

A PATH FORWARD

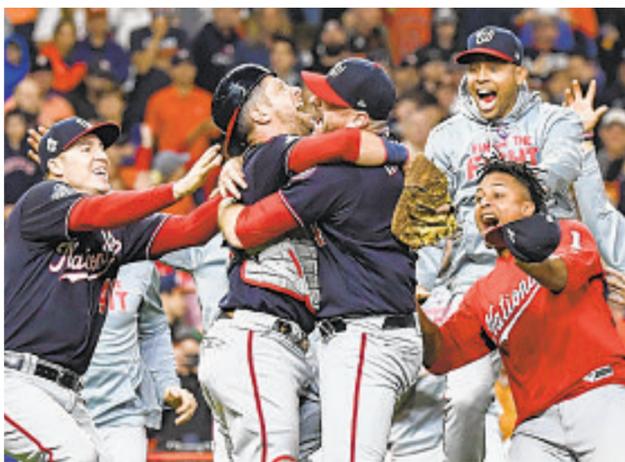
NATIONALS HIT HOMER IN FOSTERING WARMHEARTEDNESS

BY STEVEN P. DINKIN

The Washington Nationals recently won the World Series with a 6-2, Game 7 victory against the Houston Astros. Dubbed the “late May misfits,” the team had a 19-31 record as of May 23. At the time, MLB Stats pegged the team’s chance of winning the World Series at less than 0.1 percent.

The Nationals went on to finish the season with a 93-69 record. They won the National League Wild Card game against the Milwaukee Brewers and then defeated the Los Angeles Dodgers in the Division Series. Each of their victories against the Astros was played on the road in Houston’s Minute Maid Park, defying conventional wisdom about home field advantage.

Although I once lived in Washington, D.C., I can’t claim to be a Nats fan (especially since they defeated my Brewers). But I am taken by the response of their fervent supporters. An Associated Press reporter put it this way: “In a city divided by politics, race and economics, the Nationals were something of a unifier — at least for the time being — as partisans and non-partisans alike congratulated one another on the team’s win.” Tens of thousands of their



JONATHAN NEWTON THE WASHINGTON POST

The Washington Nationals celebrate beating the Houston Astros in Game 7 of the World Series. They also unified a city.

red-shirted fans gathered on Nov. 2 at a downtown parade, described in The Washington Post as a love-filled day of strangers hugging strangers.

They joined in celebration of the team’s first World Series victory since 1924. Was it the odds of this feat that brought Washingtonians together in such a remarkable way — in the very same week as the polarized impeachment

inquiry vote against President Donald Trump? Whether someone was a Democrat or Republican, supportive of the president or not, didn’t matter. Everyone cheered on and cheered for the Nats.

While we often think of sports rivalries, it turns out that sports have a long and unique history of healing and unification. Writing for the World Economic Forum,

Mark Ein describes sport as “an important connective tissue that binds people together, both across and within societies.” Ein cites the use of sports by world leaders to open diplomatic dialogue, such as China’s 1971 invitation to U.S. ping-pong players to participate in exhibition matches there (called “ping-pong diplomacy” at the time).

Leaders also use sport to heal divisions in their own country. Following his contentious appointment as South Africa’s first black president, Nelson Mandela went to a rugby match dressed in the home team’s traditional green jersey and cap. The stadium — largely filled with white South Africans — burst into a chorus of “Nelson! Nelson!”

So, we have seen the power of sport to inspire and unite, in cities as close as Washington, D.C., and in countries as far away as China and South Africa. We have shown an ability to put aside even the deepest of differences for the sake of our beloved teams. How can we harness this same ability for the betterment of society and the sake of our country’s future?

In finding common cause, we are better positioned to engage in the respectful dialogue that can lead to greater understanding.

I’ve been reading “Love Your

Enemies,” by Arthur Brooks. In it, he opines that America is being torn apart, but that our problem isn’t one of incivility, intolerance or even anger. The real problem, Brooks says, is contempt: the conviction that those who disagree with us are not just wrong, but somehow less worthy. To overcome contempt, Brooks recommends that we practice warmheartedness — a lesson he learned from the Dalai Lama, who prays each day for China’s leaders to live good and happy lives. His people were exiled by the Chinese when he was just a teenager.

Warmheartedness is the precise feeling we get when we come together at a local park to cheer our kids at a hard-fought soccer match. It’s the feeling that Nats fans shared on the streets of Washington, D.C. As the sometimes-fractious holidays near, the practice of warmheartedness could be our most important and valued gift.

Steven P. Dinkin is president of the National Conflict Resolution Center (NCRC), a San Diego-based organization that is working to create innovative solutions to challenging issues, including intolerance and incivility. NCRC is nationally recognized for its conflict management and communication strategies. To learn about NCRC’s programming, visit www.ncrconline.com.

NOTEBOOKS

From Union-Tribune reporting staff

PUBLIC SAFETY: LUKE GARRETT

Grant supports drug DUI prosecutions

The San Diego City Attorney’s Office announced last week that it had been awarded nearly \$200,000 to support a highly-trained team of prosecutors who handle cases involving people accused of driving under the influence of drugs.

