

HIGH PLAINS READER



Volume 4, Issue 19
January 8, 1998

Look what the
dog brought home

THE SOUNDS OF FARGO:
Barking Dog Records releases local music
— page 8

Temple of the Dog

On the Label

Recording music and expanding venues, Linda and Mike Coates discuss the history of Fargo's music scene and their own Barking Dog Records and Raptor Studios

By Steve Listopad
Contributing Writer

Every once in awhile there are those neighbors who play their music much too loud. They set their stereo in their back yard while they sun bathe, or have a raging kegger all night with Chumbawamba's Tubthumping as the track of choice. I'm sure you know whom I am referring to. Usually they are college students who have their first class after lunch.

Enter Mike and Linda Coates. Forty-four and 41, respectively. They have eight piece ska bands performing in their basement on a regular basis.

Folk rock, alternative, metal, Christian, pop, classical, and ska are some of the few sounds that are produced in the Coates' Fargo abode. And let's not forget the vocalizations of a little, white West Highland Terrier named Tuza.

A perfect environment for the home of Barking Dog Records and Raptor Studios.

The Duo

Mike is a classical guitarist who spent many years on the road as a touring and recording artist with Whitewing and Asia, two Midwestern bands. He earned a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in music performance and taught for 10 years at Moorhead State University as an Assistant Professor of Guitar and Audio Production. During the time he was at MSU, he initiated the student sampler recording project, Dragon Tracks.

Linda is the crooner on the albums with her husband. She has two bachelor's degrees and a master's degree in vocal music. She taught for four years at MSU and served as the executive director of the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony of the Lake Agassiz Arts Council in Fargo. Linda also has 20 years experience as a freelance graphic designer.

Mike and Linda founded the record label and 24 track studio (the only studio of that size between here and Bismarck) in the fall of 1995 with the main purpose of producing their own music. Mike and Linda both agree that when it is not fun or personally enriching for themselves any longer they will move on to something else.

Mike is mainly in charge of the music production while Linda handles public relations, graphic design of the albums and advertisements, and management. They do cooperate in both areas very well.

"I insist on Linda being around for cross referencing while we're in the studio," Mike said. "She's usually the one to go out and check out new bands. She'll come home and say that I have to hear this original material. I don't have the ability to spot the next big thing as well as she does."

They have produced albums under their Barking Dog Records label for local talent like Three Minute Hero, Brenda Weiler, Jay Walters, Jim Langemo, Lisa Briggs, and Deborah Harris. Other artists who have recorded in their basement studio are Aflame, Aldo, Escaping Jacob, Pat Koenig, Mata Hari, Elise Midelfort, Sarah Morrau, Silicon Monkey, Soul Doubt, and Dan Wagner. They are currently working on promoting the new releases of Weiler's and Walter's albums and will soon start with Three Minute Hero's second album.

They are confident the work they do is beneficial to the artists they work with and the community, even though, as Mike points out, "We don't want to think of ourselves that way. Our shit stinks, too."

Mike and Linda, both musicians themselves, like to give a lot of the power to their label artists. "They are the ones out on the road and they know their fans best," Mike said. "I would be a fool if I thought I knew what their music should sound like better than they do. I just want to lend my expertise and experience to theirs."

On local music: venues

One aspect of the local musical era causes Mike and Linda to have mixed feelings, specifically local performance venues.

Mike exclaims that back in the 1970s touring bands were big. They had their own buses, sound systems, lights, and all of the other staples of a popular industry. Today, with the alternative movement of the '90s (in other words: three to four chord songs), kids can pick up a guitar and hop on stage. Most young bands just use the equipment the venue already has, which usually isn't that good. There were also three vital booking agents in Fargo-Moorhead. Now there is just one, which is up and coming due to their main act, 3 Minute Hero.

In the '70s, venues abounded.

"Performance venues are in crisis," Mike said. "There used to be 20 to 30 bars in the Fargo-Moorhead area that would feature bands. Everything from jazz to rock to country. The clubs paid well and they could because they were packed. And you have to realize the amount of drinking and partying back then was staggering. Nothing like it is now. This generation is much more conservative. People will maybe go out and have five or six drinks. Back then, 10 to 15 easy. So the clubs could definitely afford to pay bands well."

First Avenue, along with several other clubs, showcases young bands regularly. But even just a few years ago there were several coffee shops in Fargo-Moorhead that featured musicians. Now there are none. The Coateses are especially appreciative these days for the likes of First Avenue, or even Full Circle Cafe and Zandbros for support.

Mike and Linda often find themselves creating places for their musicians to play. And that necessarily isn't all that bad, according to them.

"Several of our artists play in museums and art galleries in Fargo-Moorhead," Mike said. "For musicians, who wouldn't want to play in those places? A serene environment, a captive audience. It's perfect."

Linda agreed.

"We can't turn back the clock. And would you really want to anyway?" she said. "It would be nice to pick and choose the best parts of each time period, but music progresses like everything else and you can't change that."

Mike, who has played over 2,500 gigs, added, "Back then we weren't aware of our bodies either. At night I hack away with my asthma because of

BARKING DOG RECORDS MASCOT TUZA



screaming in

those noisy, smoke-filled bars. But, on the other hand, there definitely is a loss of passion today. And you have to be passionate to create passion in your audience."

Linda does see the need for acoustic venues since the loss of the coffee shop scene. That's why Mike and she are initiating a performance series at the Plains Art Museum. "Unplugged at the Plains: A Rush Hour Concert Series" will feature their label artists and other local talent. The series starts near the end of January and will take place during rush hours, which gives people a chance to eat at the bistro and listen to music.

Even though performance venues do not abound, Mike and Linda do know that artists have to have a lock on their area.

Musical Geography

Linda defines the music that Barking Dog Records produces as "geographically not musical." The Coateses only want to do local acts that can record and perform here.

"If you were a record executive, the first thing you would look at in a band is if they own their area," Mike said. "If you can't sell your act in your closest surroundings, how could you sell it nationally?"

The Coateses see two of their label artists, 3 Minute Hero and Brenda Weiler, with the potential to transcend the Midwest. They described 3 Hero as an "unabashed party," one of the hottest acts in Fargo, which does plan on moving to Minneapolis in the near future to expand their listening base.

Brenda Weiler, however, with her mellow crooning, has a connection with her audience that sometimes scares Mike.

"It's amazing, magical, to be in the room when someone like Brenda has the entire audience listening intently to every word she says," Mike said. "That's when you know you've got something big."

While Mike and Linda insist that money isn't their number one goal at all, they are looking forward to that day when a major label picks up one of their acts and buys the rights from Barking Dog Records.

"That's the big money," Linda said. "Now it's small money, but that's the big money. And there is definitely a market for popular bands' first independent albums."

In the future, the Coateses would like to see the studio and label pay for itself, have their son get into the business with them, and have bigger investments artists but fewer and more meaningful.

"Our first priority is our music and happiness, but we are very dedicated to the artists that we work with as well," Linda said.

Jim Langemo



Lisa Briggs



Jay Walters



3 Minute Hero



Brenda Weiler



Deborah Harris



The Coateses



The Coateses



The Coateses



Discs available at Media Play, Barnes & Noble, Discontent, and Zandbros Variety

HIGH PLAINS READER

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Marguerite's Music

From Springsteen to ♯, Marguerite has sold axes to them all.

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The Firehall finishes
post-flood renovation
just in time to
celebrate it's
50 year anniversary

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Reviewing the CDs from the
upcoming Through & Through
Festival

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Marguerite's Music

Marguerite on Marguerite's

Tucked away behind a pop machine, a wall of guitars and autographed pictures, in a quaint office with coffee stained papers on rumshackled desks and newspaper clippings precariously clinging to the walls with Scotch tape, exists a filing system wherein nearly half a century of music history is stored. A place where the life and times of one Marguerite Mowry can be perused like the Dewey Decimal system at your local library.

Marguerite's card catalog, an ominous wooden time capsule containing drawers upon drawers, seems an unlikely place to find rows of purchase records by famous musicians like Prince, Bruce Springsteen, Randy Travis, Johnny Holm, and... the president of Kenney Shoes. Marguerite elaborated on the footwear tie-in.

"The first bass guitar I ever sold at my store in Jamestown was to a young boy named Jim who later became the president of Kenney Shoes."

She started her career off as owner of a small store in Jamestown which originally was a card and gift shop. Her son, Don, had placed a guitar he was trying to sell in the window of his mother's store. At that moment, the course of Marguerite's life changed and it wasn't long before she became nestled at the heart of the regions music scene. She is known as one of the most generous and supportive advocates of the regions musical talent.

Marguerite began a small music store in the basement of her other store. There was no music store in the Jamestown area at the time, and Marguerite began to see that her small shop was taking care of the music needs of the upper-midwest. In 1975, she moved her store to Moorhead where her current store, Marguerite's Music, exists. The store has expanded to music instruction with six teachers, as well as sound equipment and music instruments.

"We began seeing that most of our customers were coming from the Fargo/Moorhead area, so why not go there," Marguerite said, sauntering out of her chair and over to the card catalog.

Sliding open a drawer, Marguerite pulled out card after card on some of her biggest customers. Johnny Holm, Lowell Lundstrum, and Assembly of God church of Fargo are the top three customers she has had in her long career. But it's not just the people who have been around since nearly the beginning who make her business great.

"I'm really excited about Shannon (Curfman), now," said Marguerite. "She's going to be big in the near future."

What makes Marguerite special is her willingness to support regional talent. Marguerite was there when Holm bought his first guitar, and she has also been essential in the young careers of new talents like 14-year-old Shannon Curfman and 17-year-old Johnny Lang.

The number of people Marguerite has affected throughout her career is impossible to count. She has always been willing to go out of her way to help struggling artists with holding off payments, or to help fix equipment for a major talent 15 minutes before a major gig.

"It's a really personal, friendly environment here. We know over 50 percent of our customers by their first names," Marguerite's daughter, Linda Smith, said.

Marguerite added, "We don't like to sell something and not tell the people how to use it. It's not like a big chain store where they try to pump out quantity. We care about all of our customers."

A moment that symbolizes most of Marguerite's life happened a few years ago when a doctor's wife shoved a young girl out of line to buy an item. Marguerite, in turn, ignored the lady to make sure the girl was given her fair spot in line. Marguerite said she's never received so much "heck" from a customer in all her life.

"I don't have anything against adults or professional musicians, but they're just people. Just like everyone else. We treat them all the same. We've always done that," Marguerite said.

Unfortunately, Marguerite would be last to tell us what she is known for best, her generosity and kindness, which have kept her in business for this long. It is her loyal customers and friends — all those countless people who have been immortalized in her office file cabinet who give her the credit.

What the musicians have to say

Mike Coates (musician, producer, owner of Barking Dog Records):

"When I was younger and far more arrogant I always felt that my bands (WhiteWing, Asia, Solomon Kane) were vastly superior to the Fargo-Moorhead bands with whom we were in direct competition. But it always aggravated me to no end that those bands had such great sound systems — and that was because of Marguerite's. Well, the only real truth in that youthful opinion is that Marguerite's had and still has the best gear and sales people in the Upper Midwest — and that the talented musicians from this region are very fortunate to have a resource such as Marguerite's."

Linda Coates (musician, owner of Barking Dog Records):

"I remember going into Marguerite's first store when I was a little girl growing up in Jamestown, North Dakota. At that time it was a gift shop on Main Street with cards, wrapping paper and knick-knacks on the main floor...but downstairs there were electric guitars and amps. It was quite exciting. Later she opened her larger store in Jamestown and I remember feeling proud that bands from all over the Midwest would find their way to our little town to shop at Marguerite's. Then I came to school at Moorhead State and Marguerite's moved to Moorhead, too. I have kept a close association with Marguerite's — from the time that I dropped out of college in the 1970s to join a touring lounge trio to the past few years when my husband and I have outfitted an entire recording studio as well as various artists' touring sound systems. I have purchased gear from her store."

"Marguerite is an inspiration as a business woman and as a person. Through all those years, I was impressed by the genuine affection and respect with which she treated all her customers. Now these were often people who got little respect anywhere else — long-haired, often broke, rock musicians — who were drawn to Marguerite's as a place where they could feel at home, dream, learn from the pros, and even get emergency equipment repairs. Now Marguerite is watching my children grow up — and she spoils them with suckers and balloons, too. It's nice to know some wonderful things never change."

Dr. James Condell (professional psychologist, instructor at MSU, guitar player):

"We met in Jamestown about 1957 or '58 when she was working at her appliance store. She also sold records there. I bought several records, she had nice taste. We didn't even know each other's names until she moved her guitar and music store to Moorhead. I was so impressed with the woman. I knew Bill Law, who worked there for years, and he would engage me in conversations with her. I still have a practice of frequently stopping in her store to talk to her". (Smith said he comes in to get his free soda every week.)

Matt Velline (producer/composer at Media Productions, former band member of Johnny Holm, nephew of Bobby Vee):

"I have good memories of Marguerite. She was an extremely fair business woman. I first met her when I was 13 years old in high school. She was very good with helping out young musicians. She gave a lot of leeway with borrowing equipment and paying off our bills. I worked with her for one summer in speaker and guitar repair and things like that. Like I said, she's extremely fair and a kidder as well. She still calls me Matilda."

Darren Rust (singer with The Blenders):

"She played a big part in a lot of young musicians lives. We got a lot of gear from her early on. What I really

respected about her was she recognized us as a local act and she really tried to help out local talent. She tries to help them make something of themselves. I remember going there as a little kid, when I always dreamed of having a band. Marguerite and her store helped spawn the dreams of a young kid out of Fargo. Other music stores, in Minneapolis or California, their salespeople are just salespeople. We still do business with her, but most often I just stop in to say Hi. The most exciting thing about her and her employees is that they actually care about their customers."

Bill Law (director of the Fargo/Moorhead Symphony Orchestra, former employee of Marguerite's Music):

"I met Marguerite in the mid-'70s when I was a working musician. I then started working for her and did so for 11 years until a few years ago when I quit. Back in those days, it was the place to go. It was a very unique store. She was really good for starving artists who were short on cash. She really kept a lot of us afloat. I feel it's the greatest store of its kind. And she is the most dynamic, energetic person I've ever known. She would work our legs off, and still out-work us at twice our age."

Bruce Larson (Assembly of God church, associate pastor of worship, music, and drama):

"I've known Marguerite for 20 years, and worked with her for about 15. She has been very supportive and she also has the ability to surround herself with an excellent staff of people. On several occasions she and her staff have helped us out of big jams. We were conducting A Concert for Prayer at the Fargo Civic Auditorium when we had a number of problems with sound. She did not hesitate to send someone over to help us and that really made the concert. Their service department has always done their best and has never let us down, and that has a lot to say about her."

Shannon Curfman (musician, The Shannon Curfman Band):

"Marguerite has always been really nice to me. I buy all my stuff there because she's such a great lady. I've known her for three years and have taken lessons from Steve Langemo (who is a member of Shannon's band) for two. A lot of artists in this area would not have gotten this far without her help."

Johnny Holm (musician, The Johnny Holms Band):

"I am Marguerite's biggest customer. Nobody else is even close anymore. She's a legend around here and it's about time someone did a story on her. I live in Minneapolis, but I still make it a point to do business with her. They take care of us if we have a problem. And if something breaks down, they can get it to us right away. I'm not saying anything bad about the stores in Minneapolis because they all want my business now, but they don't offer the kind of hospitality she does. I stop in and tease her all the time when I'm in Fargo. Her best line when it comes to borrowing equipment or paying bills, 'cuz no one else will tell it to you, is, 'Oh, real fine dear, we don't worry about you.' She gives artists the benefit of the doubt. I can't confirm anything, but I bet her losses have been great over the years. Maybe that's why she's so popular...because she's so generous."

