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By the time he was no longer playing for the Milwaukee Brewers, Morris was a married man. His wife, Lorri Eakin Morris, was a college graduate who worked in the admissions office at Angelo State University. The school was located in the Central West Texas town of San Angelo, a three-hour-drive southwest of Brownwood (where Jim had graduated from high school).

Because Jimmy had spent so much of his life playing baseball, he had not graduated from college. He got a job working for the Texas Youth Commission, transporting juvenile offenders around the state. He also enrolled at Angelo State.

He couldn't stay away from baseball, however. He helped assess the talent of prospective players for Howard Payne University's new baseball program. It wouldn't be the last time Howard Payne was a significant factor in Jimmy's life.

A year after his shoulder surgery, Morris was pitching batting practice to the Howard Payne team. He threw better and faster than ever. Walt Williams, a former big league player with several teams including the White Sox, was surprised by Jimmy's progress. After a few well-placed calls by a few well-placed people, Morris was recruited by the Chicago White Sox. It was the fall of 1988. As Jimmy says:

*Dreams die hard. Maybe they never die at all. (The Rookie, page 139.)*

But dreams, even when they come true, don't always follow a prescribed path. Pitching for the White Sox instructional club in Florida, Morris performed well. Over the 1988/1989 winter he had one thought that buoyed his spirits. A White Sox executive told him he'd "be spending spring training with the triple-A club." He had never progressed that far before in pro baseball.

He wouldn't progress that far in 1989 either. Playing with the White Sox high-A team, Morris was throwing 90-mile-an-hour pitches. But the batters on opposing teams were hitting those balls off the center park wall. Did he have another physical injury? A leading orthopedic surgeon told him:

*Jimmy, I can't find anything physically wrong with your arm. We could go into the shoulder and look around, but that would set you back another year or two, and if you really don't want to play anymore, there's no reason to have the surgery at all. You're twenty-five now. What do you want to do? (The Rookie, page 144.)*

Morris was finished as a White Sox player. He collected his \$1,500 monthly pay for the rest of the season. His dreams of baseball fame were about as real as the baseball movie he watched that year: Field of Dreams.

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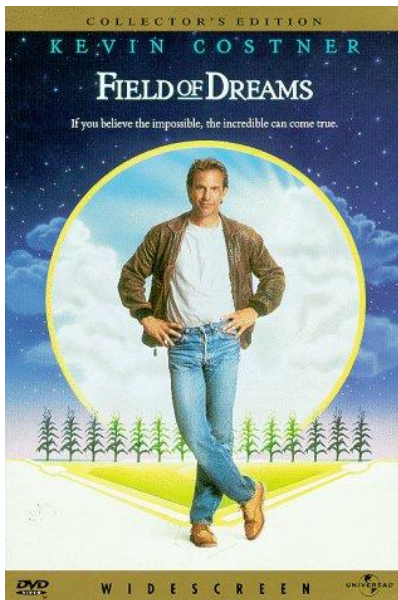
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### San Angelo

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### Field of Dreams Movie Poster

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