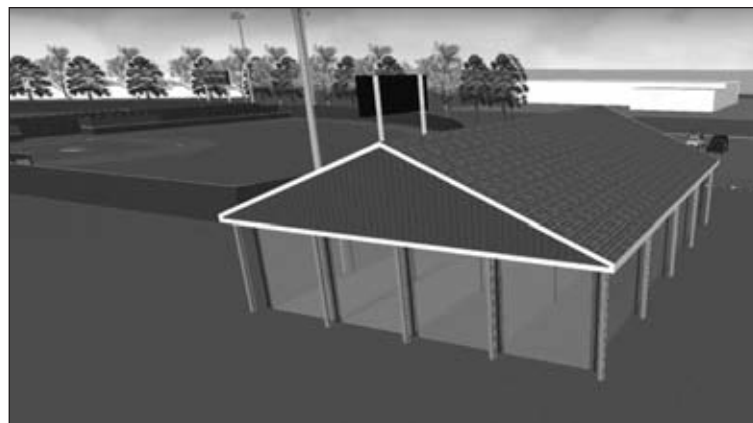


A rendering of an aerial view of the future Parkhurst Field.



A rendering of a future pavilion at the park.

Artist renderings courtesy of the Parkhurst Field Foundation



A rendering of a future batting cage at the park.

GLOVERSVILLE — The Parkhurst Field Foundation is undertaking an effort to develop Parkhurst Field into a destination for Little League and travel teams from around the country.

The foundation, which is seeking to raise \$2.3 million for the project, says its mission is to chronicle the history of the park, dating back to 1906, promote its historic significance, and raise money to revitalize the park.

The foundation, led by Executive Director David Karpinski, has created a development plan for the creation of five regulation fields capable of hosting Little League teams from around the country, a lighted premier field on the original 1906 home plate location of AJ&G Park, a scaled version of the original grandstands, new batting cages, a new concession stand and other amenities on the nine-acre park.

It would look and feel like a 100-year-old ballpark, including a vintage train past the left-field wall to reflect the FJ&G Railroad, which built the original field and picked up and dropped off teams and spectators at the field.

Karpinski said the revitalization of the park would present "an opportunity to be an economic diamond for the area."

"People will come play on this park, spend their money on restaurants, hotels and souvenirs in the area," he said.

"It's one component that could be an economic revitalization of the area," he said.

The new park, if it comes to fruition, would put the city in a positive light, he said.

"It's OK to grow up here and create roots here and be proud of the area you are living in," he said.

"[The revitalized park] also exposes this area to people from outside the area," he said.

"People will come to experience it, to see it, to be part of it," he said.

"If we embrace that as a community, from that will come other opportunities," he said.

Karpinski praised local businesses and organizations that have supported the foundation's efforts. Many of them, he said, have provided services — such as construction and architectural planning, and research — for free.

Mike Hauser, vice president of the foundation, added the improved park "would be one of the greatest facilities, short of Williamsport [Little League headquarters in Pennsylvania] that any Little Leaguer could play in. ... It would become a premier place that our own kids would have access to."

He said wants the park "to be a wow factor ... we want people to see a stadium."

"While we want the park to have an old-time ballpark feel, we will be very cognitive of the Little League history and keeping the connection to Catholic War Veterans who created the Gloversville Little League," Hauser said. "While a few of the fields will shift to new locations on the property, each will still carry the names of the great men who were integral in building the Gloversville Little League into what it is today."

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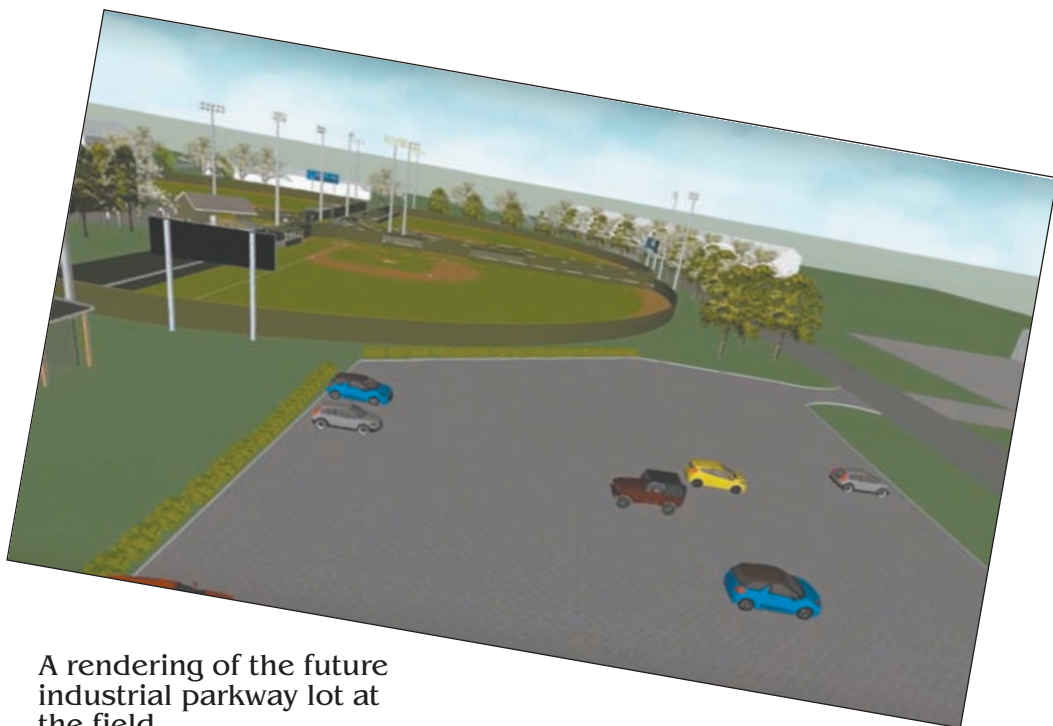
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A rendering of the future industrial parkway lot at the field.



A rendering of the future entrance at Parkhurst Field.



A rendering of a future sign for the park on Harrison Street.



A rendering of the future Kratky concession stand at the park.

Artist renderings courtesy of the Parkhurst Field Foundation



A rendering of the future museum entrance at the field.



A rendering of the future premiere field at the park.

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