

Maryland's trusted source for business, legal and government news

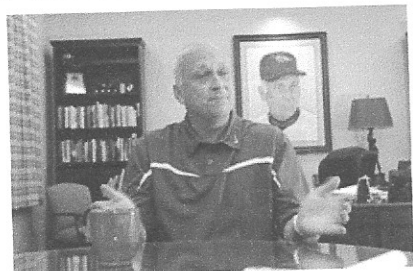
**NOMINATE**  
NOMINATIONS CLOSE FEBRUARY 6

CLICK HERE

- ### EDITOR'S PICKS
- Our best, right now.
- Hogan legislation focuses on redistricting, ethics and lobbying reform**  
by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 19
  - Franchot announces Taxpayer Protection Act with Hogan's support**  
by Heather Cobun | Jan. 19
  - Justice Reinvestment Act faces implementation challenges, lawmakers told**  
by Steve Lash | Jan. 19
  - Ex-state lawmaker Bohanan's 'consulting' raises eyebrows**  
by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 18
  - Former Md. deputy attorney general joins DLA Piper**  
by Daily Record Staff | Jan. 18

## Perfect pitchman

By: admin | July 26, 2007



Even though he hasn't donned a uniform in more than five years, Ripken remains as viable a brand as he was during his playing days.

As Cal Ripken Jr. enters the Baseball Hall of Fame Sunday, the work ethic that got him to Cooperstown is the same one that makes him attractive as a spokesman.

"Who wouldn't want to be associated with Cal?" asked David Warschawski, founder of Baltimore public relations and branding firm Warschawski. "Here is a guy who stands for everything you want to stand for: credibility and reliability."

Even though he hasn't donned a uniform in more than five years, Ripken remains as viable a brand as he was during his playing days. With a "Q-rating" of 41, he is still one of the most popular athletes, and one of the top three in all of sports. He trails only Michael Jordan and is

one ahead of Tiger Woods. A "Q-rating" is a marketing tool that measures likeability.

At present, he is endorsing 11 companies.

Ripken Baseball would not discuss how much he receives from endorsements.

"Arguably, Cal is the strongest baseball pitchman out there," Warschawski said. "He has a tremendous cross-section of appeal. Here is a guy who showed up to work every day for 21 years. He has the credibility that when he says something, people believe it."

Cal Ripken, Jr.'s Coca-Cola commercial.

For companies, that association goes a long way.

Comcast Cable hired Ripken in March 2003 to make commercials and appearances in its mid-Atlantic market.

"Cal has shown a high level of involvement and commitment in working with Comcast, and the partnership over the years has been great," said Mark Watts, vice president of marketing for the company's Maryland/Delaware/Richmond region.

Watts said that the company aligned itself with Ripken because he is a "living legend" and it made sense, especially in the mid-Atlantic region, to partner with him.

But that same credibility that makes him so popular is a double-edged sword.

"Great spokesmen have to align themselves carefully," Warschawski said.

Ripken needs to be very cautious about what he chooses to endorse, said Ronald T. Rust, a marketing professor at the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business.

Rust said Ripken's appeal is limited, but in a positive way.

"His image needs to be linked to the product," Rust said. "For instance, if he's pitching a product like lawn mowers, he'll get a response, but if he's signed to sell opera tickets, he might not do as well."

A recent commercial for The Holiday Inn which mentions his Hall of Fame selection.

Ripken said he is aware of the pitfalls and, to maintain his public persona, he is very careful about the products he endorses.

Early in his career he was given the opportunity to endorse several products, one of them being underwear, at about the same time he was offered the chance to promote Esskay hot dogs and milk.

"You know, it wasn't by chance that I chose the milk and the Esskay because those were comfortable. I ate hot dogs. I drank milk," Ripken said, then added, laughing: "I wear underwear, but I don't go around parading in my underwear and get my picture taken. And, I couldn't get past that even though, maybe, the

### CONTACT US

Call us at (443) 524-8100, or email or visit us.

WHAT DOES  
**NATURAL GAS**  
MEAN TO  
**MARYLANDERS?**

**LOWER CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS**

CLICK TO LEARN MORE

Paid for by the American Petroleum Institute

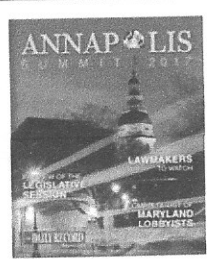
### FEATURED VIDEO

### DIGITAL EDITION



Subscribers to The Daily Record can access the digital edition archive.

### SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS



Browse industry reports in the special publications digital edition archive.

### FAMILY LAW

### @MDDAILYRECORD

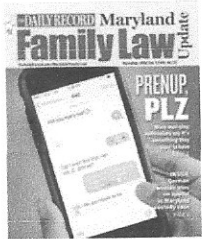
Tweets by @MDDailyRecord

- The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord

Marriott plans 22-story tower at new Bethesda HQ  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/20/mar...
- The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord

Chase Brexton names new president and CEO  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/19/cha...
- The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord

Embed View on Twitter



Subscribers to Maryland Family Law Update can access the **digital edition** archive.