The grant — of a little more than \$198,000 — was funded by the California Office of Traffic Safety.

“Driving under the influence of drugs can have devastating effects on San Diego drivers and their families,” City Attorney Mara Elliott said in a statement. “Our City continues to see DUI cases involving the misuse of prescription drugs, marijuana, and illegal drugs, often in combination with alcohol.”

The grant money will be used to fund a unit of attorneys who handle what are known as “vertical” prosecutions, meaning the same deputy city attorney assigned to the case in the beginning will stick with it through its resolution. It is common for certain kinds of cases to not be vertically assigned, meaning they’re handled by differ-

ent prosecutors as the case moves through the court system.

The City Attorney’s Office handles misdemeanor cases in San Diego.

“This grant allows our highly specialized prosecution team to work closely with law enforcement to hold accountable those who endanger our community,” Elliott said.

Last year, the state Office of Traffic Safety provided the San Diego program with more than \$250,000 in funding. Of the nearly 3,000 DUI cases filed in the city last year, the specialized drug-DUI unit worked more than 200 cases, according to the City Attorney’s Office.

Barbara Rooney, director of the Office of Traffic Safety, said the grant holds drug-impaired drivers responsible for their actions.

“Prosecution programs ensure drivers who decide to drive impaired and put others on the road at risk are held accountable,” Rooney said in a statement. “Accountability is important in highlighting the dangers and consequences of driving under the influence.”

THE READERS’ REPRESENTATIVE: ADRIAN VORE

Should quote have been tweaked?

There are two schools of thought in journalism on quotes: The words are not to be altered at all; or, they can be tweaked occasionally to correct minor grammatical mistakes.

Reader Katherine Hoyt of Chula Vista spotted a grammatical mistake in a quote that she said should have been corrected. The quote had a twist to it — it was provided through an interpreter.

The quote appeared Oct. 25 in a story on A1 about the victim of a hate attack on a San Diego trolley. The victim was a 17-year-old Syrian refugee. The reporter, Lyndsay Winkley, interviewed the boy and his mother through the help of the interpreter.

Here’s the quote from the mother to which Hoyt referred: “All we are looking for is a safe environment where me and my kids can live with dignity and respect.”

“We have to assume that the woman was speaking correct Arabic,” Hoyt wrote. “She did not deserve to have her words translated into bad English and then put into the newspaper of a major U.S. city. Very often on the scene interpretation is not very good so

wouldn’t it be the obligation of the journalist reporting the event to turn what is said into good English? That ‘me and my kids can live’ was so painful to my ears and I felt so bad for that woman!”

I believe the slight change in replacing “me” with “I” would have been OK, especially since the quote came through a translator.

Public safety editor Dana Littlefield, the editor on the story, disagrees. “If the quote is understandable, then we quote the person.”

Littlefield said it’s a matter of being understood. If the language was so broken that the reader could not understand what was being said, then the quote would be paraphrased.

I don’t believe grammar should be fixed in all cases. I would never change a “who” to a “whom,” for example. In the case of the translated quote, I believe the tweak would have been acceptable.

What do you think? And, what do you think of quoted matter that came from a written source, such as a document or email? Can punctuation be corrected? Write to readers.rep@sduuniontribune.com.

BIOTECH: BRADLEY J. FIKES

Stem-cell therapy and diabetes

Stem-cell therapies are becoming increasingly versatile. Two presentations at this fall’s Cell and Gene Meeting on the Mesa in Carlsbad illustrated how the field is maturing.

San Diego’s ViaCyte is developing two versions of an experimental diabetes treatment, using insulin-producing cells grown from embryonic stem cells. The cells are encapsulated in a device that’s implanted below the skin.

One version, called PEC-Direct, shows intermittent signs of producing therapeutic levels of insulin, the first time this has been seen, said Paul Laikind, ViaCyte’s CEO.

This was seen indirectly through the presence of a byproduct of insulin production. However, production isn’t reliable enough to substitute for injected insulin, Laikind said. ViaCyte is now working to improve reliability.

PEC-Direct is meant for the most severe cases of type 1, or insulin-dependent, diabetes. It allows blood vessels to grow into the device to contact the cells. To prevent an

immune reaction, patients get immunosuppressive drugs.

The other product, PEC-Encap, shields the cells from direct contact. Immune-suppressing drugs aren’t required. However, it didn’t work well in early testing, because scar tissue built up around the implant.

Another company at the meeting, Cleveland-based Athersys, reported on its multi-purpose cell product, MultiStem. It’s in late-stage or Phase 3 testing for stroke, caused by blood clots. It’s also in testing for heart attacks, and being considered for brain trauma.

MultiStem is a proprietary cell that can be given “off the shelf” to different patients. It’s obtained from adult bone marrow.

Athersys is planning a midstage, or Phase 2, trial of MultiStem in trauma patients. The goal is to temporarily reduce inflammation, which goes to excess in trauma.

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MILITARY: ANDREW DYER

Flood of pictures show Navy mice

Not long after an alleged rodent infestation at Navy facilities on San Clemente Island made headlines, Naval personnel working on the island began emailing the San Diego Union-Tribune photos of what they called a “crisis.”