"I bought my first guitar from her when she had her store in Jamestown back in 1970. That's when my account began. Twenty-eight years ago. We were wondering about why she works so hard for young artists. I guess she just likes musicians. There's a lot of weird people in this industry."

story and photos by Steve Listopad

HIGH PLAINS READER

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**Shannan
Curtman**

Wanting the World

Shannon Curfman: Wanting the World

By Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

Age can't stop talent. The Fargo-Moorhead community has had its share of young stars lately. Most notably would be Jonny Lang, 17, a blues singer and guitarist who recently appeared in *Blues Brothers 2000*.

Then there is Shannon Curfman of "The Shannon Curfman Band." At the age of 12, she has already accomplished what most college students can only dream about—singing and playing guitar in a band that is named after her.

While most 12-year-olds would be spending Wednesday nights finishing their book reports or math assignments, Shannon runs frantically around the house to make sure the Grammy's are being taped. Her parents, Terry and Mary Curfman, assure her everything is in order, while they continue working on Shannon's entry package for the 1998 Lilith Fair tour. Not the usual childhood evening.

Shannon has been involved with music since a very young age. "I've been interested in music since I could talk," she said.

Shannon, who has been in several other bands, including *Monster on a Leash*, says that this band is "the most focused and serious" of her musical endeavors.

"We all have the same direction as far as what we want to do," she said.

But they aren't going to be doing much yet. Shannon, who has high hopes for the future, wants to take things nice and slow for a little while. Except, of course for the Lilith Fair.

Shannon's band consists of Jason Woods, keyboard; Matt Johnson, drums; Chris Ross, bass guitar; and Steve Langemo, lead guitarist. Ironically, Langemo was Shannon's guitar instructor for two years before Shannon was asked to sing and strum for them. Shannon's father works for Burlington Northern Sante Fe Railroad out of Dilworth and her mother helps manage Shannon's affairs and helps with home schooling.

For a person as young as Shannon, what kind of role will she play in a definitely adult music industry?

"She is a talented musician, but she needs to learn to talk to the crowd," Chris Jonas, manager of 1st Avenue Cabaret in Fargo, said.

Shannon has performed at 1st Avenue five times since Jonas has

taken the managerial reigns. The usual night for Shannon at the establishment draws near full capacity of 180 to 200 "not-to-rowdy" people, according to Jonas.

"It will just take experience for her to learn how to deal with the audience. As far as talent, the whole band is one of the most talented groups in Fargo, bar none," he said. "But it's too bad that so many people in the state have to get huffy about these laws. And that's why, I assume, she's playing a lot in Minnesota. The law itself stinks because it doesn't give the young and up-and-coming a chance."

Controversy involving Shannon's age has sprung up since a performance at Army's Sports Bar in Bismarck late last year. Brian Jensen, manager of the bar, was brought up on charges for allowing a minor into his liquor establishment.

Jonas is not worried about possible repercussions of letting Shannon perform at 1st Avenue, since his establishment is considered a coffee shop and cabaret.

To be a professional singer, there can't be a lot of time allowed for the usual kiddie stuff like...school. Shannon quit attending Fargo public schools after she completed 6th grade at Agassiz

Junior High. She is currently home taught by her mother. The curriculum she uses is ordered and a monitor from the public school system checks up on Shannon's work once a week. Home schooling hasn't changed her life to any great extent. Her mother said Shannon is far ahead of other students at the same level.

"In school, they might only finish half or three quarters of a textbook," said Mary Curfman. "But Shannon finishes all of her textbooks for all of her classes."

"I still do the same activities that my friends do. I go rollerblading, skating, hang out at the mall and do all of that stuff," Shannon said. "It just gives me more time in the day to get all of my stuff done that I need to do. I just felt that there was a lot of wasted time in school. You know, walking the halls when you're done with your assignments. I've wanted to do home school for years."

Where Shannon's social life is concerned, she said, "It hasn't really affected my life at all. It just gives me more to talk about when I go out."

So how does a 12-year-old fit in with the rest of the band, whose ages average in the mid-20s?

"The only real difference I see between the rest of the band and

me is that

they're guys and I'm a girl," she explained. "I don't know how they see it."

There were different ideas for the name of "The Shannon Curfman Band," but the idea came for the final title came from fellow band members. "I had nothing to do with it," Shannon said. "They made the decision, however we always discussed having my name in the title."

The band does have an advantage with Shannon's age when it comes to attracting attention. "I think it's just kind of a given," Shannon said. "That's what people just pick out."

With a youngster climbing up Jacob's Ladder of success, how does the family fit into the picture?

"Well, we just feel very fortunate that she gets to work with very good people," Terry said. "There have been some people that have come up to us and made some offers. But we've just been taking it one step at a time."

"Shannon's never been one to hold back. She's been playing every instrument that she could get her hands on," Mary said.

"It's definitely not something that my parent's pushed me to do," Shannon added. "It's something that I wanted to do. It's totally what I live for. It's music."

Shannon has always had a special place in her heart for regional talent, especially when it comes to Jonny Lang, who calls whenever he's in town and has taken a special interest in Shannon's career. "He gives me advice as far as music business decisions and what I should look into as far as instruments. And I'm so happy for him. It's a big dream to try to reach his success."

One drawback for Shannon is not coming from a musical family. Lang's father was a musician and had a vast resource of connections for his son. Shannon's first musical influence was her grandmother pushing her to take guitar lessons on an old acoustic guitar that was just sitting around the Curfman residence collecting dust.

"She's always been a little singer. She's always had a microphone," Terry said. "It was a gradual thing, and

when she really started showing some talent...you've gotta support them."

"I relate to parents having their kids involved in hockey. I don't look at it any differently than that," Mary said. "We spend just as much time and money as they do, or to having your daughter in dance or basketball."

Still defensive about parental pushing, Shannon said, "I'm not really pushed into it. It just so happens that the people who play instruments to be in bands aren't in my age group. That's where my interest is and that's probably where my interest will be forever."

As far as the Army Sports Bar, the Curfmans said that the manager had a choice to let Shannon play or not. The stage was set up and Jensen said to go with it. He ended up with a \$100 fine, but invited Shannon back to perform again.

"It was a really good show, and we heard a lot of good comments about it. Next time we go back it will be an all ages show...so then I can be there," Shannon said.

The future for the Curfman band is uncertain at worst and unlimited at best. It's a difficult concept to grasp—moving slowly in the music business, but according to Shannon, they're going to try.

"We're working on putting out a debut CD. Hopefully it will be out this summer or fall. We're just going on a day-by-day basis."

They have had some responses from national producers, but Shannon stressed that it was definitely something they didn't want to rush into. Staying in the area and building a bigger fan base is on the agenda for the immediate future. "Once you establish those connections you could always come back to them."

If the band does take off, Shannon is enthusiastic to get out of the midwest.

"I want the world right now, but it depends on the whole band. I'm only a fifth of the decision."



The Shannon Curfman Band

HIGH PLAINS READER

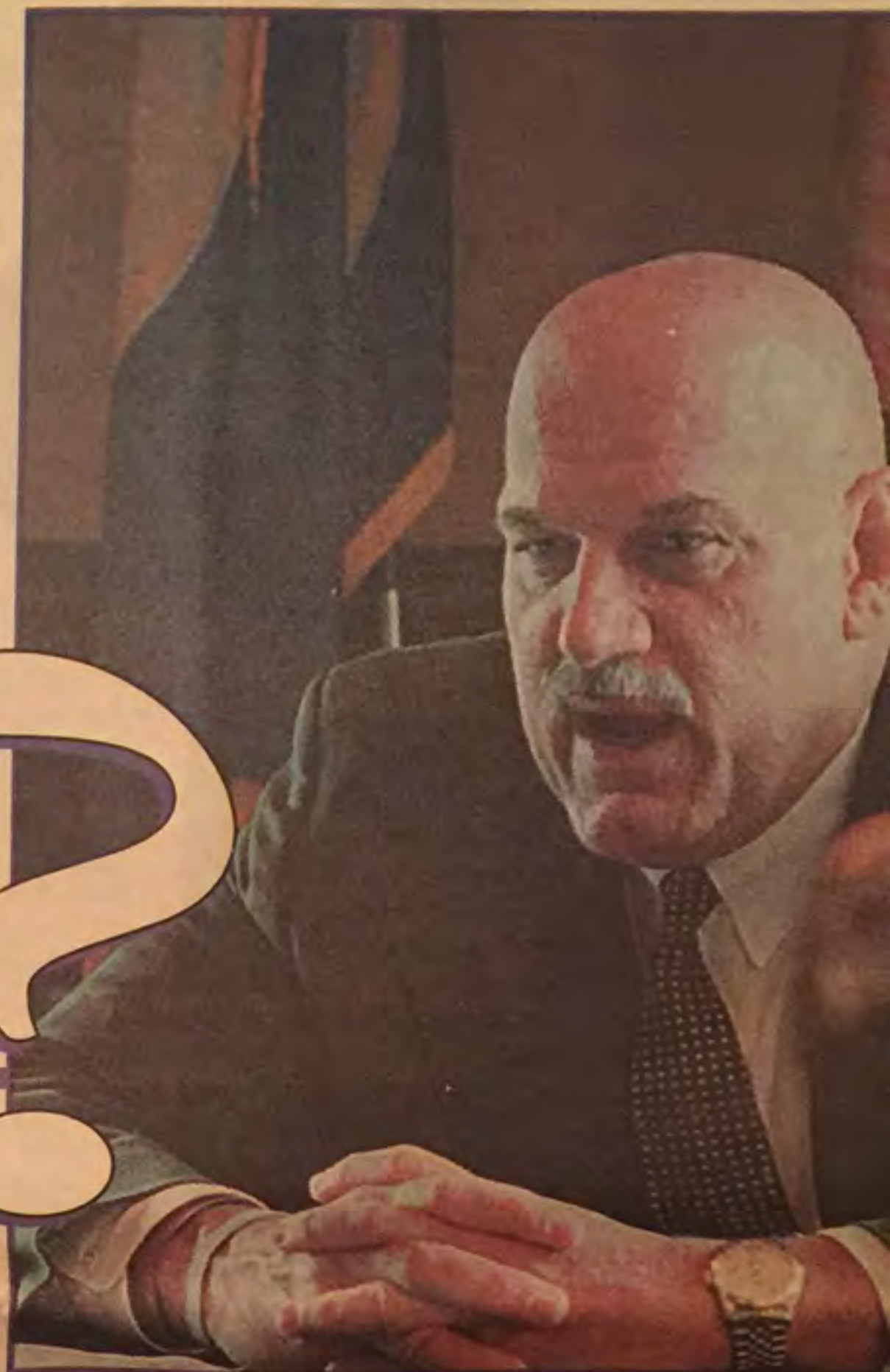
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GOV. Jesse Ventura

Body, Mind, & Soul

Governor Jesse Ventura body, mind & soul?



Story By Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

Photos By Matt Tompkins
Contributing Photographer

The laws we choose to define our reality will not permit us to travel faster than light, but they will let us elect an ex-pro wrestler as Governor of Minnesota. Take that, Einstein!

Reflecting upon recent history, many people will say Ronald Reagan, a former movie star, was both the best and worst president ever elected. But no one will argue the indelible mark he left on our society. Especially when it comes to how skillfully he influenced the media.

Today, there is a man many consider to have leadership qualities similar to Reagan. He is also a man who is meticulously scrutinized under the watchful eye of the media. Maybe history only will be able to determine whether he has a firm grasp of the media's reigns, or if the media has a hold of him. Whatever the case, Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura has a lot to say.

When I walked into his office March 9, Gov. Ventura stood slowly and leaned across

his desk to greet my outstretched hand. Before I could even express my appreciation for this opportunity he let me know I was in over my head.

"The Red River Valley...yeah if you guys remain on the earth," he said. "All my DNR people have told me that eventually that will go back to being the lake (Agassiz) that it was. It's just a matter of when. Eventually the lake will return, whether it's ten, fifty or a hundred years. At least that's what I was told. I had a DNR guy looking at it with me."

I responded with a stuttering agreement, and I didn't stop stuttering until I walked out of his office 30 minutes later. Being in the presence of such a physically daunting and intellectually bright luminary is not something I'm used to.

I wanted to get started with the interview right away, knowing we only had a short time to spend with him. Half an hour is not much and I had to make use of every minute of it. At first he sat motionless, slumped shoulders and sunken eyes telling me how uninterested he was to be there. From what he showed me, I had no idea I was going to get the interview that I did.

The following story is a tale of three Jesses. Within the first five minutes, the governor, began rocking back and forth in his chair, and

he didn't quit. He gave me the impression I was interviewing a triumvirate of ruling men. His former self, "The Body," made an encore appearance as an optimistic and goal orientated young athlete embracing his advancing years with grace and dignity. Next came "The Mind," a jaded and bitter blue collar citizen, barely containing his contempt for a political system he feels driven to change. And finally, a side of Ventura many people have not seen before, "The Soul," a spiritual thread that defies the cynicism of "The Mind" and the larger than life mystique of "The Body." A continuity that ties these opposites together with the promise of some grand design. So let's get started on this odyssey through a divided land, because in the words of Gov. Ventura himself, "Well, you've got a half hour."

WORLDS COLLIDE

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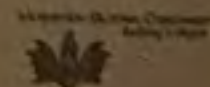
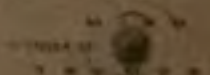
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The Body

"My skull, my eyes, my nose three times, my jaw, my shoulder, my chest, two fingers, a knee, everything from the top of my head to the bottom of my feet."

-Jackie Chan listing body parts he's broken

Born James Janos, Gov. Ventura has taken every kind of hit imaginable, from physical and mental abuse as a Navy Seal, to professional backlashes caused by his pro wrestling days. What kind of early training did this rock of a man receive as a child to be able to take such otherworldly stresses and come out unbroken?

"I think it's the fact that my mom and dad raised both my brother and I to be extremely independent. And to go out and compete, and to not let the world come to you but to go to it," he explained. "And so I think that I've kinda lived that way during all my careers. Being aggressive and going out and going after your goals and chasing your dreams. So I think probably that was what I carried forward from my

childhood."

"Just work hard and good things can happen. Don't work hard and not so many things can happen. I think the main thing is the effort that you put forth.

The larger the effort, the better chance you have for success. The less the effort, the less chance."

To his benefit, the world young Ventura grew up in was a much tamer one.

The sins of the cities hadn't yet invaded small town America and children were given more freedom to explore their surroundings and themselves. At least in some ways.

"I grew up in a great time where kids could go out and be independent. I mean, when we were young kids we used to live not far from the Mississippi River. You know, we would leave on Saturday morning and not come home until dark. Today, with my children, I would be mortified to not know where they were at because the times have changed. But in those days all we did was tell (our parents) 'hey,

we're going to the river,' and that's all that was needed or that's all that had to happen. I think just the freedom of growing up then was very nice."

Other than the teachings of his parents and the adventures of youth, Ventura has always idolized one of America's greatest athletes not only for his physical prowess, but also for the strength of his character.

"Well, my hero is Muhammad Ali. And he was because he's a person who wouldn't let anything stand in the way of his beliefs. He was willing to give up everything he had for what he believed in. I mean when they asked him, or drafted him, into the military he didn't have any reason to fight. And he gave up the heavyweight championship of the world rather than do it. And I admire someone who will stand by their convictions regardless of what they suffer because of it. And I got a chance to meet him a couple of months ago and it's probably been the highlight...it's probably been the best thing that's happened to me since I became governor, opening the door for me to do that."