**BUSINESS NOTICES**

- The Dowell Family Fndn
- Homewood Federal Savings Bank
- Kopernik Bank
- Midstate Commuinity Bank
- Ramaker & Associates, Inc

**LEGAL NOTICES**

- Name Change - Johansson, Calvin G
- Family - Unknown Fr
- Name Change - Serpas, Veronica A
- Name Change - Harjivan, Kinnain B
- Notices - Godoy, Et Al.

deal structure and what it would mean, but it wasn't who I was."

There is another limit to Ripken's appeal.

While to Marylanders and baseball fans, Ripken is undoubtedly a superstar, Ryan Schinman of Platinum Rye Entertainment, a New York-based entertainment consultant for Fortune 500 companies, said his star doesn't shine much beyond that core demographic.

"Unless you are a true baseball fan, he just is not a household name," Schinman said.

*Harford County residents check out a life-sized ad for Lays.*

The problem, he said, is that Ripken played in Baltimore, a smaller market, his entire career. While this is one of the reasons he is attractive to baseball fans and those in the state, he didn't get the exposure he would have had he played in New York or Los Angeles.

"There is no question that he is one of the greatest players to ever play the game, but if he had played for the [Los Angeles] Dodgers or the [New York] Yankees, endorsement-wise he could have been of the caliber of a [Michael] Jordan or a [Derek] Jeter or a Tiger [Woods]," Schinman said.

But marketing professor Rust disagrees.

"The Cal Ripken brand is strong and not just in Baltimore, and it spreads beyond baseball," he said.

Rust said the reason for his large following has to do as much with Ripken as a person as his play.

"People have such an attachment for his performance as an athlete, but you can't discount his personality, physical appearance," he said.

That "look," and his reputation, gets him the attention of those who might be casual fans of baseball or not know the game at all.

"He's the 'All-American Boy,'" Baltimore's Warschawski said. "It's more than a coincidence that he endorses Chevrolet and hot dogs."

But being a brand, no matter how profitable, does have its drawbacks.

All three marketing specialists said the same thing: The major hang-up to being a brand is that it's tenuous.

So tenuous, in fact, that something as simple as stating an opinion could do irreparable damage to his reputation, Rust said.

"No sooner than he was to express a liberal political stance or a conservative political stance, he would lose half his audience," he said.

This means, whatever his political or social views, politicians will probably never get a much-coveted endorsement from him, Rust said.

"It goes back to knowing which products you can and can't represent," he said.

But choosing which ads to do and who to endorse goes beyond simply protecting an image.

While Ripken does not like to be considered a brand, he understands the advantages his image gives him in his business dealings.

"I look at it as a platform," he said. "It gives you access to a lot more resources. Your phone calls are usually returned pretty promptly and you can get to anybody that you really want to."

Share this:

- Email
- Print
- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Google

**LEAVE A REPLY**

Logged in as max.franz@thedailyrecord.com. Log out?

I'm not a robot

reCAPTCHA  
Privacy · Terms

Post Comment

**Find legal jobs!**  
Click here to sign up for your daily alert  
THE DAILY RECORD

Maryland's trusted source for business, legal and government news

**NOMINATE**  
NOMINATIONS CLOSE FEBRUARY 6

[CLICK HERE](#)

- ### EDITOR'S PICKS
- Our best, right now.
- Hogan legislation focuses on redistricting, ethics and lobbying reform**  
by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 19
  - Franchot announces Taxpayer Protection Act with Hogan's support**  
by Heather Cobun | Jan. 19
  - Justice Reinvestment Act faces implementation challenges, lawmakers told**  
by Steve Lash | Jan. 19
  - Ex-state lawmaker Bohanan's 'consulting' raises eyebrows**  
by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 18
  - Former Md. deputy attorney general joins DLA Piper**  
by Daily Record Staff | Jan. 18

## Cal's coattails

By: admin   July 26, 2007



John Maroon: 'Having Cal as a client had helped my business immeasurably ... you gain credibility simply by being associated with him.'

John Maroon was tired. He missed a button on his shirt near the waistline. The commute to his Marriotsville office had started with a red-eye flight from San Francisco where he had been helping Cal Ripken Jr. with press requests during the All-Star Game.

Before San Francisco, he was in Connecticut with another client.

"I've got giant bags under my eyes," he said. But his smile was warm and unassuming.

Maroon opened his public relations office, Maroon PR, a little over a year ago after working with Ripken for years as the Orioles top media officer and later as Ripken's personal media

representative. He has 14 clients now, including Ripken.

As the popular player enters the Hall of Fame this weekend, Maroon is one of a handful of people close to Ripken who have been aided in their careers by the Ironman's coattails.

"Having Cal as a client has helped my business immeasurably. Because of his amazing reputation, you gain credibility simply by being associated with him," Maroon said.

He has three pictures of himself with Ripken in his office. He calls one his Forrest Gump shot. Maroon is in the background while former President Bill Clinton shakes Ripken's hand.

Maroon's clients range from the Babe Ruth Museum and real estate firm The Acclaim Group to Opening Day Partners, which owns minor league teams, consults on baseball field design and is headed by Brooks Robinson, another Orioles Hall of Famer.

"I am sure [having Cal as a client] has helped us get a foot in the door many times," Maroon said.

