

**26th Annual Conference
on Baseball in Literature and Culture**

Friday, March 24, 2023



Order of Service

THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2023

6:00 p.m.

Pre-Game Reception

Location: 421 South Elm Street
Ottawa, Kansas

FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2023

7:45 a.m.

Registration and Breakfast

8:15 a.m.

Opening Remarks

Andy Hazucha, Conference Coordinator
Reggies Wenyika, Campus President - OUKS

8:30 –

Morning Keynote Address

9:15 a.m.

Morning Keynote Speaker: Brad Balukjian
Author of “The Wax Pack”

Book signing in the Mabee Lounge following the talk.

9:30 –

Concurrent Sessions A

10:30 a.m.

Session A1: Baseball Eccentric Characters

Location: Hasty Conference Room

Chair: Jordie, Ottawa University

- “He’s Number One: The Lasting Legacy of Old Hoss Radbourn’s Digitus Medius”
Shawn O’Hare, Carson-Newman University
- “The Ugly Truth about a Beautiful Sport: Ted Sullivan and Racism in the Early Days of Baseball”
Pat O’Neill, Independent Scholar
Tom Coffman, Independent Scholar
- “Characters of the Game: Virtue, Integrity and Eccentricity in Our Pastime”
Phil Oliver, Middle Tennessee State University

Session A2: The Economics and Psychology of Baseball

Location: Zook Conference Room

Chair: George Eshnaur, Ottawa University

- **“Scouting vs. Statistics: Wisdom Lost in Numbers”**
Peter Jacobsen, Ottawa University
- **“Empirical Shifts in Major League Baseball Roster Management: Effects of the 1976 Labor Agreement”**
Chris Azevedo, University of Central Missouri
- **“Automatic Strike Zone? Four Human Views of a Pitch Reduced to a Computer’s Ruling”**
Joc Collins, Carson-Newman University

**10:35 –
11:35 a.m.**

Concurrent Sessions B

Session B1: Baseball in Culture

Location: Hasty Conference Room

Chair: Jordie Smith, Ottawa University

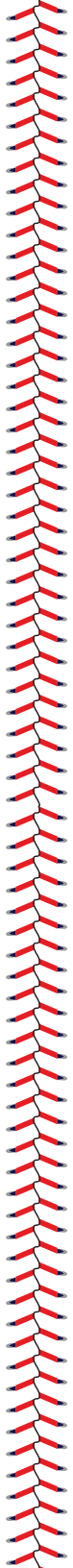
- **“What’s in a Name? Cleveland Indians to Guardians: How a Team’s Name Feels to the Fans”**
Ken Moon, Iowa Western Community College
- **“Multiversal Language: Sports, Esperanto and a Passport to Many Worlds”**
David Prihoda, Ottawa University

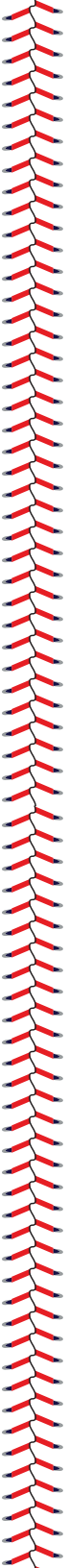
Session B2: Kansas Baseball History

Location: Zook Conference Room

Chair: Steve Foulke, Ottawa University

- **“Early Baseball Programs at Kansas Colleges”**
Doug Wright, Independent Scholar
- **“Baseball Goes to Town: Bushong and Comiskey, Kansas”**
Mark E. Eberle, Fort Hays State University
- **“Quiet Giants: Jackie Mitchell, JL Wilkinson and the Wichita Monroviaans; Amplifying Baseball’s Less-heard Voices”**
Kyle Belanger, Springfield College
Maeve Bolin, Lansing High School (KS)





**11:45 –
1:15 p.m.**

Luncheon and Keynote Speaker

Keynote Speaker: Andre Dawson

**1:30 –
2:15 p.m.**

Concurrent Sessions C

Session C1: Baseball History

Location: Hasty Conference Room

Chair: George Eshnaur, Ottawa University

- **“Baseball at 47 Degrees: Early Baseball in Northern Minnesota”**
Eric Berg, Bemidji State University
- **“Lou Gehrig’s Auto Accident on December 27, 1937, in Jefferson City, TN: Many Questions and Some Answers”**
Gerald C. Wood, Carson-Newman University

Session C2: Baseball Rants, Baseball Cards

Location: Zook Conference Room

Chair: Lyn Wagner, Ottawa University

- **“Baseball, Madness, and Losing It”**
Justin Clarke, Ottawa University
- **“Don’t Just Collect. Display Your Collection.”**
Darrin Daughtery, Independent Scholar