Ventura, now given the chance to be a role model for today's youth, said, "My advice is to not to hold

anyone in too high of an esteem.

you know. Because we're all human. We're all in many ways no different from each other, and I would tell them that honesty -- you know, but honesty will get you in trouble. If you're truthful and you're honest, especially in the political arena, politically correct is more important than being honest. If you're honest, you're going to get hammered. If you're politically correct you won't. So that's a judgment call you have to make. You can be false to yourself and be politically correct, or you can be honest to yourself and face the trouble that it will bring."

Considering young Ventura had many goals and aspirations as a child and the courage and freedom to explore anything and everything he wanted to, what should we suppose his greatest successes and worst failures have been?

"My biggest successes? I suppose winning this election. No one said I could. Everyone assumed I'd lose. All the so-called experts said I could never win. So I think that would be the biggest. I guess my other success would be going through B.U.D.S. training and being a frogman Navy Seal. You know, at that point in my life there was nothing more challenging, and nothing more physically and mentally challenging than anything I've ever done in my life. All the other stuff is a piece of cake. And that's why I measure everything to that. People say, 'Gee, how do you hold up being governor.' I said, 'that ain't nothin', spend a day with Mother Moy.' He's one of my instructors. He was here for my inauguration. Chief Moy. Spend the afternoon with him and the rest of these guys are a bunch of pukes. So I think those are the biggest successes of my life, winning the election and making it into the Navy Seals."

"I haven't had a lot of failures, really. And I don't deal with failures. If I fail at something I forget about it and move on. You know, everyone fails at something. I don't dwell on it. I don't even know what I'd classify a failure because I always put forth my best effort in everything that I do. If you get fired from a job, I don't always view that as you failed. An employer can fire you for many reasons and it doesn't necessarily mean that you failed."

Have major turning points in the governor's life ever resulted from a failure?

"Not really a failure, but I've had things happen in my life. Like when I got the pulmonary emboli, the blood clots in my lungs, at the height of my pro wrestling career. It made me reevaluate everything because as a pro athlete one never really believes that it will end. You're in such prime physical shape, and so powerful and mighty, and all that and then all of a sudden to be struck down and have to face the reality of what do I do now. That was probably really traumatic for me because I didn't know if I could ever get back in the ring again. I subsequently did. But I had been a wrestler for 11 years (shrug). You know, what does that do for you on a job application. If I'm going to go down here and apply for a job at Honeywell or IBM - pro wrestler 11 years (shrug). So, you know, that's the tough part about being an athlete. You make money but you have to be smart with it because you have to understand at

some point in athletics it's a young man's game and Father Time beats everyone. So you have to prepare for it."

Before the "The Body" met his match in the natural selection process, he had brief success on the silver screen. Movies like Predator and Batman and Robin that needed some muscle were pounding at his door to get whatever they could out of him.

In a small, but nevertheless interesting internet poll at www.mediawarpcomics.com, 41 percent of the 39 people who participated said Ventura should play the Marvel Comics villain Kraven the Hunter in the upcoming Spider-Man movie produced by Sony Pictures. Could this be his next project?

"My agent hasn't told me a thing about it, so I know nothing. I'm a big fan. I used to read Spider-Man. Tell them I'll take the role. I'd love it. But I don't know nothin' about it, I haven't heard, my agent hasn't called. And besides I don't know if I could do it because of this job. I mean, I could do a cameo role for a couple of days but for a major shoot I'd have to leave for seven or eight weeks so I don't think I'd be available to do it."

Hmm...listen up Hollywood. "The Body" may strike again.

The Mind

"Our mind is capable of passing beyond the dividing line we have drawn for it. Beyond the pairs of opposites of which the world consists, other, new insights begin."

-Herman Hesse

Jesse "The Body" Ventura, then 47, shortly into his new career as governor of Minnesota, professed that he had metamorphosized into "The Mind." He started his political career as mayor of Brooklyn Park, Minn. in 1991, but the all-knowing, all-seeing political eye of America didn't take notice until his gubernatorial success.

How did he get this far? Is it his looks? His charisma? His brains? When asked if he thinks he's a genius or a savant, he said, "I don't know about that. It's just observing and watching and seeing how things happen." The brief notion of his genius was marred by the several assistants needed to define savant.

The answer to "How did he get this job?" and "Why does he deserve it?" may lie in another part of "The Mind."

As a leader, the governor said of himself, "Well, I've been compared to Ronald Reagan. I would say that I would compare to Dick Marcinko. He writes the Rogue Warrior books. He's a former seal. Seal team Six. And I think that our type of leadership was born out of our naval experience. I'm a firm believer that you hire the best people to do the job and then get out of their way and let them do it. I don't believe in micro-managing. Naturally I'm the ultimate decision-maker, but I believe that I have great people like my trade and economic development commissioner Jerry Carlson, who has 32 years doing

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the same thing for Eco Lab in the private sector. This is his first venture into the public sector. Well, I'm not going to know more than Jerry does about that. So get out of his way and let him do his job for me. If he's successful then I'm successful. So I delegate

one will know that his opinions are meaningless. Weird, huh?)

"Like Super Tuesday," Gov. Ventura said. "What is my opinion of Super Tuesday. I'm not a member of either of those parties. What do I care for? Yet



power. Not really power, but I delegate and allow my commissioners, I have twenty-five of them I think at last count, I let them do their jobs. And if they fail to do their jobs then I'll deal with them. But as long as they do their jobs then I'll shine. So I'm a big believer in allowing people to do their jobs and not micro-manage them. Not sit and look over their shoulder to second guess them."

Leading a country is one thing, but leading a movement is something completely different all together. And it can be safely said when the ballots were cast in November of 1998 in Ventura's favor a statement was made to the powers that be -- the people want reform. How, then, has this celebrity handled the added pressure of leading a revolution?

"In positive ways the attention brings a lot of spotlight on Minnesota. Virtually now everywhere in the world I'm told as soon as people say they are from Minnesota they identify it with me now. And that's good in a way, 'cause we can take advantage of that for tourism and trade and economic development, and all that. It's a good advantage to have. On the negative side, I think that it is very unfair that everything that I do be scrutinized to the point that it is. I'm human and it gets sometimes almost comical when they (particularly the media) want my opinion on things that really are irrelevant. It's meaningless what my opinion is. But the media knows that by attaching my name to something it will get headlines or it will get focused upon even though my opinion doesn't mean anything."

(This was a turning point in the interview. This was the moment when I realized Gov. Ventura wasn't just talking to another faceless reporter. He was talking to me and he was trying to impress upon me his humanity. He wanted me to know I was caught in a Catch 22. He said his opinions are meaningless and no one should care about them, but it's my responsibility to report them because if I don't no

they all want me on television giving my philosophical opinion on what's happening. I didn't even watch Super Tuesday. I went to the 'Wolves game. Didn't even watch the news. Didn't even care, you know. So I think what's hard about it is that I'm put under such public scrutiny for many of the things that I do that are irrelevant. I mean, judge me for what I do when it affects numbers of people, but what I do when it only affects me is really no one's business."

So, if Gov. Ventura feels so strongly about having his freedom to be himself, his freedom not to be poked and prodded for his thoughts about this and his opinions about that, why does he allow himself to get lured into verbal pitfalls? And conversely, if he feels so strongly about his freedom to make "drunken Irishmen" jokes on The Late Show with David Letterman and religious criticisms in Playboy, why did he later retract them?

"I didn't retract them," he declared. "No, I just said that I didn't mean to offend anybody by them. The Irish comment was made on David Letterman. To the best of my knowledge that is a comedy show. To the best of my knowledge the top ten list isn't the Ten Commandments. It's humor. I'm a performer from my past life, and so when I go on a show like Letterman...have fun. And so, no, the only thing that I did is I came out and said, 'hey look, if I offended someone it wasn't meant to'. You know, it was meant to be a joke and meant to be funny. And if people took offense to it I'm sorry they did. It wasn't meant to be offensive. And as far as the religious comments go, if I would've simply said 'some' I'd have been all right. But I didn't say some. At that point in time I was doing five interviews a day, twenty-five a week. Which if you multiply that out it comes to over a thousand a year. Well, I'm only human. And when Playboy interviews you it's very much like they're with you a few days. And it's very much like sitting down and having a conversation at

a coffee table, where you're going to exchange ideas and the exchange of those ideas aren't as harsh until they come out in black and white on paper where they're written 'Playboy asks this...Answer this.' It becomes a lot harsher in reading than in a conversation. And the interview is done very conversationally. You know, it would be like you spending the afternoon with me and riding with me and just having conversation with me. So, if what I said was that some organized religions are a sham and a crutch for weak-minded people, which I'll stand by that today, I believe that some are. You're not going to tell me that Jimmy Swaggart and them, you know, are upstanding good deals, I guess. Good deal for who? And the whole thing is, truthfully, what difference does it make what I think. Those are my opinions. I don't govern by my opinions."

After a stint in the Reform party, only to make a much publicized exit early this spring, Gov. Ventura sees his place among the no man's land of the political arena. "My niche is probably the title of my next book. It's called 'I Stand Alone.' Wait'll it comes out. It'll really stir things up. My niche in the political system is battling the two parties and what they stand for. And they're nothing but power. That's what it's about."

He has been quoted as saying he won't run for reelection, and that seems like a good bet, but even the governor admits you can never say never. "I'll decide in about two years," he said. "I'll see what I've accomplished. I'll see if it intrigues me to continue to do this. I'll see what my family thinks."

Even though Ventura sees himself as being unduly scrutinized, he always finds time to draw attention to activities of others, especially when it comes to campaign tactics.

"My campaign, I already said that I'll spend less money than I did in this one. I set an all-time record

for the least amount of spending. My view is that people spend so much money, my father always used to say to me, speaking of politicians, and this is my father talking. He used to always say, 'You know how you know they're all crooks?' and I'd say, 'No dad, how do you know that?' 'Cause', he said, 'They spend a million dollars for a job that pays a hundred grand a year.' And, no if I run again my view will be very simple. My campaign will be very simple. If you think I've done a good job, and you'd like me to continue for four more years, vote me in. If you think someone else will do a better job, vote them in and I'll go back to the private sector. I'll be happy to do the job. I'll give forth every effort I have in doing it. But to me, I find it just utter...Gov. Bush is spending more in one day than I spent in my entire campaign. He's spending that in one day. Now, why?! That's a question that needs to be asked. Well, obviously it's the buying and selling of power. I mean, people aren't giving Gov. Bush money because they like him. They're not giving him money because he's handsome. They're giving him money 'cause they're buying influence. They know that as a contributor that they'll be able to receive an audience from him if they need it. Because he'll have guilt. If someone's contributed large amounts of money to your campaign, well, you can't very well shut the door on them and say, 'Well, no that was to get me elected but now I don't care.' And, see, that's the one place that I think we should switch to socialism. And it's very rarely that you'll hear me say that. But I think that we should allocate tax dollars and give each major party candidate an equal amount of money and with no contribution and let them spend it as they see fit. People will disagree with me. They say it's a First Amendment right to be able to contribute to the candidate of your choice, but I think it's the buying and selling of our

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political system."

Ventura, not ruling out a second term as governor, has definitely put the kibosh on a run at Washington in any capacity. In an early '90s Today Show interview, Ventura, adorned with hair and a bandanna, said he "belonged in the White House. Not so anymore. He said, "That could've been Jesse 'The Body' talking. And you have to remember that lot's of times I'll say things at certain points of my life that I'm not truly serious about. It's just a way to be interesting. No, I don't even want the White House. I couldn't stand its prison. I couldn't take losing my freedoms to that degree. Because I've lost my freedoms a lot at this job. I can't go anywhere without protection. Generally in public I can't do this, do that. And as President you can't go anywhere without multitudes of protection, and I just wouldn't want to do that. I'm 48, and to do that for four years of your life. Four years of your life where you literally are...you're in your own prison, and I just don't want to do that."

In summing up the essence of "The Mind," it's important to observe his struggle to keep his lives separate. He said, "My values in my public life are there to be looked at by the public. My values in my private life are not there to be looked at by the public. That's my personal business."

The Soul

"I do not believe in an afterlife, although I am bringing a change of underwear."

-Woody Allen

If you believed Gov. Ventura was headed for the Emptiness of oblivion at the end of his life, don't feel bad, because you were not alone. Due to certain comments he made in Playboy like

"Organized religion is a sham and a crutch," many people were led to the conclusion that he's an atheist. Hell, even the American Atheist Magazine rallied their troops in support of his politics.

Alas, Gov. Ventura does believe in something beyond our physical realm. However, like the spontaneity of his actions and the bluntness of his mediated proclamations, it is obvious that it isn't organized.

"Something causes you to do what you do," he said. "Because you make decisions in your life...I'm 48 now, lot's of times I'll look back and think 'Gee, why did I make that decision.' There was no reason to do it, but look what happened because of it. One interesting thing that happened to me, that had it not happened I wouldn't be governor today. That was back in 1989 and 1990, I had a TV series, a pilot that was being picked up. It was going into production. It was picked up as a mid-season replacement. Guaranteed six episodes or seven episodes. And I had temporarily moved to Los Angeles to do it. Well the night before it was due to shoot it got cancelled for no real reason. Politics, whatever, I never really found out why. It was unheard of. That had never happened before. They had already spent well over a million dollars on the set. Gone. Dropped it. I had a call sheet to go to work the next day (banging on his desk). And at five o'clock that evening my agent called me and said are you sitting down, you just got canceled. And I said that's impossible, I have a call sheet. Nope, you're canceled. And, well, what happened was, that was in the late summer, early fall of 1990, it allowed me to come back and run for mayor of Brooklyn Park. Had that series picked up and gone on I would never have run for mayor of

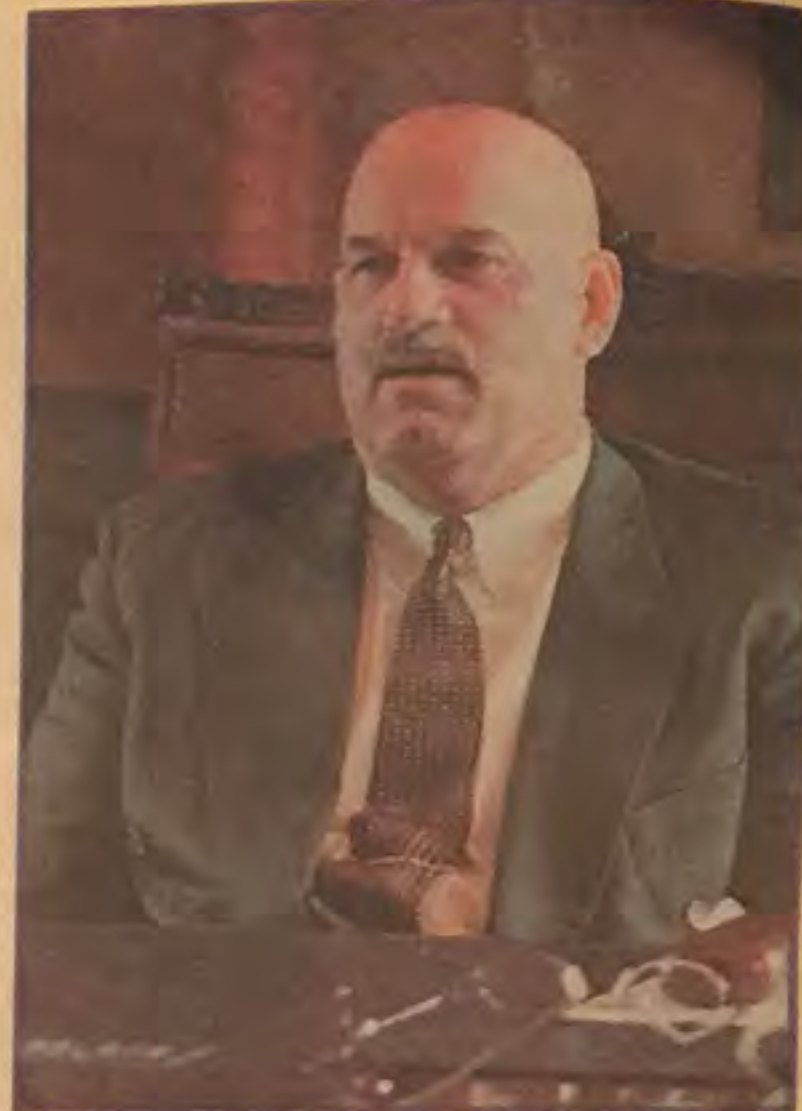
Brooklyn Park. Had I never run for mayor of Brooklyn Park, the chances would be that I never would have run for governor of Minnesota. So why did those things happen and what did they lead me to? And they were things beyond my control. You know. I didn't cancel it. *Someone* did."