In fact, Kristine Lilly, the "Iron Woman of Soccer," came to Maroon's firm because of his work with Ripken.

Maroon began his media career in the public relations department of the American League before moving on to the Cleveland Indians as the team's No. 2 media officer in 1990. In Ohio, he gained credibility for his sensitive handling of a team tragedy when two young players were killed in a freak boating accident during a picnic.

The national media had to write about the incident. But they didn't want to intrude too much, Maroon recalled. It was suggested that perhaps a different player could be made available each day for questions to give the media a fresh angle.

Maroon and his co-worker decided to run with the idea, holding press conferences with various players appearing to talk about their reactions.

"I thought that scored our department a lot of points with the national media," he said.

Maroon's good reputation traveled to the Orioles when Cleveland pitching coach Phil Regan left to become manager of the O's. Maroon started with the Baltimore team as the top media officer the year Ripken would go on to break Lou Gehrig's consecutive game record.

Ripken had two concerns as he closed in on Gehrig's streak. He didn't want the media attention around the event to be bothersome to his teammates, and he didn't want to talk about it every day.

Borrowing an idea from Maroon's observations on how Nolan Ryan finished his 27-season career, Maroon suggested Ripken hold an informal press conference in the dugout in each city. The idea was to let the media know that was the day Ripken would answer streak questions and that was the only day Ripken would take streak questions.

Ripken balked somewhat at first. "I don't like making this assumption that people want to talk to me,"

### CONTACT US

Call us at (443) 524-8100, or email or visit us.

**WHAT DOES NATURAL GAS MEAN TO MARYLANDERS?**

**LOWER COSTS FOR BUSINESSES**

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

Paid for by the American Petroleum Institute

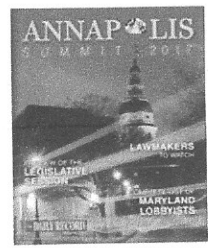
### FEATURED VIDEO

### DIGITAL EDITION



Subscribers to The Daily Record can access the digital edition archive.

### SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS



Browse industry reports in the special publications digital edition archive.

### FAMILY LAW

### @MDDAILYRECORD

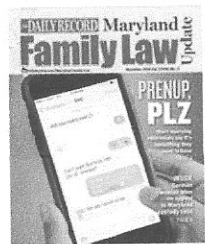
Tweets by @MDDailyRecord

- The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord

Marriott plans 22-story tower at new Bethesda HQ  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/20/mar...
- The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord

Chase Brexton names new president and CEO  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/19/cha...
- The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord

Embed   View on Twitter



Subscribers to Maryland Family Law Update can access the **digital edition archive**.

**BUSINESS NOTICES**

The Dowell Family Fndn  
Homewood Federal Savings Bank  
Kopernik Bank  
Midstate Community Bank  
Ramaker & Associates, Inc

**LEGAL NOTICES**

Name Change - Johansson, Calvin G  
Family - Unknown Fr  
Name Change - Serpas, Veronica A  
Name Change - Harjivan, Kinnain B  
Notices - Godoy, Et Al.

Maroon recalled the player saying. But Maroon pushed him to try it. The plan worked.

"That was the beginning of a very good relationship between him and me," Maroon said.

The two used that strategy earlier this month with the All-Star Game Ripken attended in San Francisco and the new theme everyone in the media wanted to talk to Ripken about — the Hall of Fame.

Not all those buoyed by Ripken's popularity have worked mostly behind the scenes. Ripken's family has been seen from time to time in commercials. His daughter Rachel was seen in a Coca-Cola commercial that watched him leave the stadium with her after breaking Gehrig's record.

His brother Bill and mother Vi appear in a commercial chatting about a ballgame for telecommunications firm CloseCall America. Another upcoming ad for the phone firm shows Bill writing messages on baseballs and then hitting them out of the stadium to the family home.

It is unusual for relatives of an athlete to appear in commercials. Only about 5 percent of athlete-related endorsements include members from an athlete's family, according to lawyer and sports agent Ron Shapiro's estimate.

"You have to be at the highest level of prominence, because for there to be recognition of the family member it has to be tied to someone [big]," Shapiro said.

Bill Ripken played in the major leagues for 12 years, though he never attained the superstar status of his older brother.

The two brothers founded Ripken Baseball after retiring from the major leagues. The baseball empire sells authenticated sports memorabilia, owns two minor league baseball teams, runs a foundation to teach disadvantaged kids lessons of life and health through baseball, and consults on baseball field design, among other things.

"In big-league baseball, nobody does you any favors," Bill Ripken said. But Bill said their business has benefited from Cal's fame.

"He has the ability to get to places that few people can get," Bill said.

In some ways, the roles they played on the field continue off the field in their business. Bill, a second baseman by trade who also filled in as a utility player, continues to fill in where needed for the business. Sometimes that is vision work and sometimes it is the nitty-gritty details.

"It's kind of doing anything you need to do for the good of the squad," Bill said about his role.

When Bill came up with the idea to build a three-tiered deck in Ripken Stadium's left field, he pushed the idea along from concept to completion. The desirable seats quickly became big sellers this year. They are nearly booked for the rest of the year.

