This is a special time of the year.

Football is in the air and Friday night, Lebanon High christens its new football stadium against Franklin County.

The Blue Devils would rather forget Week Zero (I will never understand that math) against state powerhouse, Mt. Juliet.

There is nothing like the first game in a brand new stadium. The popcorn tastes better. The band has some extra pep in its step. It's a great spot to run into friends you haven't seen this summer.

The new Lebanon High School has a lot of similar features that Mt. Juliet used when it built its new school. If only the Blue Devils football program could become as competitive as Mt. Juliet's.

Football isn't the only thing to get excited about around Middle Tennessee.

Goodlettsville's Little League team is undefeated in the Little League World Series, the first time since 1974 an area team won its first two games in the event. Their next game is Thursday against Texas, also winners of its first two games.

Vanderbilt baseball coach **Tim Corbin** attended Sunday's game against California and it was as good a game as you can find. Goodlettsville had to rally to take a 9-6 decision.

Corbin said the atmosphere surrounding the Little League World Series is similar in a lot of ways to the College World Series.

He also said if you are a baseball fan, the Little League World Series should to be on your bucket list. I would agree.

I remember how important playing Little League baseball was when I was that age. Every time it looked as if that day's game was going to be rained out, I watched the sky closer than any certified meteorologist ever did.

If it was rained out, my whole day was ruined. I had to wait another week to play a game.

We never got to Williamsport. We did travel 15 miles or so to Erwin to play their All-Stars. My buddy **Johnny Leach** hit a home run as a train was passing just beyond the outfield fence. Spectators claimed the ball landed in one of the coal cars and I always contended it was the longest home run hit in Little League history. Think about it. He hit a ball from Erwin to Kansas City, or wherever that car came to rest.

Moving to Hendersonville, **Steven Fox** captured the U.S. Amateur crown at Cherry Hills CC in Colorado Sunday, winning a 36-hole match-play marathon that required an extra hole before engravers were cleared to put Fox's name on the Havemeyer trophy.

It didn't come easy for Fox, a senior at Chattanooga. He was the No. 35 seed in the 36-man field and dodged a number of bullets to reach the finals. He becomes only the second player in history to win from that position.

Down two holes with two to play, it looked bleak for Fox. But he would record back-to-back birdies to catch Cal's **Michael Weaver**. Weaver could have closed Fox out with a 5-foot birdie putt on No. 18. It appeared to be destined for the cup, but it spun out.

Even Fox gasped when the putt failed to drop. He finished Weaver off on the playoff hole with yet another birdie putt.

So Middle Tennesseans have had a lot to cheer about. And we still have a full football season ahead of us.

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