"I just take the roads of life as I travel them. And one thing leads to another. I don't make real conscious decisions. I make a lot of decisions on the spur of the moment. I'm very much instinctive. Plus I also have my own personal belief. I believe in fate. I believe that you're destined to do certain things. And someone told me that I believe in God because someone has to control that fate, that destiny, so obviously that means you believe in a higher spiritual entity whatever it is. And I believe that things happen for a reason and you're driven. I believe that you're going to die on a certain day. No matter what you do that day, won't matter."

The body, mind, and soul of Gov. Jesse Ventura were on display for the people of the Red River Valley to see that afternoon. He was so uncommonly open I thought I would ask the one question everyone wants to know. The one question that is asked at every high school student body presidential debate: Boxers or Briefs?

"Neither, it depends what I'm wearing. If it's jeans, neither. But if it's like what I'm wearing now then it would be briefs."

Nevertheless, the threads that tie this physically hulking, mentally superior, and spiritually elusive figure are tenuous at best. But for this reporter, a thirty minute interview intended to get one good soundbyte changed course and turned into a morality tale of personal strength, media ethics, political malignancy, and spiritual solidar-



ity. This is far from a psychological study, and I can't claim that any of the observations of the governor made in our thirty minute conversation can be confirmed by trained experts. But in a reality where the governing laws rule out reaching the other side of the universe in half an hour, they make no mention of the time required to glimpse the soul of a man.

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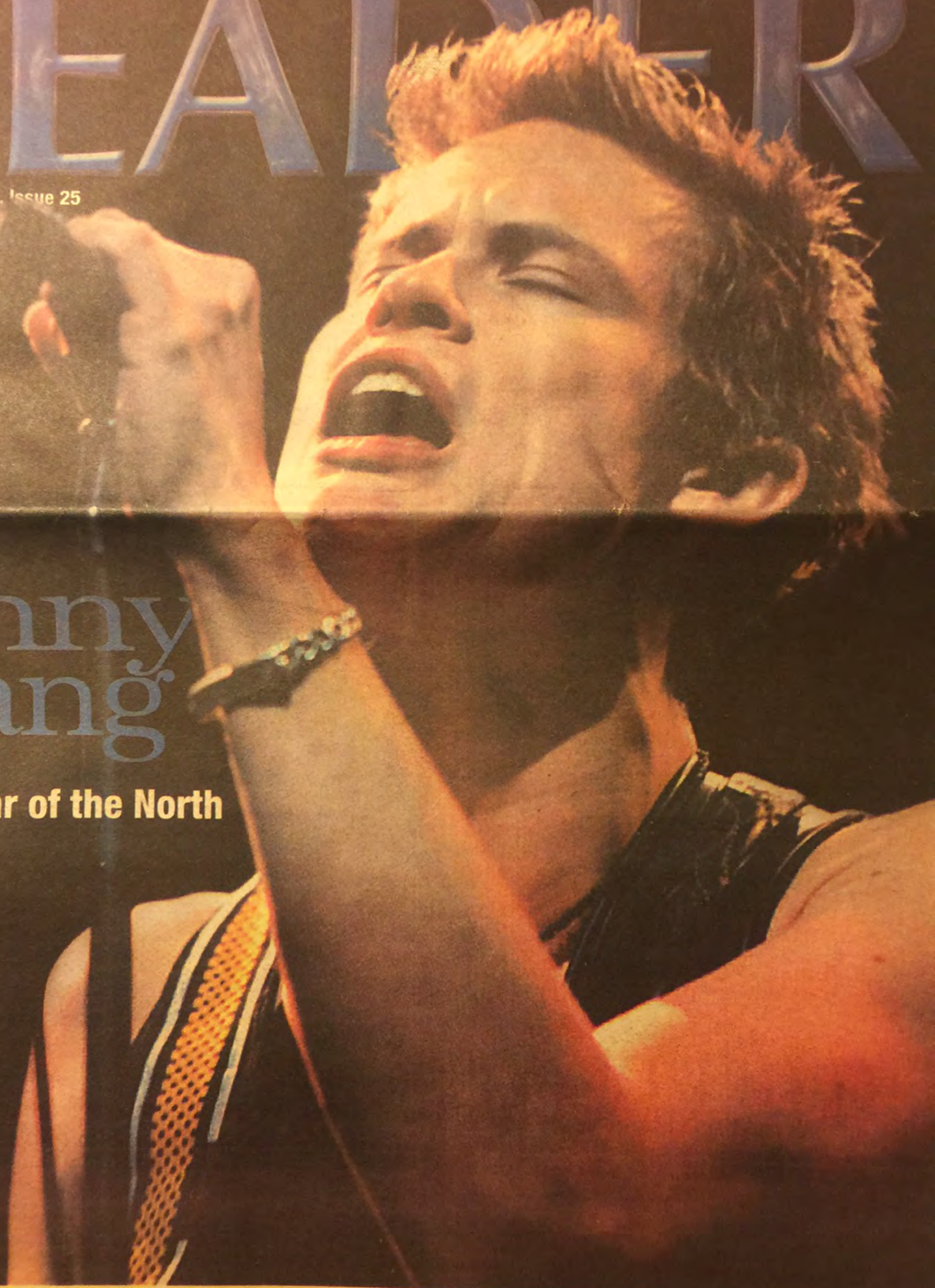
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Jonny Lang

Rising Star of the North





Jonny Lang

STORY BY STEVE LISTOPAD, PHOTOS BY ROCH TWETEN



"Shit, I might live here," Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones quipped when the packed Fargodome roared after a stellar solo performance.

All 19-year-old blues sensation Jonny Lang would say to Richards is, "Been there, done that."

Lang, opener for the Stones' No Security Tour Feb. 17, currently resides in Minneapolis. But it was when he lived in the Casselton-Fargo area that the blues took hold of his life. By the age of 14, he was touring and making a name for himself. Several years have passed since he moved, so the obvious question is, "What's it like to come home?"

"It was great," Lang said, in reference to his entrance onto the Fargodome stage. "I wasn't expecting a reaction like the Stones were going to get, but I wasn't worried about that."

The Fargodome isn't the only place Lang has performed in Fargo-Moorhead. Playmaker's, The Old Broadway, The TreeTop, and other smaller venues were witness to his early sound, but Kirby's stands out in Lang's mind. "It sounded great on stage in there. It was just a cool little funky club to play."

Lang has always been praised and criticized for his soulful stylings. Many people have told him he was and still is too young to sing the blues.

"The blues is just like any other style of music. You don't need hardships to play the blues," Lang said. "And when B.B. King leans over and says 'good job,' who needs to listen to anyone else?"

On his second solo effort, "Wander This World," Lang described the song "Breakin' Me" as a metaphor, like most of his music. "It's not like what's in the song actually happened, but I can see how some people get taken for granted. They want what is taken from them back."

Living in Minneapolis has helped change Lang's perspective on music. The funk scene has played a big part in his more recent musical ventures.

"My favorite band to see is Dr. Mambo's Combo. They are just a bunch of guys who played with Prince," Lang said. "Every Monday that I'm around I jam with them, and have my ass kicked a little. It brings me back down to earth, you know."

Lang's early influences in music came from his family, friends and a guitar instructor by the name of Ted Larson of Fargo. Larson, a blues guitarist himself, taught Lang the fundamentals before the two put together a band that would eventually be called Jonny Lang and the Big Bang.

"When I first saw Ted he was obviously a blues guitar player in a blues band, and it was really the first live performance I'd ever seen. It kinda hit me, like 'Wow, this is great!'" Lang said. "Ted said blues was all he could really teach me, so I never really had an opportunity to see much else. Then they asked me to be the lead singer in their band."

Other than singing with his mom and sisters on road trips, Lang has never had any formal voice training. He didn't even participate in school choirs. "It's just something that came naturally, I guess. But I love to sing."

Reaching celebrity status at such a young age can put stars in the eyes of anyone, no matter how stoic their value system is. Drugs, parties, and excess have ruined the careers of many talented individuals. Midwestern talent is not exempt from this trend. However, the rock and roll lifestyle that plagues tabloid stars has yet to hinder the rising star of the north. Friends and family and small town North Dakota still remain a part of Lang's life.

"I just always keep in mind what I started doing in the first place, 'cuz that's what I love doing. All the other stuff that they say comes along with it isn't necessary for me. I don't feel like living the cliché of a rock star. I just love to play music," Lang explained.

"I went to functions after awards shows. I wouldn't call them throwing-TVs-out-windows kinds of parties or anything, but I'm not into that stuff. The ones I go to are just big schmooze-fests, and I'm not into them either."

Lang doesn't get to see his family or friends much, being on the road most of the time, but he said that nothing changes when he comes home. After the Fargo show, a few of his friends made the venture back to Lang's home in Minneapolis with him. And he treasures the times his parents and three sisters can come on the road with him.

"You only live once, you know. You can always go back and say that I wish I was still riding bikes around with my buddies and stuff," Lang said. "To go back, to regress and regret doing something because you feel like you missed out on your childhood — I've thought about that kind of thing — But I've never really sat down and thought about quitting music."

There are also those people in the area who feel the big-time has gone to Lang's head. Lang laughed and said, "Sure I've lost some friends, (Lang does admit to having more than three, however) but my close friends and my family are still there. I don't really care, I guess, 'cuz people are going to think what they want. As far as I'm concerned, like I've said in the past, nothing changes when I come home."

Like any celebrity, Lang does attract his share of yes men and handshake friends. "There are always people that hang out. You know, a friend of a friend of a friend. But that's cool. You know, I would do the same thing."

He is, however, wary of being taken advantage of.

"Those people are easy to spot," he said. "I always try to stay away from those people. I think if you keep everything else real, people are a lot more real to you."

Growing up in Casselton and Fargo does not leave a bad taste in Lang's mouth. Coming from the Midwest has given Lang, according

to him, the precious commodities called common sense and a good family — two things that some people in the spotlight just never get to have.

"I wouldn't change a thing about the way I grew up. I had a great upbringing," he said. "My parents got divorced, and that was probably the worst thing. And even that wasn't that bad, you know."

As far as the future of Lang's music is concerned, he said, "I could be the first underwriter violinist, or something. Everybody said that from the first album we did in Fargo with the Big Bang to 'Lie to Me' to 'Wander This World' that we keep moving away from the blues and they're like, 'What's wrong with you.'"

"I'm like, these are the same people that told me I didn't have the right to play the blues, so what the hell are they talking about?"

Lang continues to write new music, but as a solo effort, he chooses to expand his horizons

within the folk genre.

"And you know, I would never want people to have to hear the same thing out of me twice," he said. "Fortunately for me I don't have to do a whole ton of soul searching to come up with something new. I've just been lucky to have new influences in the last couple of years that have pushed me in different directions."

Lang is not one to talk about himself, but he does offer this nugget of personal philosophy: "If anything is a well thought out plan, it's thought about too much. If you have a preconceived idea of what you're going to do tomorrow, with what I do anyway, it's almost detrimental. It's like waiting for that Christmas present you always wanted, then opening it to find it's something else. It may be better, but you're still disappointed 'cuz it's not what you wanted. I pretty much live day to day, fly by the seat of my pants sort of thing."

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HIGH PLAINS READER

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RUNAWAY

RUNAWAY

Two girls on the run

(Editor's note: Due to the sensitive nature of the following interview with two underage female runaways, and to protect them and their families from unnecessary headaches, the names have been changed, as well as some pertinent details. The story line is true. While police were searching for these two runaways, HPR reporter Steve Listopad was interviewing them about the whys and wherefores of running away from home. Any connection to names of real people in and around the Fargo area is accidental and unintentional.)

By Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

The randomness of life, of youth. Like a cat, rotating radar dishes atop its head, that suddenly becomes alert to some phantom menace and leaps off the foot of the bed, running with a mad fervor. But to the rest of the world, that cat is crazy.

Today is Tuesday.

Rose and Violet are runaways. At 17 years old, both of them have seen enough of life's hardships to deserve wrinkles.

They left their small hometown last Thursday, looking for a ticket to the Twin

Cities, but the farthest they made it was Fargo. Violet said that their main goal was to get out of the small town setting and lose themselves in a city with a few more than 700 people. But even only after four days and three nights on the streets of the F-M area, our 150,000 odd population is beginning to feel a bit stifling.

"We need to get out of Fargo tonight. We need to get to Minneapolis. The cops already know we're here," Rose said.

On one of their many adventures, the girls were stopped by a cop on a busy weekend night near the downtown area. They were carrying sacks with all of their possessions in them and the officer thought they looked suspicious. The female officer did identify them as two girls who had recently run away from a small town in the area, but when her radio signaled an emergency, the girls took the opportunity to run. They ditched their bags in an alley with the intention of picking them up in the morning. At first sight of another cop, they used a young man's flirtatious advances as license to jump in the back seat of his car. Unfortunately, their bags would not be waiting for them in the morning.

In the book "Einstein's Dreams" Alan

Lightman, on the topic of an acausal world, wrote, "Most people have learned how to live in the moment. The argument goes that if the past has uncertain effect on the present, there is no need to dwell on the past. And if the present has little effect on the future, present actions need not be weighed for their consequence. Rather each act is an island in time, to be judged on its own."

The seemingly random act of standing up and running seems insane. What do the parent's of two young girls think when their bags are found? Kidnapped. Raped. Dead. The girls had just begun their adventure while their parents feared the worst, because we do not live in an acausal world.

Rose started her story in the 5th grade, when her family moved to their present location. Rose's parents owned a business that took most of their attention, so Rose was usually left alone with her older sister Daisy. But Daisy developed an eating disorder at age 13 and was sent to a clinic for rehabilitation, leaving Rose home alone.

Rose's point of contention from then on was with her parents' lack of affection for her and her sister. When Daisy did return a year later, her parents would avoid and ignore her because of her "rebellious" behavior.

It was in the 6th grade that Rose started smoking. She stole cigarettes from her mom to share with her boyfriend at the time. It was also in the 6th grade when she overdosed on aspirin. "I know I didn't want to die," said Rose. "I really don't know why I did it. But I wasn't

happy. All I know is that my parents were very mad at me because I ruined their reputation."