"I think in a lot of ways Bill is underappreciated because of his name and his brother," Maroon said.

Bill also has taught baseball clinics for Ripken Baseball youth camps and co-produced instructional baseball materials, including a DVD and book entitled "Play Baseball The Ripken Way."

On XM Radio's Sports Nation channel, Bill co-hosts a two-hour show on Saturday and Sunday with Cal.

"Obviously Cal is the national name. But Bill is a Ripken name, and it takes pressure off Cal so he can do more," Shapiro said about the show. "It has been a great dual effort."

Share this:

Email Print Facebook LinkedIn Twitter Google+

**LEAVE A REPLY**

---

Logged in as max.franz@thedailyrecord.com. Log out?

I'm not a robot

Find legal jobs!

Click here to sign up for your daily alert

THE DAILY RECORD



Maryland's trusted source for business, legal and government news

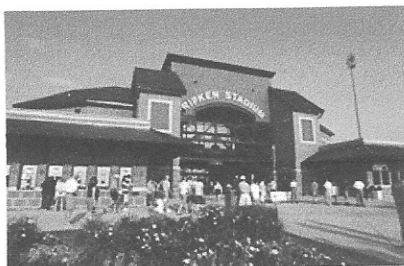
**NOMINATE** [CLICK HERE](#)  
NOMINATIONS CLOSE FEBRUARY 6

## EDITOR'S PICKS

- Our best, right now.
- Hogan legislation focuses on redistricting, ethics and lobbying reform**  
by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 19
- Franchot announces Taxpayer Protection Act with Hogan's support**  
by Heather Cobun | Jan. 19
- Justice Reinvestment Act faces implementation challenges, lawmakers told**  
by Steve Lash | Jan. 19
- Ex-state lawmaker Bohanan's 'consulting' raises eyebrows**  
by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 18
- Former Md. deputy attorney general joins DLA Piper**  
by Daily Record Staff | Jan. 18

## Home ownership

By: admin July 26, 2007



Since their inaugural season in 2002, Ripken's Aberdeen IronBirds have sold out Ripken Stadium's 6,000 seats for every game.

What Orioles fan doesn't dream about it? Cal Ripken Jr., the Ironman, one day owning the hometown team.

It's a much-discussed fantasy in the stands, on talk radio and in barbershops from Arbutus to Frostburg.

But how would Ripken do as owner of the Orioles? Would the magic he produced on the field translate to the owner's box at Oriole Park at Camden Yards?

"Look around," said self-proclaimed "lifelong Orioles and Ripken fan" Arnold DiAngelo on an early July night at Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen. "If you want to see if it'll work, all you need to

do is look right here."

DiAngelo waved his arms wide as he spoke, showing off the nearly packed stands. Anyone who has doubts about how Ripken would do running the Orioles just needs to look at the IronBirds franchise, said the Havre de Grace resident.

"You can't look at this and not be impressed," DiAngelo said.

Ripken bought the Utica (N.Y.) Blue Sox for \$3 million, moved it to Aberdeen and changed its name to the IronBirds.

Since its first season in 2002, the Orioles' Single-A affiliate has sold out its 6,000 seats for every game and has become a fan favorite that fields a competitive team and seems to be only growing.

The team drew 235,905 last year. While less than some of the other Maryland minor-league clubs, the IronBirds play about half the number of games as the others, 74.

The Aberdeen IronBirds took two out of three games from the Lowell (Massachusetts) Spinners during their most recent homestand, July 17-19. As of Thursday, they sat in third place in the McNamara Division of the N.Y. Penn League with a record of 16-18.

The IronBirds shutout the Lowell Spinners 6-0 in the opening game of a three-game series on Tuesday, July 17. [Hear an audio clip of highlights from the game.](#)

The next day, the IronBirds again topped the Spinners, 6-2. [Hear an audio clip of highlights from the game.](#)

In the final game of the series, the Spinners avoided being swept with a 7-3 victory over the IronBirds. [Hear an audio clip of highlights from the game.](#)

The Bowie Baysox drew 285,277; the Frederick Keys 280,034; and the Hagerstown Suns brought in 149,188. Those three teams, though, play about 140 games, half of them at home.

But as much as the success of the IronBirds has to do with Ripken, it has a lot to do with the state of minor league baseball in general.

According to Minor League Baseball, total regular-season attendance has increased in 20 of the last 24 seasons. It has exceeded 35 million for seven seasons.

"This is a great place to play," said Zach Britton, a pitcher for the IronBirds. "Not only because it's a nice ballpark, but actually playing for one of the legends of the game makes it more special."

DiAngelo said fans feel the same way.

"You walk into this place and it's an experience," he said. "Cal knows how to put on a show and knowing it's him and his attitude toward winning makes it that much better."

Ripken is trying to apply the same magic in Augusta, Ga., with the Augusta GreenJackets, which he bought

## CONTACT US

Call us at (443) 524-8100, or email or visit us.



WHAT DOES  
**NATURAL GAS**  
MEAN TO  
**MARYLANDERS?**

**CLEANER AIR**

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

Paid for by the American Petroleum Institute.

