



villages, the Atlanta Braves, one of only two pro sports teams regularly available on television, was the first professional baseball team Grabow watched. He idolized them so much that for his first personal purchase, at nine years old, he spent his life savings on a Braves baseball hat. So, in his original script, Grabow included the Braves hat and team name in a few scenes as part of Matt's endearing backstory, unaware of the emotional hurt it would not only cause his cast member, but also an Indigenous community.

Grabow was quick to remedy the situation, immediately inviting Spears to help rewrite the scene and create new dialogue directly addressing the issue of the Braves hat. In doing so, the scene deepened in meaning and poignancy. "We're not Braves or Chiefs or Redskins. We're real people," Spears says in the new scene. "I'm not a goofy cartoon. We don't do the tomahawk chop... And that makes a difference in how we feel about ourselves. That affects my self-esteem. That affects our kids' self-esteem."

"Learning to have difficult conversations is essential, especially in a divided political climate," Grabow adds. "I'm proud of the way Michael and I faced this serious topic. I believe the scene now provides a useful road map for engaging in controversial subject matter with mutual respect and understanding."

The NFL's Washington Redskins officially rebranded as the Commanders; MLB's Cleveland Indians, as the franchise was known for over a century, are now the Guardians; hundreds of colleges and high schools across the country have revised or eliminated the use of derogatory and hurtful symbols. Recognizing the distress it caused in their community, a Utah high school team, once known as the Bountiful Braves, are now the Bountiful RedHawks. A Florida high school team, once known as the Chamberlain Chiefs, are now the Chamberlain Storm.

While the issue of offensive sports team names like the Atlanta Braves and Kansas City Chiefs is a minor subplot of the film, it leaves audiences asking, as it does a lifelong Braves fan like Grabow, "Why is it that this small handful of our professional sports teams still cling to names that harm the self-esteem of millions of Indigenous Americans?"

Production stills, cast and crew information, trailers, and information about release locations are available online at [www.theyearofthedogmovie.com](http://www.theyearofthedogmovie.com), Instagram, and Facebook.

Jane Owen

Jane Owen Public Relations Inc

[jane@janeowenpr.com](mailto:jane@janeowenpr.com)

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