And that's when Rose's stint of group homes and foster families began. At the second treatment center she was sent to she was diagnosed with severe depression. Rose said, "We were all so f**ked up no one even cared," concerning her fellow residents. Apparently, according to Rose, her parents didn't care. During the extent of her nine-month stay, she only conversed with her parents on one occasion. Her attempts at reaching them were futile.

Rose spent the summer before 8th grade in a foster home, and she finally returned home and to school that fall. Admittedly, she spent most of that school year sleeping around and doing drugs. The next summer, faced with the threat of an all-girls boarding school, Rose ran away for the first time. She stayed with her sister, who had moved out, quit school and married at 16.

Eventually she returned and was placed in foster home after foster home, adding up to a total of four. Rose had good and bad experiences with her foster families. One of her foster fathers, according to Rose, grew a little "too friendly" for her comfort. At another home, Rose had the pleasure of staying with a family of six, where she felt like an intruder. However, the mother's sister was a free spirited senior in high school, which gave Rose access to her preferred party lifestyle.

As Rose tells her story Violet sits in silent *Aparanoia*. Fingers restless. Eyes flitting around the room. She was opposed to talking. The sun was going down and she wanted to be out of Fargo a long time before this.

The cat was getting restless.

Rose's teenage years were not all lost, however. At the end of her 10th grade year, Rose moved to California to live with her aunt. She stayed there through 11th grade, and professed that this was one of the best times of her life. "I cleaned up," said Rose. "I didn't have sex for over a year, I didn't drink or do drugs. My grades were the best they've ever been."

Rose only talked to her parents once over the year and a half that she stayed with her mom's sister. But the return home was inevitable. Her aunt was a recovering alcoholic, but her recovery wasn't going all too well. Rose said her aunt's drinking and self destruction were causing the young girl's depression to return, so she had to leave.

Three weeks before this interview, she returned home to live with her parents and go back to school in her hometown.

"I was so good for so long," she said. "But when I returned home it all started again. I started doing the same things I was doing before. Sex, drinking, smoking weed, all of it."

Her relationship with her parents was finally reaching a breaking point. Even the extended lack of contact didn't heal any wounds, Rose said, "My mom got molested when she was a girl, but she doesn't talk about that with the rest

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Thursday, December 2, 1999

of her family. No one in her family believed her when she told them. Her mom didn't believe her. That's why she's such a raging bitch!"

On her last night at home, Rose "snuck out" to do what she needed to do. When she returned in the morning there was a reckoning.

Rose paused. Violet said, "Are we going to get a ride, or what? It's getting dark out." Her demeanor was slowly metamorphosing into the frenzied, rubbernecking, paranoia of a fugitive.

Eyes wide, claws digging into the mattress, the cat was getting ready to pounce.

Rose was calm and wanted to talk. In prison, they say that if you're guilty and you know it, you sleep easy your first night. You've already been caught and there's nothing left to lose.

"My mother and I got in a big fight," Rose mumbled. "She said that I wasn't her daughter anymore and she didn't want me around. That was when I made up my mind to leave. I told my father I was going to leave. He tried to stop me. He said my mom didn't mean it, that she was just angry and didn't know what to do. But he knew that I was going to leave anyway, so he gave me some money and a phone card and told me to call him when I got where I was going. He also said that he'd wait a day to tell the police."

That day Rose went to a football game and met up with Violet. They had been friends on and off since the 5th grade, and when Violet heard Rose's plans she made up her mind to go with her.

They started out with around \$200 on the Thursday that they left. Some from Rose's dad, some from stocks and Rose's checking account.

Rose said, "I had been with this 19-year-old that we could have stayed with the first night, but we decided to spend it in an old tree fort. We spent the whole next day sitting by a stream, talking and thinking, until our bus left for Fargo."

The sun had gone down. Violet had regained some composure and resigned herself to the fact that she wasn't getting a ride anywhere from anyone she was in the company of at the moment. She was reluctant to tell her story without having confirmation that they would have a ride to the cities. Violet's parents are divorced. She lived with her mom who remarried and was also married to her job. Violet has four sisters and a brother, but she lived with only one real sister and two step-sisters. Violet had run away once before when she got caught stealing, but returned home to look after her sister. Violet said, "She gets in so much trouble and I didn't want her to be alone."

Violet's only reason for running this time was not as elaborate as Rose's. Violet didn't get along with her mom, they always fought, and their incompatibility made it hard for her to be at home. She didn't want to divulge anything else.

Rose and Violet had dyed their hair blonde before the got to Fargo Friday night. They were excited to be on their own. They were free and proud of their ingenuity that had gotten them this far. Rose and Violet, Thelma and Louise, call them what you will, it doesn't matter.

Rose, more so than Violet, prided herself on her sexual prowess in helping them find places to stay. On the night they were fleeing from Fargo police, the girls stayed with Bud and Larry, neighbors of the man whose car they jumped in. Rose stayed in one of their beds, but was adamant about not fooling around. On another occasion they stayed with Jake. At first Rose said she just slept in Jake's bed, but her story soon changed. They had been drinking, Jake seemed like a nice guy, and one thing led to another.

Another night held a different adventure. Rose and Violet wound up with some other boys. The travelers and their three or four male companions were cruising south on University near North Dakota State University campus. They came upon a car filled with young men

looking for a party. According to Rose, one of the boys in her car made a racial slur to an African American in the other car.

Rose said, "We're from a small town and I didn't know that there were so many problems between black and white people. I had never seen that before." One of the men from the other car jumped out, ran over and started throwing punches in the window, connecting with Rose's forehead. Rose, playing with the bandage on her eyebrow, said, "Is it that noticeable? I think I'm going to need stitches but I didn't want to go to the hospital. Not yet."

Rose and Violet are sitting in a West Fargo apartment....waiting, hoping, praying they will get a ride to Minneapolis.

Rose's sister, who had divorced her husband after six months of marriage, lives somewhere in the cities. She also has an ex-boyfriend and a whole list of names that she has picked up along the way that might provide shelter. Violet also had a friend in the cities that she knew would help them out. All they had to do was get there.

"My parent's love their dogs more than they love their kids," Rose said. "They are really close with each other, they've been married 20 years. But my mom is really stuck up. I'm not going home until after Christmas."

That was their plan: Get to the cities, live off what they could, survive as long as they could, and hopefully stick it out to Christmas. Rose was insistent that she was going to call her father one week from when they left, no sooner or later. Violet was indifferent, but was very concerned when Rose gave out her parents' home number to several of the boys they met on their journey.

Violet said, "We just started. This is like an adventure. Lot's of girls dream about this stuff. We can't go home yet....so are we going to get a ride or what?"

Two days later, posters of two young girls started surfacing in the Fargo-Moorhead area. They had brown hair. They were approximately the height of Rose and Violet. They were from the same small town in Minnesota.

And the posters held another piece of information: They were 14 and 15-years-old.

Rose and Violet had successfully made it to Minneapolis that day. They stayed over night with the driver and were dropped off the next morning at a gas station near the area where they could find some of the people they were looking for. Then they were gone.

Violet was eventually found at a friend's place and returned home. Rose made contact with her family and was taken off the missing list, but she wasn't ready to come home.

The randomness of life, of youth. Like a cat, rotating radar dishes atop its head, that suddenly becomes alert to some phantom menace and leaps off the foot of the bed, running with a mad fervor. Running away from an evil that no one else sees. Back arching and bowing, legs churning, the cat is determined and confident, alive and free. But to the rest of the world, the cat is crazy.

Maybe, just maybe, the cat is crazy.

—Chris Smith assisted
Steve Listopad with this interview.

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Skid Row's 30 Minutes of Fame, Vacation Included



By Steve Listopad
Guest Editor

Dave "Snake" Sabo is not one to dissuade any myths about the rock and roll lifestyle. "There's not a whole lot of super clean living out here. I don't believe in drugs but there's always boozin' and beer drinkin' and, you know, smoking a little weed."

When Snake's "party bus", band included, roll into Fargo's Granite City on August 18th, it is certainly his intention to send the fine dining establishment a' crumblin' and reintroduce the Valley to the finer points of hard rockin'.

So who is this band of Snake's?

Snake, a founder and surviving member of Skid Row, is on the upswing of the eponymous early 90's hair metal band's second incarnation. Skid Row dropped off the radar in 1995 after their fourth and final album *Subhuman Race*. But their self-titled debut in 1989 crystallized their place in the annals of

rock lore and pop culture with the hits "Youth Gone Wild" and "18 and Life." Slave to the Grind, their second album, debuted at #1 on Billboards in late 1991 with the hit song "Monkey Business."

And then like all good Behind-the-Music scenarios, "It kinda fell apart and it was on really bad terms. We didn't want to forget about what we had accomplished as Skid Row, but just to remove ourselves from it. That gave us the opportunity to really appreciate everything."

The former front man of Skid Row, Sebastian Bach, was a major contributor to the band's decline. Snake said, "When one person's ego grows larger than the band's it's time to call it quits."

Skid Row was conceived by guitarist Snake and bassist Rachel Bolan in 1986. They soon added another guitarist, Scotti Hill, and drummer Rob Affuso. Bach, was the last addition to the band, who won the part with his lanky-

framed, long-blond frontman looks and screaming vocals. But with no more hit singles on the way and internal hemorrhaging, something had to happen.

"Success is a gift," said Snake. "It's not something that is owed to you or a birth right. It's a blessing. You're going to reach those pinnacles. And then it's going to slump. Every artist, musician, every athlete goes through this."

After the band hit the skids, Snake, Bolan, and Hill started the side project *Ozone Monday* to "take a breather from the Skid Row thing." *Ozone Monday* lasted several years with touring, but no album ever materialized. Eventually Snake and crew decided to give Skid Row another run for its money. Affuso was out, replaced by Charlie Mills on drums. John Solinger replaced the enigmatic Bach in January of 2000, but a frontman's shoes can be hard to fill.

"He's more of a people's person," said Snake. "He's a great looking guy and he's got a lot of charisma on stage. But they are two different people. He gets asked all the time if those shoe's have been tough to fill and he always responds 'I wear my own shoes and my

feet are bigger.'

The new album, entitled *Thick Skin*, could be considered somewhat symbolic of their dissolution, rebirth and new face. "John Solinger is balls out. He's full force. He's a really good front man and a good guy. We get along so well now. There is no fighting and no outside hands controlling us. He's been a big part of that, as we all have."

With a new lease on life, Skid Row is heading into the music scene at quite possibly an opportune time. Not saying there is no need to change. "Everyone has to evolve or they just get caught in the bum rush," Snake said. "I've listened to everything and been influenced by so many different musicians. The biggest influence is life in general and what you want out of life. I've learned that one of the biggest key things to having a successful band is having everyone with a unique talent exercising it on a daily basis."

Snake continued, "Any creative idea is welcome, but the best idea needs to win. Rachel and I have never been dictators in anyway, but the best often came from our great writing relationship. We always want the band to look good. I don't want us to go up on stage lookin' like or shit or chicks or something. But what's always been the most important is the music. The songs are always the most important."

With a million and one redheaded step-children of Pearl Jam running around, the rock industry has become somewhat watered down. Does Snake think a hair metal Skid Row revival is what this country needs? "It's still very viable music in this day and age and it's still us. We can't be Incubus and you won't hear a record being scratched on our album. I think Creed is a throwback. They're basically a heavy rock band. What they do is just good heavy rock and roll."

And that's where Skid Row comes in. Their goal for the near future is to finish the album so "everyone can judge it for themselves" and to have a lot of fun. "We hang out on the tour bus every night. We go to bars and party with each other, or go to casinos every night. On the last tour, our bus was a rolling party."

"I'm very proud of our past," said Snake. "I don't know if I'll ever be satisfied, but I'm proud and I'm proud of what we're accomplishing now. The five of us right now are standing. We'll take any shot that anyone wants to throw at us. There is so much fight in this band. I can't imagine not doing this for another ten years cuz it's so much fun."

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SAVE THE JAIL



FOUNDATIONS:

The Cass County Courthouse, Jail, and Sheriff's Residence



By Steve Listopad
Associate Editor

Ron Ramsay, a 32-year veteran of the architecture department at North Dakota State University, provided the information in this story. His areas of study include archi-

tectural history.

The Cass County jail and sheriff's residence are currently in a standoff with a wrecking ball brought about by financing and Cass County politics. Ironically, unusual financing and politics were probably how the buildings were born into this world.

Architecture in early America was a not like it is today. Craftsmen such as carpenters and masons who had become extremely skilled at their work would transition into the realm of design without formal education or training. Before 1900, only four schools of architecture existed in the U.S. with the first

being founded in 1871 at MIT.

The first wave of building in North Dakota consisted mostly of short-term, wooden structures. Style, including artistic masonry and ornamentation, would become more popular in a few years.

A man by the name of Walter Hancock, who has his signature on NDSU's Old Main, became one of the first prominent "educated" architects in Cass County. Hancock was also elected Fargo's first building inspector.

In 1903 the Cass County Commission decided they needed a new courthouse. Since the commission had a large investment in the foundation of the old courthouse, they ruled that only submitted plans that included the existing foundation would be considered. Local architects, including the Hancock, followed the commission's wishes and included the foundation in their designs.

For reasons unknown, an out-of-state architect by the name of Charles Bell was awarded the job. Bell's design, however, was the only one submitted that did not include the original existing foundation. The resident architects' irritation at the Commission's decision was made known by a series of letters to the editor, which still exists today.

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Bell was not without his merits. At the time, he had just completed the capitol building in Helena, MT. When Bell died in 1932, he had a portfolio that included two state capitol buildings and around 25 courthouses among many other projects.

The courthouse he built in Anaconda, MT, still exists and is a carbon copy of the Cass County courthouse. The major difference lies in the stone. Anaconda's courthouse was built with native red sandstone while Cass County's was built with our own native yellow sandstone.

In 1913 the Commission came to the conclusion the county needed a new jail. The existing structure was built in the 1880's and had become too small to accommodate the increasing population.

The Commission strayed from popular practice in the hiring of an architect for the jail and sheriff's residence. Unlike with the courthouse, the bidding process was skipped over. In just two months, the Commission had working blue prints and had awarded the job to a little known engineer by the name of Samuel Crabbe.

Crabbe was a local man, but did not have any architectural background to speak of. Definitely not enough to justify a job of this

magnitude.

It is Ramsay's theory that the Commission was very impressed with Bell's previous work on the courthouse. So impressed that they hired Crabbe as a front man to cover for the real architect, Bell.

The closed door hiring process for the job is just one aspect of Ramsay's suspicion. The finished Cass County Jail ended up looking exactly like jails in Montana that were officially Bell's handiwork.

Local architects were not unaware of the shadiness of the situation, and in 1917 they formed the State Architecture Association to enforce the licensing of all architects who plan to practice in the state of North Dakota.

As far as the current state of the courthouse, jail and sheriff's residence are concerned, this story adds a bit of historical significance. The three buildings, all of which are still substantially intact, share the same style, same material, were built around the same time, and probably share the same architect. This fact, if the theory of the architect holds water, makes the jail, courthouse, and sheriff's residence one of the only three-building ensembles of its kind in the entire U.S (and the only in North Dakota).

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By Steve Listopad
Contributing writer

For \$64,000: What-a-ya gotta do to survive?

- A. Eat
- B. Breathe
- C. Sleep
- D. Dance

"Well, I moved to Colorado in '94. I had just grown out of my three to four year hip-hop phase and I was looking for something else..."

Remember, you have three lifelines left.

"When I got back from Colorado, I felt that there was a big void that needed to be filled. I threw my first party (rave) in '95 at Johnson's Barn. I did this out of necessity because there weren't any places that played this kind of music."

