

# Close Enough That You Can Hear The Ball Hit The Bat

I know that the baseball season has ended and legions of Cubbies fans are still mourning the playoff showing (not trying to rub it in; honestly, there is a point to this madness). Tonight at work, I was chatting with a friend and customer whose daughter lives in Chicago. I told him that some of my best friends moved to this area from the Chicago 'burbs. Greg's daughter lives within breathing distance of the hallowed ivy covered outfield walls of Wrigley Field in Wrigleyville. Her apartment building is near the Budweiser sign where a game can be seen right out the window. Coolers and grills are frequently seen going while games are going on. I said, "Don't tell my brother." "Don't worry, Chad and I have already discussed it." But don't be asking to use any connections anytime soon. The apartment complex has been purchased to be redeveloped into something more lucrative (just don't ask me what).

This brought about a discussion of my brother's devotion to the team. Every spring, he conveniently becomes ill at lunch on opening day (or takes a vacation day from work)... EVERY YEAR. One would think that the school would catch on. In our youth, Chad and I shared a bedroom. He would spend hours in the room making towers of baseball cards. Invariably, these towers would be placed right beside the closed door. Consequently, the door would open and the towers would come crashing down. THIS was not done purposely. Periodically however, I have a cousin who would stay overnight and we would have some fun by going into the bedroom and mischievously knocking over the cards. OH, My... you would not want to be caught dead after Chad discovered his hours of work destroyed (intentionally or not). And guess who was first on his radar? To this day, I never understood why he stacked and

restacked those cards when he could have been protecting them and probably would have some money in them. Even less did I understand his practice of personally autographing the cards that did not have a signature on them. I do not know how many cards he has but we have speculated that it has to be in the millions (I'm not kidding). He would also get entire sets of cards for Christmas year after year which he would open and mix in with all the other cards or trade with friends. AH... YOUTH.