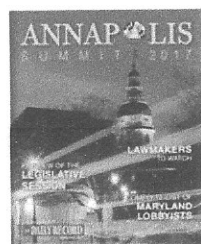
## FEATURED VIDEO

## DIGITAL EDITION



Subscribers to The Daily Record can access the digital edition archive.

## SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS



Browse industry reports in the special publications digital edition archive.

## FAMILY LAW

## @MDDAILYRECORD

Tweets by @MDDailyRecord

**TDR** The Daily Record  
@MDDailyRecord

Marriott plans 22-story tower at new Bethesda HQ  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/19/20/mar...

2h

**TDR** The Daily Record  
@MDDailyRecord

Chase Brexton names new president and CEO  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/19/cha...

4h

**TDR** The Daily Record  
@MDDailyRecord

Embed

View on Twitter



Subscribers to Maryland Family Law Update can access the **digital edition archive**.

**BUSINESS NOTICES**

The Dowell Family Fndn  
Homewood Federal Savings Bank  
Kopernik Bank  
Midstate Community Bank  
Ramaker & Associates, Inc

**LEGAL NOTICES**

Name Change - Johansson, Calvin G  
Family - Unknown Fr  
Name Change - Serpas, Veronica A  
Name Change - Harjivan, Kinnain B  
Notices - Godoy, Et Al.

in 2005. The GreenJackets are Single-A affiliates of the San Francisco Giants.

The GreenJackets aren't having the same attendance success as the IronBirds. The team drew 155,910 in 2006, about 2,260 per game. That was up from 2005 when it drew nearly 33,000 fewer fans. The stadium seats about 4,200 and the team plays 69 home games.

Ripken has said he would like to one day own 10 minor league teams.

But underneath the veneer of the packed ballpark on a perfect summer night for baseball, two questions remain about Ripken and the purchase of the Orioles.

The first is: Does Ripken even want to own a major league franchise?

"I'm pretty content doing what I'm doing now," he said. "But if the opportunity would come around, I would certainly look seriously at it."

Ripken, who said he has a "very good relationship" with Orioles majority partner Peter Angelos, said he has expressed an interest to Angelos about wanting to be an owner.

He said the two talk "periodically" about Angelos' plans for the team.

"Sometimes they seem like they take a little bit more serious tones, sometimes not," Ripken said. "So, you know, [buying the team] would depend upon whether Mr. Angelos wants to sell and what the timing of the sale would be."

The second question is a little tougher to answer.

Can success with a minor league club translate to success with a major league baseball team replete with multimillion dollar contracts, dwindling attendance and the ever-present pressure to succeed in a division that has been dominated by the free-spending New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox?

As the owner of a minor league team, Ripken does not have to concern himself or his staff with player personnel, which is handled by the Orioles.

This allows team officials to focus on marketing the team and bringing in fans.

However, as the owner of the Orioles, Ripken would have to oversee nearly \$86 million in player expenses, farm systems and scouting.

This is on top of the day-to-day management of the stadium and all the other details that go with running a major league club.

"It's a long way from Aberdeen to Oriole Park," said Zenophon A. Abraham, president and CEO of Sports Business Simulations Inc., a California sports consultant.

Abraham said there is a misconception that running a minor league club automatically means that an owner can have the same success at the next level.

"If that were true," he said, "it would just be a matter of having enough money."

Minor league team owners focus on filling small ballparks with very small or even no television contracts in tiny markets, he said.

"It's a whole different beast when you are dealing with an MLB team and all that goes along with it," he said.

Abraham said he wasn't sure whether Ripken could make the transition. "It's not easy," he said.

There is also the issue of money and whether Ripken can afford the team.

Despite attendance drops and on-the-field problems, a 2007 ranking of the value of baseball teams by Forbes magazine found the Orioles to be valued at \$395 million.

Ripken and his representatives declined to talk about how much money the former Oriole has, but he would almost certainly have to put together a group of similarly wealthy people in order to be able to buy the Orioles.

In the past, speculation on who might buy the team from Angelos has included present limited partners Steve Geppi and Tom Clancy, as well as Legg Mason's Raymond "Chip" Mason.

In Aberdeen, though, fans don't need experts or analysis to hail Ripken as a conquering hero.

"Come on," said Donald Martin of Bel Air. "It's simple. You put a good product on the field and people will go to Baltimore just like they come here."

Share this:



**LEAVE A REPLY**

Logged in as max.franz@thedailyrecord.com. Log out?



# THE DAILY RECORD

Maryland's trusted source for business, legal and government news

**Leadership in Law NOMINATE** [CLICK HERE](#)  
NOMINATIONS CLOSE FEBRUARY 6

## EDITOR'S PICKS

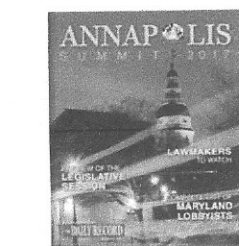
- Our best, right now.**  
**Hogan legislation focuses on redistricting, ethics and lobbying reform**  
 by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 19
- Franchot announces Taxpayer Protection Act with Hogan's support**  
 by Heather Coburn | Jan. 19
- Justice Reinvestment Act faces implementation challenges, lawmakers told**  
 by Steve Lash | Jan. 19
- Ex-state lawmaker Bohanan's 'consulting' raises eyebrows**  
 by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 18
- Former Md. deputy attorney general joins DLA Piper**  
 by Daily Record Staff | Jan. 18

## DIGITAL EDITION



Subscribers to The Daily Record can access the digital edition archive.

## SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS



Browse industry reports in the special publications digital edition archive.

## FAMILY LAW

## Giving back

By: admin July 26, 2007



Many of the kids in the Boy's & Girls Club of the Virginia Peninsula get their first exposure to baseball through a partnership with the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation.

For 10-year-old Gregory Gibbs, hitting the ball is the hardest when it comes to baseball. He managed to hit two home runs in one game. He also strikes out sometimes. But he knows the point of the sport.

"We cheer, even if we lose," said the boy from Newport News, Va.

Gibbs learned much of his baseball skills through a partnership between the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation and the Boys & Girls Club of the Virginia Peninsula.

Using Ripken's name as the thread, the foundation has spun off a national program to teach disadvantaged kids the lessons of life through baseball. The program will serve close

to 70,000 children this year. Since 2003, the foundation has partnered with 150 Boys & Girls Clubs in 38 states to teach a program titled Healthy Choices, Healthy Children.

In Maryland, the foundation works with Boys & Girls Clubs in Annapolis and Harford and Cecil counties. In Baltimore, the program is taught through Major League Baseball's Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities program.

"We use baseball as a hook to get your attention, but you really want to transfer some of those life lessons and start to give support to the kids," said Cal Ripken Jr., who will be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame on Sunday.



"Once the kids have support in their lives — a positive influence — then they can take it into the directions that would be positive and productive for the community," Ripken said.

Ripken and other members of his family created the foundation in 2001 in memory of their father, who worked as a player, coach and manager of the Baltimore Orioles for 37 years.

"In our family, sports was the way that we were taught about life," said Ripken.

The program teaches principles such as sportsmanship, leadership, trustworthiness, health and accountability through the sport. It emphasizes using simplicity, fun, lots of explanations and flexibility when teaching. Boys & Girls Club executives helped develop the curriculum, but the concepts also echo those taught in several books authored by Ripken.

For many kids, it is their first exposure to baseball.

"When they first started playing, they were putting gloves on the wrong hand and couldn't swing a bat," said Jonathan Putt, director of operations for the Boys & Girls Club of the Virginia Peninsula.

The foundation donates curriculum, equipment, uniforms and helps refurbish ball fields, if necessary. It also runs clinics and camps for kids and coaches.

Last year the foundation began partnering with local law enforcement agencies, too, using police officers to coach kids under an effort called Badges for Baseball. The pilot program, paid for in part by a grant from the Department of Justice, ran in 22 communities last year.

"What makes it all work, before we get onto the field, is Cal's name, his reputation," said Steve Salem, executive director of the Baltimore-based Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation. "Cal is the magic in the bottle that we have that no one else has. Then you add Bill [Ripken] into the picture, and it's a done deal."

In 2006, the foundation operated on a \$4 million budget raised from private donations and federal and state funding.

## CONTACT US

Call us at (443) 524-8100, or email or visit us.



**WHAT DOES NATURAL GAS MEAN TO MARYLANDERS?**

**LOWER CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS**

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

Paid for by the American Petroleum Institute

## FEATURED VIDEO

## @MDDAILYRECORD

Tweets by @MDDailyRecord

**TDR The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord  
Marriott plans 22-story tower at new Bethesda HQ  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/20/mar...

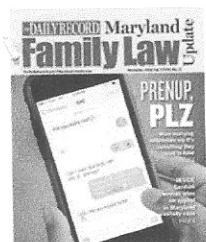
3h

**TDR The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord  
Chase Brexton names new president and CEO  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/19/cha...

4h

**TDR The Daily Record**  
@MDDailyRecord  
Embed

View on Twitter



Subscribers to Maryland Family Law Update can access the **digital edition archive**.

## BUSINESS NOTICES

The Dowell Family Fndn  
Homewood Federal Savings Bank  
Kopernik Bank  
Midstate Community Bank  
Ramaker & Associates, Inc

## LEGAL NOTICES

Name Change - Johansson, Calvin G  
Family - Unknown Fr  
Name Change - Serpas, Veronica A  
Name Change - Harjivan, Kinnain B  
Notices - Godoy, Et Al.

The foundation hasn't developed a method yet to chart its long-term success, partly because most of the program's expansion happened in the last year. But program directors like to tell the story of one girl who saw a policeman show up at one of her games. She asked the officer who he was there to arrest. When she found out he only came to watch her play ball, she hugged him.

"That is what we're trying to accomplish with this — that police officers are their friends and they're there to help them and not hurt them," said Steve Kast, president of the Boys & Girls Club of the Virginia Peninsula.

About 180 children from his organization took part in the baseball program during the past season.

"It has been a huge success," Kast said.

Joseph Hicks, 14, said he's made many friends with other teams in his league. The Newport News teen plays catcher and plans to try out for the junior varsity baseball team at his school this year.

His team didn't win the league championship, but he takes the loss in stride.