And your final answer?

"I love to dance. It's therapeutic. And I like to make people feel the way others have made me feel."

Is that your final answer?

"That's my final answer."

Diversity, unity

minute. To use Fatboy Slim as an example, his music ranges from 120 to 180 beats per minute and he crosses the styles of breaks and jungle. Other famous DJs include The Chemical Brothers and Moby.

Dave describes his style as "Funky house and trance, people say I like to scratch and spice up the mix. DJ Dan from San Francisco is my biggest influence. He's one person that could move a crowd like no other, but he costs thousands of dollars so that's why I haven't got him here."

Another vital aspect of a party is the location. Parties started in the U.K. in the mid-'80s with the dawning of electronic music. It spread to the coasts in the early '90s. Most promoters at that time didn't have venues to hold these dances at so they found abandoned warehouses and the like. They didn't get the proper authorizations to hold large gatherings so they kept the locations secret and party-goers needed to call private numbers to find out where to go. This trend spread inward from the coasts and was soon hitting middle America like Denver and Chicago by the mid-'90s. Today, most parties stand up to fire code and have proper security, but the location is kept secret to keep the mystique alive.

And the last vital aspect of a party is the diversity of the audience.

"At the first party I threw, the band Pure Country was hanging out at Johnson's barn talking to the owner," Dave said. "At one point in the evening, I saw an ocean of candy ravers and preppy college students, and one lone cowboy hat floating across the top of it. The great thing about parties is that they are so diverse. So many different types of people come out. It's only exclusive in the fact that you are expected to be original and yourself when you are at one."

The hard part of establishing the legitimacy of raves is their connection to drug use. Concerns have been raised because drugs such as marijuana and ecstasy have been known to be used at raves. Alcohol is not as big a factor in the scene as it is in a bar or a dance club, but it is also present. Dave takes the stance of neither condemning nor condoning them, but he realizes they are a part of the experience for a lot of people.

"If people are using drugs at a party to enhance the experience and are not detracting from the experience of others who are not using then that's their personal choice. I keep a straight head," he said. "The people that abuse the scene just to do drugs are the ones that cause problems for themselves and others."

It's this aspect that casts the negative light on the rave scene. Instead of looking at them as all night dances, they are perceived as outlets where kids can do exactly what their par-

ents don't want them to do.

"What people need to understand is that parties are social events," Dave told HPR. "The music is the focal point. The secret location adds to the character, the mystique. But ultimately, a party is where people from all different cultures and classes come together to be themselves. If they do drugs at a rave, it's a personal choice and not what the scene is making them do."

And it's also important to note that all events sponsored by Sensory Overload

Environments have proper security.

"We usually don't let the authorities know where we are going to be at until the day of," Dave said. "But we hire private security, or we have the Sheriff's Department there if they require it. Most of the time when we hire out, cops will stop in, take a look around, give us the OK, and leave. They've been really good about it, and that's because they don't have much to worry about."

The one party that Dave did have to worry about was at the Grape Garage. The party received a loud noise complaint and the police came in with police dogs. In the end everything was sorted out and people stayed until sunrise, but that ended up being Dave's biggest financial loss.

Dave recently joined forces with Todd Clark to tackle the promoting business. A promoter brings in talented DJs from around the country



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and the world. DJ Slacker from London has been a successful draw for Sensory Overload Environments. Being credited as the man who brought raves to this part of the Midwest, however, doesn't make the work involved in promoting any more bearable.

Dave's true love is the music and the dancing. He started promoting so he would have a scene to do the music that he loves. Now that

venues like Tropics are getting more courageous in their quest to attract business, there is less of a need to promote.

"Tropics is trying new things," he said. "They see the bigger scope of music and music venues. Dance clubs like the O.B. are all right, but who wants to hear Mony Mony every night."

Dave's persistence in creating a party scene in Fargo is paying off. Two other promoters have started since Dave kicked things off five years ago. Jason Mattura started Red River Rising in 1997 and Josh Anderson started Harmony in 1999.

"Promoting is a tough thing to do. Since I started throwing parties, I know that I have lost at least \$10,000. I've thrown over 20 parties and I remember the one that made a substantial amount of money. In March of '97 I made \$200," Dave said.

"Having more promoters helps the scene out a lot and makes more people aware of it. I prefer to spin over organizing so with more promoters I can do less of the stressful stuff and do more of the music."

Dave's slate is full this spring. He can be heard every Friday at Tropics and Saturdays at various locations in and out the area. April 1st is Sensory Overload Environments' next big event. That date marks their five-year anniversary. A location has yet to be determined. And this summer Dave and Todd are planning a festival that will be his biggest event to date. He is also working on a record label entitled Northern Lights, and his own mix CD "Uniting Our House."

His desire is not to be a rock star. His desire is to create a feeling and an environment that supports diversity, unity, and above all dancing.

For \$1 million: What's the best part of what you do?

- A: Fame
 - B: Money
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- "None of the above, Regis."
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| 2 | [Yo! What] |
| 3 | [Funkin' Town] |
| 4 | [Get Up & Party] |
| 5 | [Overdrive] |
| 6 | [Body Rock] |
| 7 | [4, 5, 6, 7] |
| 8 | [Snake] |
| 9 | [Give It All You Got] |
| 10 | [Sassy Bo Bo] |

ers of the tax-favored corporation. Presumably the obscene salaries would be better distributed to the workers and the stockholders of the exploited corporations. Thirty years ago, it was uncommon for the CEO to have a salary with a multiple of 10 to the typical starting wage. Today, we see multiples of 100 and more. When highly paid executives are paid at 90 percent, we will quickly see more equity. After all, corporations were not designed to favor a minority when corporate law originated. A 90 percent tax bracket will quickly make a few people very charitable. Visions of philanthropy not know since

the tax brackets illustrated \$535, a mere 20 percent of today's so-called reduced salary. This is the lower tax bracket. Consultants were talking about meetings when asking us to wait (later) when tax brackets were ening to reasonable income. It is likely that the U.S. will suffer at a time when a general affordable. For those who think this is possible, stay tuned.

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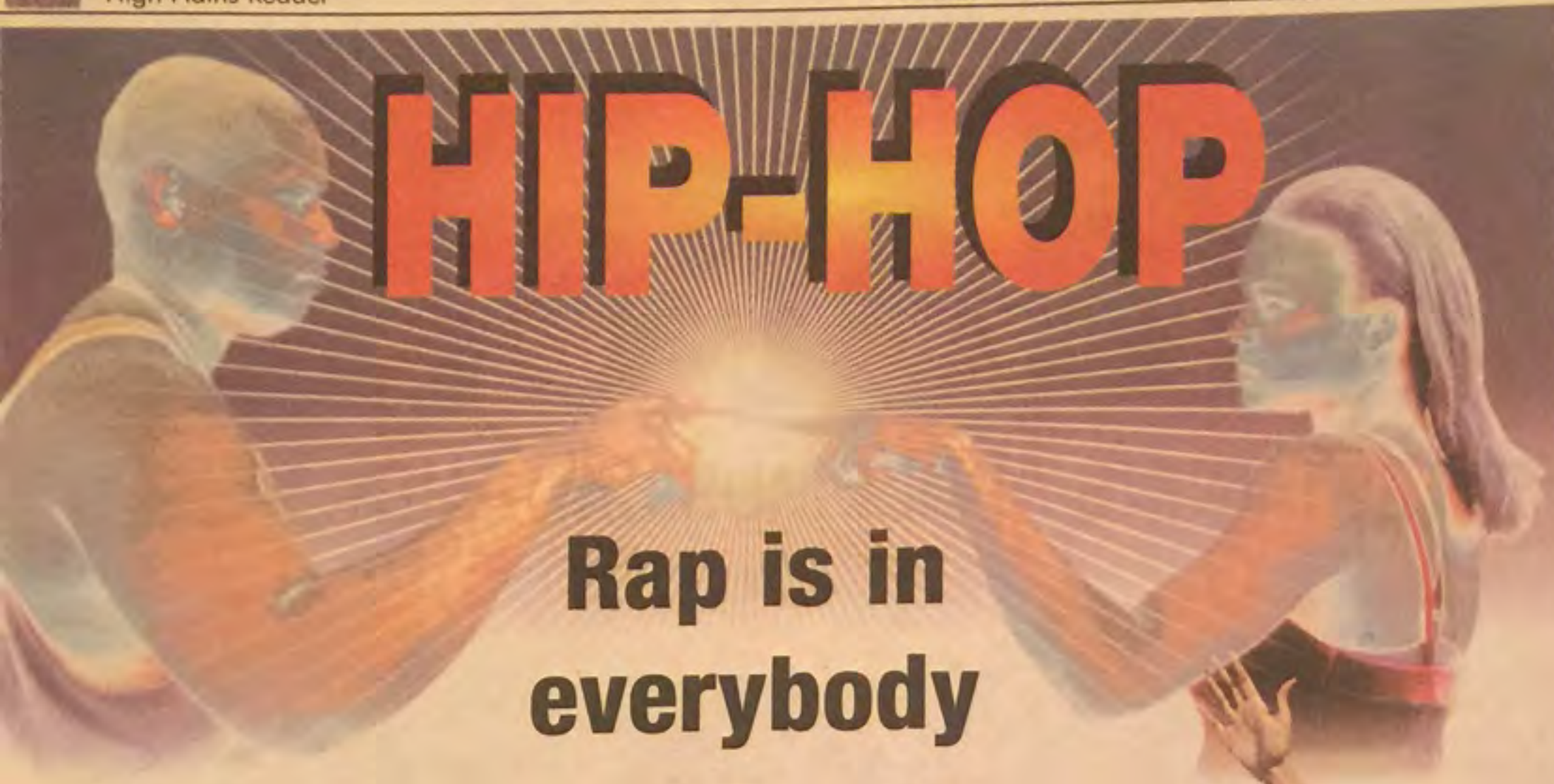


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HIP-HOP

Rap is in everybody

by Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

Fargo-Moorhead may not be New York or L.A., but it's giving its best shot. This Friday, two local rappers, Lady V and J-Sauce, will be performing at Moorhead State University's Spring Jam along with other rap and hip-hop acts.

Rap? Hip-hop? In Fargo-Moorhead? Local? The more things change, sadly though, the more they stay the same.

J-Sauce, a member of C.W.S. (Copin' Wit' Stress) and co-founder of DJ's Entertainment, is a North Dakota State University student and local rapper. J-Sauce is originally from

Sacramento, Calif. He moved to Fargo with his brother several years ago.

Lady V, who likens her style to Mary J. Blige, has a mixture of rap and R&B (rhythm and blues) in music. She is returning to NDSU in the near future to pursue a career in law. Lady V moved from Winnipeg to Grand Forks, and when her home fell victim to the floods of '97, she moved once again to Fargo. She started her career dancing, then singing, and eventually turned to rap to fully express herself.

"I switched to old school rap first and I just didn't feel. So now I have a more R&B style," she told HPR.

Both of them, like most student musicians, satisfy their love for music by playing in clubs

like the Bowler and Playmakers, while pursuing college degrees during the day. But, unlike country or rock or folk performers, finding venues in this area to raise the roof is not that easy.

Concerning their shows at the Bowler, Lady V said, "We'd make them money for their bar. Then it got to the point where I would talk to the managers and they'd say their bathrooms got destroyed or something like that. Then it got to the point where we had to search people and pad them down when they came in. We hired cops to be at our shows, but we still had to pad everyone down."

J-Sauce said, "What it is though, we did shows there, and then some other people came and tried to copy what we'd do. All they'd have is music and an open mic where anyone can get on the mic, and these people would be like 'f**k you, mother f**kin' s**t!' And it goes on forever, gets wild and there's no kind of control. So when they'd do shows, and people at the Bowler and other places would see that, they wouldn't allow anyone to do shows anymore."

"They wouldn't do this to a country band. It's easier to be stereotyped when you're black and you rap," J-Sauce continued. "One time we were doing a show at Playmakers and a lady there said she had

problems before with Mexicans. I mean (laughing), you know, what does that have to do with me doing a show there?" (For the record, both Lady V and J-Sauce are African American.)

The Bowler told HPR that they haven't had a rap or hip-hop show perform at their venue for several years and that their clientele, now, is not such that a rap performance would be beneficial.

Erik Fridell of Playmakers said their policy does not discriminate either the audience or the performers and that everyone is welcome. They don't book acts based on whether they think the act will bring in a rowdy crowd or not. Their last few acts that could be roughly considered rap and hip-hop have been Vanilla Ice and Insane Clown Posse. Fridell said that these type of crossover acts work well with the teenage and college suburbanite crowd that usually comes to shows at Playmakers.

"We don't do negative songs, and we don't draw a negative crowd. They have to take a look at that, too. That's what the problem is," Lady V said. "They put us with others who do draw a negative crowd. And there are wanna-be gangs going to these shows. They got to see us and say, 'Hey, they are real entertainers and they're doing what they want to do.'"



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But nobody takes the time."

Even though Fargo-Moorhead may be rough on young, black rappers, all things are not so bad. The two have done shows in front of as many as 400 or more area fans. J-Sauce has a solo album out and Lady V is working on her first album.

"I want to get the message out, that even though you're black and have been discriminated against that doesn't mean you can't make it," J-Sauce, who wants to be a music producer eventually, said.

What is rap anyway? How many Fargoans really know a lot about this primarily urbanite industry?

J-Sauce got his name from his attitude.

"I used to have a big ol' ego, and this girl goes 'You saucy'. And that's pretty much it," he said.

Lady V was first dubbed Queen V, being the only female in her group, but because of similarities with a certain Queen Latifah, optioned for her current title.

"You gotta have a name that will make you stick out," J-Sauce said. "Nobody's gonna see a rapper named Michael Smith. Even Will Smith started out as the Fresh Prince."

The rapper's name describes his stage persona and music style as much as band names like Korn and Motley Crue describe theirs.

"There's a rapper named Big Mike. He's named Big Mike 'cuz he's big. But it's something that the audience can identify with," J-Sauce said.

As far as what rap is, J-Sauce explained, "The old word rap meant talk. People be like 'let me rap to you.' Rap is just talkin', where a lot of people are concerned. There's nothing to it."

Rap may just be talking to a beat, but there are many different languages.

"Rap is like rock-n-roll. It goes through changes. You never know what the next person is going to come out and start talking about," J-Sauce said. "Like Eminem has that comical kind of rap. There's all different kinds of rap.

There's blues rap. Then there's Puff Daddy-Mase kinda rap. Money, cars, women. Then there's gangsta rap. People claiming different gangs. You've got political rap. Chuck D. (formerly of Public Enemy) just came out with another one. Then there's booty rap like the 69 Boys."

Where entertainment is concerned, it is always more important who you know than what you know. No where is it more evident than in rap and hip-hop. Networking isn't left behind the scenes, it is present in most lyrics and videos that are put out these days. For example, Boyz II Men give it up to Bell Biv DeVoe at the end of "Motown Philly." The late Tupac Shakur and Eminem pay homage to Dr. Dre in several of their songs. Puff Daddy gives props to the late Notorious B.I.G.

"Where rock is based on how good you are most of the time," J-Sauce said, "rap is, a lot of times, based on who you know."

Other aspects of rap and hip-hop include sampling (taking portions of other music for the purpose of remixing it). J-Sauce is not opposed to sampling. He says that there are a lot of talented rappers that have become famous from sampling like Sugar Hill Gang and Pras.

"What makes sampling good is how you put it together. Taking something old and making it new again. We all use the same words," he said.