Then we received more photos. And more. They kept coming.

The photos were sent anonymously, so it’s unclear where on the island they were taken. However, the Navy recently acknowledged it had a mouse issue.

In one screenshot of a Snapchat post, two people wearing camouflage stand around a collection of 26 glue traps with more than 50 dead mice on them. The caption reads: “I don’t want anyone else on the island to talk about their mouse problem. We have a mouse crisis.”

Navy Capt. Timothy J. Slentz, commanding officer of Naval Base Coronado, said Thursday that the photo, although unsettling, might not tell the whole story, because it is unknown how long it took for the traps to capture the mice.

“They’re gross; I get it. Nobody likes to see sticky traps,” Slentz said. “I’m not sure how much time those traps had to fill. Not every building has people in it all the time.”

Slentz said he was last on the island Oct. 29, where he ran the island 5K event. He said he saw traps with mice collected in them.

According to Slentz, the Navy has spent \$60,000 this summer on pest control after winter rains led to a mouse population boom.

There are 29 endangered or threatened species of wildlife on the island, including some that eat rodents. That’s why poisoning them is not an option, Slentz said.

“We hope the foxes and birds will help take care of the mice,” he said.

Slentz said personnel on the island could do a number of things to help minimize the presence of mice in their spaces, such as not leaving food or trash out and keeping doors closed. He also said leadership is available to respond to persistent problem areas.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

THE BERLIN WALL FELL 30 YEARS AGO

“THE WALL is gone!” shouted tens of thousands of East Germans after the Communist state threw open its borders, allowing citizens to travel freely to the West 30 years ago this week.

After standing for years as a symbol of the Cold War the Berlin Wall, which had divided East and West Berlin since 1961, came down Nov. 9, 1989.

Split into two countries after Nazi Germany’s defeat in World War II, the two Germanys were formally reunited on Oct. 3, 1990.

From the San Diego Tribune, Friday, Nov. 10, 1989:

BERLINERS REJOICE;
THE WALL IS GONE!

BERLIN (AP) — East Germany today lifted permanently all travel restrictions on its citizens while West Germany’s foreign minister said huge holes for new border crossings would be knocked out of the Berlin Wall, which for 28 years trapped East Germans in their rigidly controlled country.

Earlier, tens of thousands of giddy East Germans streamed into West Berlin and other parts of West Germany after a heady night of celebrating the opening of the Berlin Wall and western borders for the first time in 28 years.

“The Wall Is Gone! Berlin Is Again Berlin,” proclaimed a banner headline in the West Berlin newspaper Bild Zeitung. Revelers in downtown West Berlin today waved copies of the newspaper, popped cham-

pagne corks and lit sparklers.

Interior Minister Friedrich Dickel said yesterday’s removal of travel restrictions to the West will be permanent.

“The new travel regulation is not a temporary measure,” Dickel told East German television. “It is permanent and will be the foundation of a new travel law.”

Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher of West Germany told reporters in East Berlin that 18 new border crossings will be made in the 9-foot-high wall. He said East Germany would begin knocking huge holes in the wall this evening.

The announcements capped one of the most dramatic shifts in postwar Europe, giving the once penned-up East German people freedom of travel for the first time since the



Berlin Wall was built in 1961.

East Germany first opened its borders yesterday, but until today there had been some uncertainty about the scope of the move.

Dickel said police and travel authorities had been instructed to expeditiously deal with all requests for trips abroad, “especially to the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and to West Berlin.”

All efforts will be made to grant permission for travel or emigration the same day the request is received, Dickel said. Visas for private trips will be stamped in passports. If travelers do not have passports and want to leave immediately, their identity cards will be stamped, said Dickel.

“Last night, the Germans were the happiest people in the world,” West Berlin Mayor Walter Momper said.

The party continued today, as revelers popped champagne corks, lit sparklers and embraced on both sides of the border.

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl cut short his visit to Poland to meet with his Cabinet and arrived in West Berlin. He hoped to talk with new East German leader Egon Krenz.

“The Berlin Wall will come down, and Berlin will live,” said former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, who was mayor of West Berlin when the Berlin Wall went up in 1961.

Krenz, in a continuing effort to stop an exodus of East Germans to the West, today fired four more members of the ruling Politburo and launched an investigation of “gross mistakes” made by the leadership under his predecessor, Erich Honecker.

The Politburo, which normally has 21 members, was streamlined to 11 two days ago. It lost one more full member today and three candidate, or non-voting, members.

East and West Berliners joined in dancing atop the Berlin Wall during the celebrations, which lasted from about 10 p.m. yesterday until about 5 a.m. today.

More than 50,000 East Berliners crossed into West Berlin during the night, said the West German radio station Sender Freies Berlin.

Only about 1,000 of them planned to stay, the radio said.

HISTORICAL PHOTOS AND ARTICLES FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE ARCHIVES ARE COMPILED BY MERRIE MONTEAGUDO. SEARCH THE U-T HISTORIC ARCHIVES AT NEWSLIBRARY.COM/SITES/SDUB