No one likes going to a party and not knowing anyone.

It can be even more awkward when the people at the party don't know who you are.

That is why I've decided to formally introduce myself to everyone reading this article, just so you know I haven't come to crash the party. Don't worry about me changing the theme either; the topic of the Cleveland Indians will still be prominent.

If anything, we can share our pain together, because we all know that when you talk about the Tribe, it is way more fun to commiserate as a group. I may not know many of you at this party, but I will feel a lot better if you all knew me just a little bit.

If this is the first time you've seen my name, I assure you that any sort of idea of what you can call me has already been thought of and attempted. I've never seen *New Jack City*, I'm not lost in the sea and do not need found, my family does not produce a soft drink, and no I will not rock you like a hurricane.

I'm just as much of a die-hard Tribe fan as you though. We likely share the same passion of Indians baseball regardless of anything else. I do represent a new generation of Indians fans. I readily admit I'm not the history buff and if you ask me to name the entire 1997 roster, I probably couldn't get past the big stars.

However, I do remember where I was when Jose Mesa ripped out the heart of a city and out of respect for both you and I, I will not rehash that experience.

I'm part of the fresh-faced bunch that is still filled with eternal optimism. I realize this group is probably limited and that we are fiercely out-numbered by cynics that can't wait for the orange helmets to be strapped on or the wine and gold to be hustling up and down the court. Yet it is the group I belong to and I feel the need to categorize myself.

My real story begins around the time Bartolo Colon's time with the Indians ended. I remember being on vacation when Colonwas traded and from that point on is when I can start recalling specifics. I grew up in right field (literally, I spent years staring at the backs of Jody Gerut, Alex Escobar, and Matt Lawton) of what was then called Jacob's Field. As CC Sabathia matured on the mound and grew up as a pitcher, I grew up as a person. It sounds corny, but that's how I remember my years, based off Sabathia's win totals.

Seeing the big lefty traded was sort of like watching a brother go off to college, even though I'd had already been there for a year.

I almost think that growing up in the era of Indians baseball that I grew up in would have been enough psychological damage to drive any fan away. Perhaps that is partially the reason for such low attendance for the club, even when they are moderately successful. I love baseball too much for that to have happened though.

I love this team too much for that to ever happen. Admit it right now, the reason you are reading this is because you share that love and there is likely nothing that will drive you away from it.

That is why it is an honor to be putting my words on the same space as writers like Paul Cousineau, Tony Lastoria, and Steve Buffum; all die-hard fans that love the Tribe just the same. What I appreciate most about them all is the fact that they get it.

Here is my biggest pet-peeve about being a fan of the Cleveland Indians and this is something you should readily know right off the bat. I dislike more than anything else an uneducated opinion. Everyone has their right to speak their voice and this isn't a fan base that is shy to share it, but at least be informed.

Are the Indians the most well-run franchise in the game? No, but given the circumstances I think they do a pretty good job navigating through a less-than favorably climate. Let's be real now, we all know by now the club can't compete financially with the big boys, so they're forced to rely on trading players close to free agency that won't re-sign and making the draft count.

The early part of the 2000's, it was obvious they were not making the draft count, but I firmly believe that's changed these past few years. Has Mark Shapiro hit on all of his trades? No, but not everyone does. The important thing is he makes a lot of them count. Say what you want about Shapiro, who is in his last year as General Manager, but he's pulled off some of the more cunning moves in the history of the franchise.

He has made his fair share of blunders, especially in free agency, but I think he gets more flack than he deserves. In that regard, so do the Dolan Family, who I think run a class-A organization.

Despite the constant criticism over the way they spend their money (or don't), they give off the vibe that they care about winning. But as I've mentioned, there is only so much an organization like Cleveland can do to compete. I know it is part of the eternal optimist viewpoint, but this team is trying to win and for me that is what counts. Trying isn't good enough for some, but one can only ask for the effort.

Now I'm brought to the present, with a club that believes they aren't rebuilding, but rather reloading for a run in the short term. Armed with budding stars like Shin-Soo Choo and Asdrubal Cabrera, an upcoming stud like Carlos Santana, and a handful of pitching prospects that the

club hopes can step up, then not-so-distant future looks like it may be one worth watching.

This season hasn't been a fun one to watch. But at least the club, the players on the field, they've been trying. The lack of wins hasn't been for lack of effort, but rather lack of talent. There is a lack of killer instinct, almost an inability to finish most teams off. Plenty of close losses and games lost due to lack of one particular area not coming through.

If this club ever does come through in the not-so-distant future, all of this will make it all the sweeter. I don't need to tell any of you how hard it was to see the Red Sox come from behind in the ALCS. That pain is nothing compared to the pain of a year like this one or 2009. But if you get an opportunity to erase all that pain accumulated with a championship, it sort of is like justification to what you had to endure.

That's what we hope for at this point. That's why we continue to watch. That's why I sat in right field for 20-odd games a year in the early 2000's, even though I knew those teams were not even playoff bound. All of it is for the joy of claiming to have gone through the rough times all in hopes of eventually being rewarded.

So when there may be days that you can't stand my optimism or rosy outlook, think back to this particular article, my introduction to you, and understand why. Or if you would prefer to just shout at me that would be fine as well.