Lady V is opposed to sampling in her own music and prefers to do all original songs. But sometimes, when technology fails the performer, they must turn to more simplistic ways of getting their music.

"Our first show we did at the Bowler, all my music was on tape. It was so humid in there and my tapes didn't work. And J (J-Sauce) B-Boxed. The crowd loved it and it was one of my best shows. I just sang with him doing the music in the background," Lady V said. (Definition of B-Boxing or Beat Boxing: a person who makes rap style percussion and vinyl scratching sounds with their mouth and throat. It usually involves cupping ones hand

over their mouth.)

No matter what style Lady V and J-Sauce choose to use, their messages have been getting out to their fans and minorities in Fargo-Moorhead.

"I've seen people that have been down and out. 'Cause, you know, Fargo can get to a black person because you kind of feel isolated or separated from everyone else. And this dude just looked real sad. After we started gettin' into it he just got all hyper and s**t, and started dancin', and it's like we kind of brought him out of his shell, or something. It's good for people to see someone from their culture going through the same stuff," J-Sauce explained.

"A lot of people come shake our hands and say you never see that around here. They tell us to keep it up," Lady V added.

Their struggle, among other area rappers, lies in the sellability of that industry in this part of the country. According to J-Sauce, however, that shouldn't be hard in the long run, because, as he says, "Rap is in everybody."

Even in Fargo.



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Hardcore Crooning

Like any hobbyist, the hardcore crooners love a good competition. The Teamsters offer an annual spring competition, but now there is something else to sing about.

Playmakers and By Request DJ and Karaoke, Co., have teamed up to lure a national karaoke promoter into town. On Sept. 2, Fast Track to Fame, a cable and Internet television program devoted to spotlighting talented singers, will be videotaping local talent to air on their network.

Anyone can be a part of the taping, for a price. Fast Track to Fame is a buy-in program to get yourself noticed nationally. For a minimum of \$100 you can have a chance to be

they helped orchestrate the first coming of Fast Track.

"The producer for Fast Track to Fame saw our web page," said Smith. "They were looking for a spot in the area and got in contact with us. We have exclusive rights with them and if this goes well, we're thinking about doing the same for bands."

Smith likes the idea of more karaoke competition in the area and would like to see a regional competition involving many different establishments. Playmakers is looking at continuing their karaoke success on Mondays with "suicide karaoke" and "karaoke bingo."

Some of the keys to good karaoke, according to Smith, is making sure the song selection is varied and "there's not all ballads sung in a row," a good crowd, including audience participation and applause, the establishment itself, and having karaoke singers who can read the crowd. She said, "Crowd reading is like an art form. People who are good move and sing to the audience, they're not staring at the monitor. They're making eye contact and getting the audience motivated."

The Dark Underbelly

But not every karaoke aficionado is a crackerjack singer. Smith said, "The majority of the people who can't sing know that they can't sing, they just have the guts not to care."

Contest and competition aside, Lori Gudmundsen, an NDSU student, said, "It's way more fun when the people are untalented and the audience can laugh."

Kevin Baugher, an employee at Chumley's, has seen his share of karaoke. Chumley's offers it twice a week, along with drink specials, and is always overflowing with college students. This last Tuesday, he had to turn away 50 to 75 people because they were full to capacity.

"College kids come here to sing and dance," Baugher said. "They come here to get shit-faced and get their five minutes of fame whether they can sing or not."

Dewey Birksett, a Chumley's karaoke participant, said, "I just come here to get the crowd rocking. That's all."

It's true that not all karaoke enthusiasts are endowed with heavenly voices. But that's not what karaoke is all about.

Smith said, "A lot of people don't realize there is a karaoke world out there and I think it's going to grow. The Midwest has shyer people. We're starting to open up. There are not so many people with stage fright and people are more willing to let themselves be the person to steal the show."

No matter if it's the singing or the fun, the attention or the intoxication, karaoke is everywhere and on most young socialites' nightly agendas. Fargo-Moorhead may be unique in its over-saturation of the hobby, but the world will soon discover that maybe there's a reason for that.

This is a community that produces Jonny Lang's and Shannon Curfmann's. Maybe Fargo-Moorhead is just born to sing. And maybe karaoke and Fast Track to Fame will grant someone more than five minutes of fame.



By Steve Listopad
Associate Editor

A cigarette dangles. Sweat and dancing. Smoke and beer. An unsure, impatient hand wrestles with a microphone stand. The mouth moves closer. Eyes and ears. Eyes and ears. Smoke and beer. I will be Mick Jagger.

It's not the same everywhere you go. In Grand Forks you'd be hard pressed to find it. But in the Fargo-Moorhead community, it's sweetly harmonizing around almost every corner. Not only has karaoke found a special place in the hearts and lungs of F-M fun-seekers, but it has spawned a staunch following. Crooners have gone so far as to call it a subculture.

Karaoke, some say, reached its peak in the early 90's, but F-M seems to have ignored that trend report. Karaoke is a Japanese abbreviated compound word that translates roughly as "empty orchestra." "Kara" comes from "karapo" meaning empty, and "oke" is the abbreviation of "okesutura," or orchestra. Karaoke is used to describe any sing-a-long track that displays lyrics on a TV or video screen. Usually, a music disc consists of vocals and accompaniment. Karaoke songs of choice are widely varied as well. Anything from Frank Sinatra to

Weezer to Garth Brooks can be heard over the din of the audience.

It's true that trends are born and die on the coasts. Several years ago, Los Angeles was teeming with karaoke specialty bars. Most have now dwindled. The movie Duets, starring Gwyneth Paltrow and Huey Lewis, was all about the late-night pastime. It bombed. But try telling the diehards it's just a trend on the way out. Why is F-M always the last to know? Or maybe, we're keeping it alive.

Currently, there are around 15 establishments that offer karaoke on a regular basis. Schedules run from monthly to bi-weekly to several times a week. The late Luigi's restaurant had karaoke four nights a week, Wednesday through Saturday. When Luigi's closed last month, evening songbirds were hit hard.

Chumley's currently carries the torch for the college-aged fun-seeker looking to blast out a Nirvana or Dixie Chicks tune. Playmakers, Woody's, The Crowbar, M&J Saloon, Rick's, The Moose Lodge, The Old Broadway, Vic's, and many others offer the chance to be in the spotlight. But that spotlight might be getting just a little brighter in the near future.

seen on cable stations such as TNN and the Oxygen Channel. The more money you can contribute, the sweeter the deal becomes, leading up to your own CD package and release. Interested participants can sell tickets, or sponsorships, to earn the money to pave the way for their possible discovery.

While this may not appeal to even the most ambitious of local karaoke mega-stars, Playmakers has been upping the ante. For the last month, every Monday night was reserved for karaoke competitions. The winner each night was given a \$100 sponsorship for the upcoming Fast Track to Fame taping. And there is one week left; room for one more winner.

Eric Rinehard, assistant manager at Playmakers and the man in charge of the competition, said, "We've been averaging anywhere from 50 to 100 people here just for karaoke. One night was pretty slow, around 20 people, but it's been really good for us."

"Karaoke seems kind of played out in Fargo," said Playmakers manager Gary Score. "It was at it's peak in the early nineties, but opportunities like this, with a chance to win and be on national TV, put a really good spin on it."

Both Rinehard and Score are impressed by the quality singers that have come out to show off their goods.

Tammy Smith, karaoke jockey (KJ) and owner of By Request, said, "You're at home and you've got this great song going. You're dancing around and singing. Karaoke is an opportunity to do it in front of an audience. To get five minutes of fame on stage, to be somebody, to get everybody's attention. And many people who have training can show it off."

Smith started in the karaoke world eight years ago in Minot before moving to Detroit Lakes and then Fargo. She recently married her music-making partner, Tim, and together

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hpr music scene

By Steve Lisopad
Staff Writer

Over its five years of public service, the High Plains Reader has devoted much of its time to the perpetuation of the Red River Valley's music scene. A non-reader might say, "What music scene. I mean, of course I've heard of Johnny Holm, and Pistol Pete's and Kirby's have cover bands and stuff. But can you really call that a scene?"

Well, true believer, this apparent lack of enlightenment is exactly what the HPR has been battling against. Have you ever heard of the Rush Hour Concert Series at the Plains Art Museum? Have you heard about various local Christian rock artists like Jim Vilandre? Do you know how some of our talented youth are doing on the national level (i.e. Shannon Curfman and Jonny Lang)? Did you know that there are actually talented rappers in the Fargo-Moorhead area who are trying to make a name for themselves?

The battle rages on.

With the birthday party in Grand Forks this weekend consisting mostly of regional musicians, I thought it would be appropriate to recap some of the cutting edge highlights that the HPR has informed you of over the years.

Let's start with our native son himself, Jonny Lang. "Kid Blues" started his career with Jonny Lang and the Big Bang at the ripe old age of 14 in 1994. Reader enthusiasts were able to follow the rising star's progression into solo career and finally his national success with his breakout hit "Lie to Me." In the February 25, 1999, issue, Jonny, then 19, was featured on the cover once again when he returned home to open for the Rolling Stones at the Fargodome.

Jonny said, "If anything is a well thought out plan, it's thought about too much. If you have a preconceived idea of what you're going to do tomorrow, with what I do anyway, it's almost detrimental. I pretty much live day to day, fly by the seat of my pants sort of thing."

All great things come in threes. The HPR kept its omnipotent eye open for this theory to take effect. The second installment of the youth blues phenomenon arose with the coming of then 12-year-old Shannon Curfman, also of Fargo (now 14). The HPR gave Shannon her first cover story in the April 16, 1998, issue, and another on July 15, 1999. In the months between, Shannon flew the Valley coup and signed a record deal with Arista records.

Jake Walesch, Shannon's manager said, "Shannon has the challenge of being a female in the rock world, which is something that is few and far between these days, not even considering her age. I think she has some work ahead of her."

Who knows who the next musical fountain of youth will be, but rest assured the Reader will let you know.

Most 20-somethings in Fargo are familiar with the wide variety of bar bands that grace our area. Most of these bands cover songs but there are the occasional original acts. Two of these talents have been Reader favorites for quite some time and are now starting to show some promise in the big leagues: Brenda Weiler and 3 Minute Hero, both Barking Dog

Records artists.

In April 2, 1998, cover story, writer Jennifer Nelson wrote:

"Weiler played at 1st Avenue in Fargo last fall, unaware that in the audience sat a person who would help change the course of her professional life. Linda Coates of Barking Dog Records had read about Brenda in the High Plains Reader and was curious to hear this voice for herself. What happened next was inconceivable to Weiler.

"She called me the next day and offered me to sign," Brenda said.

3 Minute Hero has been a staple of the F-M music scene for several years since they coalesced on Moorhead State University's campus into the power ska group they are today.

Jennifer Nelson wrote, in a March 26, 1998, article, "They're incredible. By far the best band I've seen in these here parts. I can't think of any other band that comes close to affecting an audience the way Jeff Nelson and the boys do. It comes as no surprise that they have been recently nominated for a Minnesota Music Best New Band award, and were voted by High Plains Reader readers to be the Valley's Best Band in 1997."

In a past article, editor Ian Swanson wrote, "You know the anthem. You've heard it a million times, whether you live in Fargo, Grand Forks, Hillsboro, or Hatton. There's nothing to see in this town. Nothing ever happens here. Often that's the case," he continued. "In towns the size of Fargo-Moorhead or Grand Forks, there generally isn't a lot of live music. But that is beginning to change again, especially in Fargo, which now has one club that plays live music every night of the week, the 1st Avenue Cafe and Lounge in downtown Fargo. Several other bars in Fargo-Moorhead and in Grand Forks regularly host bands, making live music a more active part of life in the Red River Valley."

Little did Mr. Swanson know that 1st Avenue was not destined to be with the people of the F-M area very long. It closed its doors last fall, but other venues such as The Plains Art Museum, Ralph's Corner Bar, the Funky Monkey on Broadway, Kirby's, the All-Star Bowl and The Bowler and many others have all become havens for fresh, original Valley music. And, guess what, a lot of these places



let you know who's playing where in the pages of the High Plains Reader.

Since the term "alternative music" was created in the early nineties to create a genre for bands like Nirvana and Pearl Jam, most of these bands have become mainstream rock and rollers. "Alternative" music, however, is relative to your location. In Red River Valley, what would be more alternative than rap? Probably nothing. Other than Christian music in a bar.

Two area rappers, J-Sauce and Lady V, were featured on the cover of the April 29, 1999, issue: "A lot of people come shake our hands and say you never see that around here. They

tell us to keep it up," said Lady V. Their struggle, among other rappers, lies in the sellability of that industry in this part of the country. According to J-Sauce, however, that shouldn't be hard in the long run, because, as he says, "Rap is in everybody." Even in Fargo.

Modern Christian artists like Jim Vilandre and Dave Lubben were featured on a May 6, 1999, cover of the Reader. A side bar to their story, written by Michelle Aune, said: "There are numerous Christian bands and performers in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Where is this music performed? The obvious sites would be churches and, but also special concert events like the recent 'DC Talk Tour' that played the Fargodome, or the local coffer house circuit with new places like the Funky Monkey at 315 Broadway in Fargo."

Since the High Plains Reader is a the Valley's paper, it also catches flashes of light in outside the F-M area from contributing writers. Not too long ago, a writer going by "Sydney" brought the Grand Forks band Zen Mothers to our attention.

An excerpt from that article read: "The most that aspiring bands have to put up with during their creative careers is writer's block or dealing with a peevish band member. Zen Mothers, a local Grand Forks band has faced a series of circumstances that would have stopped any band in its tracks: floods, fire, injury, damaged instruments, and limited venues. But it has endured, and is now healed..."

Even as an infant and a toddler, the HPR has far surpassed other area publications in the arts and entertainment related topics and events. From features to cover stories to news to editorials to advertising, this paper has been filling a gap in the coverage of our creative time, exposing us to worlds we thought we had to live on a coast to be a part of, and helping those sub-cultures flourish. Local musicians definitely appreciate this.

Chris Danforth, an MSU student and former lead singer and guitarist of The Velvet Lush, said, "The Reader is definitely something I look at weekly. Especially the Best Bets which are great because it gives publicity to a small local music scene and relatively unknown bands their much deserved 15 'seconds' of fame."

CATCH SOME OF YOUR FAVS AT THE READER 5TH BIRTHDAY PARTY:

~ Brenda Weiler, 7 pm @ the Blue Moose on Friday, 9/10

~ 3 Min Hero, 9:30 pm @ Sensations on Friday, 9/10

~ The Honeydogs, 7 pm @ The Edge on Saturday, 9/11

~ Load/MoJo Pin, 9 pm @ The Westward Ho on Saturday, 9/11



at Moorhead State. He is also a part-time server.

whole life is part-time right now," he says.

for the Urban Stampede we drove to the Moose where Rifle claims he wrote 80 percent of "Shooting Gallery."

the summer I sat out here on the deck a lot," he says. "I would watch the water and things would occur to me."

"Shooting Gallery" came out in December but wasn't released to the world until later. It was in boxes in my Dad's garage for six years gathering dust. Some changes occurred over time and I decided it could be doing more than sitting in a garage."

his new book, "Bullet Train," is a more cohesive and unified collection. There are two themes that run through the book: trains and rain. If you say "Bullet Train" really fast it can be heard as "Bullet Rain."

"I've always had a thing for trains and I'm a weather buff. I always watch the weather change. Even through a personal storm, you might not see it for the past five months," he explains.

"When trains. I always think when I hear the sound of a train I should be on it going somewhere. There's some romance there."

his Grand Forks book party will be held at the Westward Ho on Thursday, March 9, at 7 p.m. Rifle will read and sign copies.