**2:20 –
3:20 p.m.**

Concurrent Sessions D

Session D1: Baseball Icons and Unknowns

Location: Hasty Conference Room

Chair: Mike Webber, Franklin County Historical Society

- **“Two Writers, One Game: Roger Angell and Ron Darling”**
Sarah D. Bunting, TomatoNation.com
- **“Lou Reynolds: The ‘Grand Old Man’ of Baseball in Kewanee, Illinois”**
Dean Karau, Independent Scholar
- **“Reconsidering the ‘Losing Pitcher”**
Warren Tormey, Middle Tennessee State University

Session D2: Baseball in Literature

Location: Zook Conference Room

Chair: Phil Wedge, University of Kansas

- “‘Oh you little yellow house’: Ring Lardner’s Busher Figure as Fetish Object”
Scott D. Peterson, University of Missouri–St. Louis
- “From Fowler to Robinson, from *Gilead* to *Home*”
Steve Andrews, Grinnell College
- “Weaving Baseball Facts (and Cubs Curses) into Thriller Fiction”
Dennis Hetzel, Fresh Angle Communications

3:25 –
4:25 p.m.

Session E: Baseball Fiction, Poetry and Creative Nonfiction

Location: Hasty Conference Room

Chair: Shannon Dyer, Ottawa University

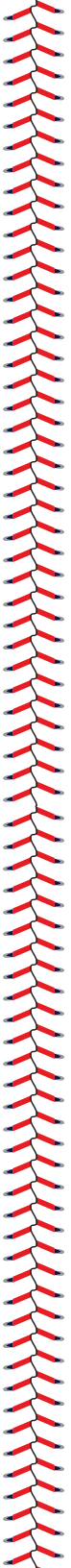
- “Your Best Gibbie Story from Breakfasts with Mudcat”
Daniel T. Durbin, University of Southern California
- “Excerpt from *The Last American Boy. A Counterfactual Novel-in-Progress*”
Scott D. Peterson, University of Missouri-St. Louis

4:25 p.m.

Session F: Baseball Fiction, Poetry and Creative Nonfiction

Location: Not Lost Brewing Company
229 South Main Street
Ottawa, KS 66067

Food and drink will be available for purchase at this networking event.





Friday Morning Keynote Speaker

Brad Balukjian

Brad Balukjian grew up in Greenville, Rhode Island, studied journalism and island biogeography at Duke University, and went on to graduate school at the University of California, Berkeley, where he earned his

Ph.D. in Environmental Science in 2013. In 2017 he founded the Natural History and Sustainability program at Merritt College in Oakland, CA, where he teaches courses ranging from introductory biology to entomology to the natural history of California islands. Balukjian has also taught at UC Berkeley, Laney College, and for the California Naturalist program. He is the former president of the Angel Island Conservancy.

In 2020, Balukjian's first book, *The Wax Pack: On the Open Road in Search of Baseball's Afterlife*, reached #7 on the Los Angeles Times bestseller list and was named one of NPR's Best Books of the Year. He is currently working on a new book, *The Six Pack*, to be published by Hachette Book Group in 2024. It explores shifting identity in the world of professional wrestling, specifically focusing on the men who forever changed the industry in the mid-1980s.

In addition to teaching at Merritt, Balukjian is a freelance science journalist who has published over 100 articles in such venues as *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian*, *CNN*, *Discover*, *Slate*, *Rolling Stone*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Alta California*, *Natural History*, and *Islands*.



Friday Afternoon Keynote Speaker

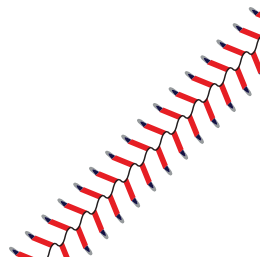
Andre Dawson

Drafted out of Florida A&M University in the 11th round of the 1975 MLB draft, Andre Dawson played in 24 games for the Montreal Expos in 1976 after making his major league debut on September 11. The following year

he became the everyday centerfielder for the Expos, earning the National League Rookie of the Year award after batting .282 with 19 home runs, 65 RBIs, and 21 stolen bases. After spending eleven seasons with the Expos, where he was the only player in franchise history to hit 200 home runs and steal 200 bases, Dawson signed a contract with the Chicago Cubs in 1987.

The move to Wrigley Field saved his knees and rejuvenated his career, as he won the 1987 National League MVP, leading the National League with 49 home runs, 137 RBIs, and 353 total bases while batting .287. Dawson was the first player ever to win the MVP while playing for a last-place team.

Over the course of his 21-year career, Dawson won eight Gold Glove awards, was an eight-time All-Star, and, along with Barry Bonds and Willie Mays, is one of only three Major League baseball players in history with more than 400 home runs and over 300 stolen bases. He was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 2010.





Logo designed by Todd Radom



1001 South Cedar Street • Ottawa, Kansas 66067