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Posted November 24, 2007

Editorial: Ice Bowl has been blessing and curse

The most storied day in Green Bay history may also be the day when the worst stereotype about Green Bay was immortalized.

We're darn proud of that day, of course: 13 below zero at game time, coffee freezing in the cups — anyone living in Green Bay on Dec. 31, 1967, claims to have been at Lambeau Field to see Bart Starr dive into the end zone through the hole Jerry Kramer and Ken Bowman created and beat the Dallas Cowboys 21-17 for the National Football League title.

But that moment on the "frozen tundra of Lambeau Field" sealed our image: In the minds of millions, Green Bay is the home of the Packers, of course, and it's wa-a-a-y too cold here. Never mind that it has never been that cold for a game at Lambeau before or since then; the Ice Bowl has been our glory and our curse.

A new cooperative venture combining the efforts of many local

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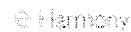
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leaders, businesses and organizations aims to broaden the world's perception of this big little city. The **Green Bay Branding Initiative** has been working quietly for a year or so researching how others understand this community; now it's about to seek input from those who live and work here about their own perceptions.

It seems like a big challenge when co-chairman **Mike Hildebrand** says a survey showed some of the top CEOs in the country don't realize Green Bay (despite the name) is located on a body of water, or that the nearest international airport is located right here. But the challenge seems not so big when the Packers are factored in: The city of Green Bay is known literally all over the world because of its one-of-a-kind professional sports franchise.

Yes, it does get cold here sometimes. Dan Clark of the National Weather Service office in Green Bay says since 1896 we have averaged about 20 days a year when the temperature dips below zero. That means 345 or 346 days or more when it's not that cold. The climate allows us to enjoy cross-country skiing, sledding and ice fishing, but also boating, biking and swimming — or visiting our world-class zoo with its giraffes and African lions.

The Initiative, co-chaired by Hildebrand of Wisconsin Public Service Corp. and Donsia Strong-Hill of Godfrey & Kahn, seems to be on the right track. First off, they hired a local marketing firm, Arketype Inc., rather than out-of-towners to guide the "branding" effort. These local people are working to promote the idea that there's more to Green Bay than the Packers and chilly weather, but they have embraced the Packers and they're not going to shy away from our winter sports opportunities.

With the Packers back center stage nationally this fall, this is a golden opportunity to shatter some myths. There are reasons why Green Bay makes lists of great places to raise a family or start a business, and there's no better time than the present to start telling our story.

— Press-Gazette

"Branding" Green Bay

To comment

The Greater **Green Bay Branding Initiative** wants to know what residents and visitors think about the Green Bay area. Comments are being taken online or by postcard. Online: www.brandgreatergb.com Survey postcards will be available Tuesday and Wednesday at the following locations:

- Shopko stores at Bay Park Square mall in Ashwaubenon, De Pere and on Military Avenue in Green Bay.
- Shopko Express, Howard
- Brown County Libraries in downtown Green Bay, De Pere, Wrightstown, Pulaski and Howard
- Green Bay City Hall
- Oneida Casino lobby

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