"It is always good to play a team that is better than you because it helps you realize what your weaknesses and strengths are," Hicks said.

Share this:



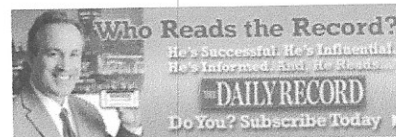
## LEAVE A REPLY

Logged in as max.franz@thedailyrecord.com. Log out?

I'm not a robot

reCAPTCHA  
Privacy - Terms

Post Comment



## MY ACCOUNT

LOG OUT  
SUBSCRIBE  
MANAGE ACCOUNT  
PRIVACY POLICY  
SUBSCRIBER AGREEMENT

## RECENT POSTS

Maryland lawyer suspended for lack of diligence, communication  
Special counsel appointed to investigate Del. Morhaim  
Md. reducing operations at 75-year-old Hagerstown prison  
Marriott plans 22-story tower at new Bethesda HQ  
The session's top business priorities

## THE DAILY RECORD

ABOUT  
ADVERTISE  
CONTACT US  
EVENTS  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS





# THE DAILY RECORD

Maryland's trusted source for business, legal and government news

**Leadership NOMINATE** in Law **NOMINATIONS CLOSE FEBRUARY 6** [CLICK HERE](#)

## EDITOR'S PICKS

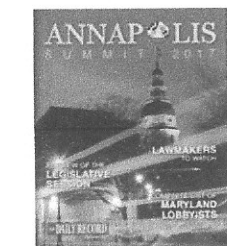
- Our best, right now.
- Hogan legislation focuses on redistricting, ethics and lobbying reform**  
by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 19
  - Franchot announces Taxpayer Protection Act with Hogan's support**  
by Heather Cobun | Jan. 19
  - Justice Reinvestment Act faces implementation challenges, lawmakers told**  
by Steve Lash | Jan. 19
  - Ex-state lawmaker Bohanan's 'consulting' raises eyebrows**  
by Bryan P. Sears | Jan. 18
  - Former Md. deputy attorney general joins DLA Piper**  
by Daily Record Staff | Jan. 18

## DIGITAL EDITION



Subscribers to The Daily Record can access the **digital edition archive**.

## SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

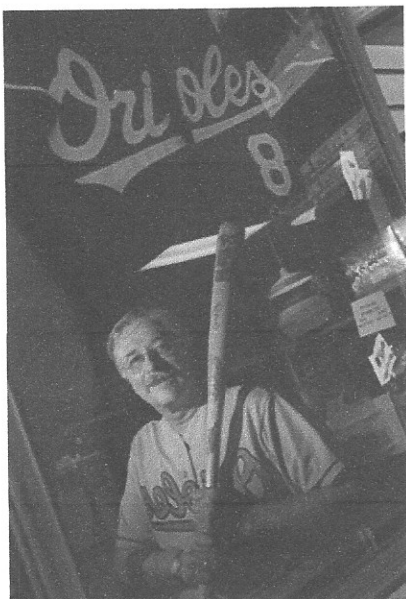


Browse industry reports in the special publications **digital edition archive**.

## FAMILY LAW

## Memorabilia mania

By: admin July 26, 2007



Richard Hubata holds a \$399 Ripken-signed bat while reflected in the glass of a \$799 Ripken-signed jersey.

"The novices get into it, and they run the price up. Then they'll fall out, and the price will fall back down. That happens with all the athletes," Davis said.



The surge in interest couldn't have been better for the Lutherville-Timonium Recreation Council. The little league organizer bought a signed Ironclad bat for \$500 from Davis' store about one month ago. The group hoped to sell 500 raffle tickets at \$2 a piece to raise money for the league. Instead the group sold 1,000 tickets, according to Davis.

Six years after retirement, Ripken remains one of the most popular and most expensive players to collect.

To fans, he is the man whose consecutive game streak revived goodwill in the sport after a players' strike cancelled the 1994 World Series. Baseball enthusiasts had fumed at the players, the owners and the stink of money in the sport.

Then came Ripken, with his dedication to baseball that saw him break Lou Gehrig's record by playing 2,632 games in a row. Fans, teammates, umpires and the opposing California Angels gave him a 22-minute standing ovation on Sept. 6, 1995, the night he broke Gehrig's mark by playing in his 2,131st consecutive game. Ripken lapped the stadium and shook hands with the Camden Yards fans, and ESPN never went to a commercial break during the entire ovation.

"It reminded people of the good things of the game, and I think that is why he is so popular," said Richard Hubata, who owns The Dugout Zone, a collectibles store in Ellicott City.

Ripken's popularity extends beyond the record. He earned many awards, including American League Rookie of the Year in 1982 and American League Most Valuable Player in 1983 and 1991, among others. His family-man image and willingness to spend hours after games signing autographs only endeared him more to fans.

Sales of Cal Ripken Jr. memorabilia were slow a few months ago. Then, as Ripken's induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame approached, the phone started ringing more and more at Robbie's First Base in Timonium. Sports fans wanted to know what cards, bats, balls, jerseys and other Ripken items the store had.

"Now that he's heading to the Hall of Fame, and it's close, we are selling a lot of stuff," said store owner Robbie Davis Sr.

In some cases, the new interest has driven prices up. An autographed ball from Ironclad Authentics sold for \$100 a little more than a month ago at Robbie's First Base. Then Ironclad, an arm of Ripken Baseball that produces authenticated, signed sports memorabilia, raised prices. The same ball sold for \$175 last week.

The mementos carry a high price. With no new milestones in Ripken's career, some collecting experts say the premium-priced goods are unlikely to grow much in value in the future. Even worse for those looking to invest beyond the thrill of owning a piece of the legendary player, seasoned collectors warn prices could go down once the hoopla and media attention of this weekend's events fade away.

## CONTACT US

Call us at (443) 524-8100, or email or visit us.



**WHAT DOES NATURAL GAS MEAN TO MARYLANDERS?**

**LOWER HOME HEATING BILLS**

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

Paid for by the American Petroleum Institute

## FEATURED VIDEO

## @MDDAILYRECORD

Tweets by @MDDailyRecord

- TDR** The Daily Record @MDDailyRecord

Marriott plans 22-story tower at new Bethesda HQ  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/20/mar...

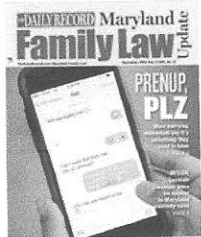
2h
- TDR** The Daily Record @MDDailyRecord

Chase Brexton names new president and CEO  
thedailyrecord.com/2017/01/19/cha...

4h
- TDR** The Daily Record @MDDailyRecord

Embed View on Twitter





Subscribers to Maryland Family Law Update can access the digital edition archive.

**BUSINESS NOTICES**

- The Dowell Family Fndn
- Homewood Federal Savings Bank
- Kopernik Bank
- Midstate Community Bank
- Ramaker & Associates, Inc

**LEGAL NOTICES**

- Name Change - Johansson, Calvin G
- Family - Unknown Fr
- Name Change - Serpas, Veronica A
- Name Change - Harjivan, Kinnain B
- Notices - Godoy, Et Al.

A commemorative bobblehead is displayed at Camden Yards on Tuesday evening. Photo by Rich Dennison.

"There is always someone who says, 'I've been trying to get your autograph for 10 years,' and he just kind of chuckles and says, 'You haven't been trying too hard,'" said John Maroon, president of Marriottsville-based Maroon PR. His firm handles public relations for Ripken.

Collectors pay dearly for Ripken's superstar status, even compared to other Hall of Famers. Ripken memorabilia, in general, sells at about 10 times the price of equivalent Jim Palmer souvenirs, according to Brian Fleischer, price guide editor at Beckett Media LP. Palmer, a former Orioles pitcher, was elected to the Hall in 1990.

Ripken items fetch about five times the price of similar mementos from Brooks Robinson, the legendary Orioles third baseman and another Hall of Famer. And they even sell at about three times the cost of Tony Gwynn collectibles. Gwynn is being inducted this weekend into the Hall of Fame alongside Ripken.

Since 1980, more than 10,800 different types of Ripken baseball cards have been produced, according to collecting authority Beckett Media.

"He has a ton of player collectors who go out and look for Cal Ripken cards," Fleischer said. "They don't care what it is. A lot of them will pay tons and tons of money on rare cards."

On eBay last week, a 1982 Topps Traded rookie card in perfect condition was selling for \$935. There were 12 bids on the card, with two days left for bidding.

Not all Ripken cards or collectibles fetch hundreds of dollars. A fan could have bought lower-priced cards for less than \$5 plus shipping on the same Web site. And a lot of the close to 3,000 Ripken auctions on the popular trading site floated by without a bid.

Hall of Fame excitement hasn't inflated the price of every Ripken memento. Last week, The Dugout Zone sold a signed photo of Ripken's last time at bat for \$299. The item cost the same back in January before Ripken was elected to the Hall of Fame.

Conventional wisdom dictates that Ripken collectibles would increase in value as he enters the Hall of Fame this weekend. But collecting experts say that event was priced into the cost of his cards and memorabilia years ago.

"[Ripken] has been a Hall of Famer for years in the mind of collectors," Fleischer said.

Hubata compared the static prices to stocks where the news that people expect gets factored into their prices long before an event happens.

The card store owner said it would have taken something unexpected to drive prices much higher, like Ripken possibly receiving the highest number of votes ever during his election into the Hall of Fame in January.

But the long-anticipated news didn't dampen Hubata's enthusiasm for this weekend's events. The Cubs fan calls Ripken one of his favorite players. He owns a signed bat, balls and an autographed game ticket from the night Ripken broke the streak. Hubata plans to visit Cooperstown this weekend with three friends to witness history.

He says many of the fans visiting his store are going, too.

"Everyone that collects Ripken is going to Cooperstown," he said.

Share this:

Email Print Facebook LinkedIn Twitter Google

**LEAVE A REPLY**

Logged in as max.franz@thedailyrecord.com. Log out?

I'm not a robot

reCAPTCHA  
Privacy - Terms

Post Comment

**Find legal jobs!**

Click here to sign up for your daily alert

**THE DAILY RECORD**