"The goal is to have some fun and hopefully get a book or two," he explains.

There will also be re-releasing a collection of short stories written in the past and lost in time. The original version was titled "Clean Water." The new title is "The Portland Stories." When Rifle graduated from college he spent time in Portland where he wrote this collection.

he says readers can expect a little surprise at the end of "Bullet Train."

"There's a little trick at the end," he explains.

Seattle's with Sergeant Pepper's had a little trick at the end. When it got to the end of the song it just kept repeating itself. So if you let it repeat it will keep repeating endlessly and they loved it. I don't have anything nearly as cool as that but there is a little trick at the end that I've saved up. "Bullet Train" is heavily Beatles influenced. To me, John Lennon is one of the best poets to have ever been. He just happened to play music to his poetry and play it well."

Rifle's books are available at independently owned coffee shops and book stores in Fargo and Grand Forks.



Ani Gillian and Greg

By Steve Listopad

Ani DiFranco, 29-year-old songwriter, guitarist and vocalist, has set in motion the wheels of a tour of which the Midwest may never see the likes of again. A tour that will be making a stop in Grand Forks, Saturday, March 11.

The songstress from Buffalo, NY, decided that she would like to take to the road without her band. Just her guitar, her voice and her incredible story telling ability. But the road can be a lonely place, and a stage can sometimes be just too big for one person. Her solution was simple. She called up her friend Greg Brown, a folk legend originally from Iowa who has had his work covered by Willie Nelson, Carlos Santana, Shawn Colvin, and Mary Chapin Carpenter. After Greg was on board, Ani called up her long time hero Gillian Welch, a Grammy nominated singer-songwriter who has made appearances on the Grand Ole Opry and Late Night with Conan O'Brien.

Together, the three musicians (Gillian will be accompanied by her music partner David Rawlings) will share the stage and bounce stories and songs off of each other for one unheard of musical experience. They have set up nine confirmed dates including the Chester Fritz Auditorium in Grand Forks, ND.

About the tour, Ani said, "There is a lot of liberty on this tour I can take, and also bouncing off of Greg and Gillian is very exciting because they are incredible song writers. This whole tour was my idea for better or for worse and the reason that I wanted to tour with those two is that I'm such a huge fan of both of them. So it will be exciting for me to have songwriters sitting around and swapping songs. This will be totally different from what I usual-

ly do." Ani, who has performed in Fargo in the past, said it was a mystery of her booking agent as to how such an exclusive concert tour ended up playing in the Red River Valley. Ani has fans all across the country, many of whom are traveling great distances to catch all the shows. She said, "This happens a lot and we get to know most of them. They become an extension of our little touring family."

However intimately her fans know Ani and her music, there is still definitely a lack of Ani awareness in our area. If anyone remembers the movie "My Best Friends Wedding," you might just remember the opening song. That was Ani covering Burt Bacharach's "Wishin' and Hopin'."

Ani said, "That was a very ironic song to do because it's not exactly feminist. You know, (she sings) wear your hair just for him." Ani describes her music as coming from a woman's perspective. She said, "Well, I don't really focus on feminist issues, I just write about my life. And I'm a woman. So if I write about my relationships or all about this kinda thing, I feel like I'm a human being just like any other and I'm trying to become myself just like any other person. So in that sense, they are feminist songs. There's always kind of a double standard. I think that if I was a guy and I was writing about my life, I don't think people would have that gender awareness. But it's just me talking about my experience and my ideas."

Her music has a political edge that also cuts into the industrial takeover of music and art. Her press release reminds us that "five multinational corporations control 80% of the music industry." Ani owns her own label, Righteous Babe Records, which produces her albums, including her newest "To The Teeth," and various other artists. She said, "I'm a very political person. I am a feminist. I also have a lot of other political ideas. Basically I've been doing a lot of anti-corporate work for a lot of years in my song writing and not working for a major label. I think that corporate takeover of our whole lives is terrifying and dehumanizing and bad for art in the end. I look at the world through a political lens, so when I write about my life I do so with a lot of political ideology at work."

Ani got started in music not unlike Johnny Lang and Shannon Curfman. She said, "Well, I got a guitar when I was nine years old. Hanging around the house playing it. And there were always people playing music around my house. And then I started playing out in coffee houses and bars in Buffalo when I was a teenager. A lot of New York, West Village singer/songwriters were most of my earliest influences but other than that I really couldn't name any."

About her music direction, Ani said, "I really don't think it's a linear thing. I'm a song writer and I write about my life. And my life changes every year. It's a natural process rather than a direction. On any given album the songs are about a lot of different things. So, it's not like, what do I write about. I just write about what happens to me."

The Boston Phoenix said of Ani: "DiFranco has an uncanny knack for writing songs that seem to talk directly to each member of her audience...songs that inspire with fierce energy, witty lyrics, and a rich mixture of contemporary folk, Southern mountain modalities, country twang, jazzy vocal phrasing, and powerful, groove-oriented guitar work."

By Erin Ceyna
Contributing writer

They're back... Plume Band! It was a good fortune of circumstance over the last year of live music. Those who caught the Mike Plume Band to the Westward Ho on Thursday March 9, saw an acoustic performance and the vibe may make you want a CD! Tickets are \$5.

They'll also be at the Westward Ho on March 10 at the 7 p.m. Pin. Tickets are \$5. The show in Grand Forks on March 11. It includes Budget Music and the final show of the Roaring 20's Band. \$5 at the door.

I sat down with the Plume Band last. Plume is buying property in it! I know many people claiming, as excellent as Celine Dion... Plume Band. The roll should be! more stock on believe these g Luckily for us ing playing go

When asked Mike answered back on. I didn't it." I guess he Yet, I'd say he ent. It's one thing to play g

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STELLAR ZELLAR

By Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

Put all of your fears aside. Martin Zellar and the Hardways are not done with the upper Midwest any time soon.

Many Zellar fans have been getting false information from the rumor mill. "Did you know that this is his last show," has been a common statement at many of his spring 98 concerts.

The reason why these rumors have been floating around stems from Zellar's move to Austin, Texas, two months ago. Zellar has been touring the Southwest ever since he was a Gear Daddie, and he felt the move was necessary to expand his fan base.

Zellar, the growling Midwest legend, is not letting go of his roots though.

"I won't be doing as many shows as I used to," he said. "But I do plan on hitting the Minneapolis, Grand Forks, Fargo area, two, hopefully three times a year."

Zellar still has an apartment in Minneapolis, which he has called home since his fame began with the Gear Daddies in the mid-'80s.

As it works now, the rest of the Hardways, which include Dan Neale, Scott Wenum, and Nick Ciola (also a former Gear Daddie), still live up here and fly down south to record and perform.

"I'll play here as long as people come out to see us. I love to play. This is what I do for a living," Zellar told HPR.

"I think I'll be up here a lot more than other bands in the same situation. I love the Fargo and Grand Forks. I have a really special feeling for both of the cities. They're the two markets outside of the Twin Cities that embraced me and the Gear Daddies when we first came out. I've never lost that fondness for North Dakota."

Zellar audience is quite as big in a few of his southern markets as it is up here, but he said that the band gets "great radio play in Phoenix, Dallas, and Austin."

One struggle for the band in this region is their lack of radio time in all cities except Minneapolis.

"Radio is hard to break. We do well in every other way in the Midwest so hopefully we'll start catching on on the radio," Zellar said. Though Zellar admits the band's style isn't the easiest to find a niche for among local radio formats.

"When the Gear Daddies first came out, we got a lot of college radio play. College radio is more into cutting edge music, and at that time we were one of the first bands to fuse country and rock together in this area. Now a lot of bands are doing it, and it's not cutting edge anymore," Zellar said. As far as other stations go, Zellar doesn't think the formats of any local stations fit well with their style of music.

Zellar considers his band to be on middle ground between "bar" and "concert" status.

"Last year we sold out the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis and then the next week we sold out First Avenue. So it's like,

half of our crowd wants to come and sit down and hear the ballads without having to deal with a bar room. The other half want to come out to a place like Kirby's and hear real rock."

Zellar does see his a time in his future where he'll want to forego his bar-rocking days and stick to concerts and the studio.

"All of us feel so incredibly lucky to be doing this for a living. This is almost all I've done for 15 years now," he said. "I have yet to have a real job, and I love to play music. The fact that I get paid for it, and it's all I do, is more than I had ever hoped for. So I'm not going to bitch how I have to do it. If it came down to it, I'd be in a cover band."

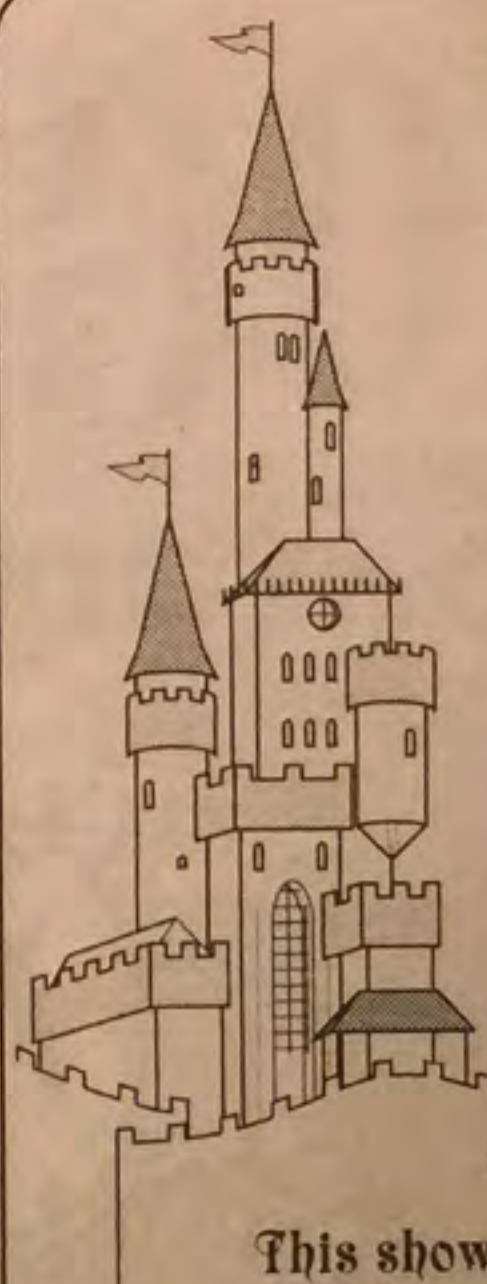
Another reason for his move to Austin is his goal of just being a singer/songwriter in the near future.

"Austin is a real singer/songwriter kinda town. There is a huge market for a stripped down style where a guy or girl will come show up with a guitar and perform. It really fits me in that way, and I can have the best of both worlds."

For all of you devoted fans who are wondering about upcoming releases, before the April 10 show at Kirby's, Zellar had to run to Best Buy to pick up some mini-disc equipment. On his current tour, the band is recording their stuff to hopefully put out a live album in the next year. He is also currently writing a lot of new material. He sneaked one new song into his most recent shows at Sensations in Grand Forks and Kirby's in Moorhead. He expects to get an original album out in the next year or two as well.

"We need to get one or two really good shows to put a live album together. I plan on having a few new songs on it, but I'm really anal about debuting new material until all the details have been worked out. And there will also be older songs that people haven't heard in a while."

One highlight for the crowd at Kirby's was Zellar's performance of "Time Heals", a song from the Gear Daddies' Billy's Live Bait album which Zellar has always shied away from performing.



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THE GREAT INDOORS

By Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

"Oh the weather outside is frightful..." Well, all right, spring is starting to rear its sunny head. The snow is gone, but that's not saying it won't come back. And even if it doesn't, it will be consistently raining every Friday and Saturday until July 5.

So whaddya gonna do? Stand on your roof against a wall of rain, aerial held high yelling, "Come on thunder!" No, of course not. But there's only so many movies you can see, there's only so much Jenga you can play.

Capitalizing on the need for indoor entertainment in our schizophrenically temperate climate has been a long time in coming, but it is finally here. With the addition of Driverz to the Fargo-Moorhead area, having a roof over our heads is rapidly becoming...well, fun!

The pantheon of sheltered amusement in our area is led by such businesses as Skateland, Laser Storm, The Sports Bubble, Skatepark by Discontent, Planet Pizza (Grand Forks), and Driverz, among others.



Driverz

Driverz, managed by Andy Johnson, opened its doors to the public last fall and has been steadily growing in business as the word gets around. Driverz features a wide range of activities for all ages: a 1/5 mile multi-level racing track, an 18-hole minigolf course, softball and baseball batting cages, a kiddy racing track, golf simulators, chipping cages, Laser Runner laser tag, five large party rooms, archery and rifle target simulators, and over 90 arcade games. Also at Driverz are a golf pro shop, Godfather's pizza and Taco John's. The next big additions to Driverz will be a climbing mountain, a kiddy discovery zone, and a motion theater.

"The upper Midwest is the perfect place to have a facility like this because of the weather," Johnson said. "Of course there was a big concern how it would do, but our business did better in December than November, and January beat December. So you can say that we're very happy." Johnson explained that their biggest competitors for the family entertainment dollar are movie theaters and bowling alleys.

Customers Sean Albertson, a student at Ben Franklin Junior High School, and his friend Steven Vogel of Oakes, ND, spent most of their afternoon chasing each other around the Laser Runner maze and on the go-kart track. Vogel said, "This is my first time here but I'll be back." He also said that a paintball course would definitely be a great addition to

so we came here instead, She said. "We don't have anything like this in our area."

When asked about how her golf game was going, she replied, "We're not going to talk about that."

Three racing aficionados, Troy Adams, John Baker, and Eric Breitting, found themselves bumping and weaving the afternoon away on the racetrack. Adams, of Minneapolis, said, "This is my first time here and I think it's great. This is a nice thing to have with the weather like it is. There's nothing that I know of like this in Minneapolis. And that track is a rush. I've gotta rest."

The first big challenge Driverz will face beside delays in construction will be to see how business holds up in the summer. But Johnson has already been planning for that.

"Right now we're primarily a family place, but we're working on having live music and a separate beer garden where no minors will be allowed," he said. "This will attract a more college age people and will also give parents more to do while there kids are having fun. And when it's too hot and humid to be out-

Driverz.

Shelly Tengesdahl of Esko, MN, was in town visiting family with her husband and ended up putting around on the mini-golf course. "We were going to go to the Home and Garden Show, but we ran late

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Plains Art Museum

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Up and Coming Performances

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Plains Art Museum

This program was made possible in part by the Lake Agassiz Arts Council, City of Fargo and the Minnesota State Arts Board through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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side, but people want to have some fun, they can certainly come here."

Skateland, Laser Storm and the Sports Bubble

The veteran of indoor fun in the F-M area would hands down be Skateland. Located at 3302 Interstate Blvd. SW, Fargo, the roller rink has been around since 1976 and has been putting smiles on faces young and old ever since.

"Skating isn't just a disco era activity. We're playing modern music, we have lights and fog," Manager Bruce Engebrecht said. "When in-line skates first came out they had bolts that were hard on our floor, but now they are safe and we welcome in-line skaters."

Skateland's main customers are families and pre-teen to teenage kids. Late-teen and college students frequent the facility on Friday and Saturday nights. Rollerskating is also a popular activity for private parties. Sororities, home schoolers and other organizations frequently hold functions at Skateland.

Resources and Encouragement for Area Christian Homeschoolers (REACH) rents the building out twice a month to give the kids a break in their studying and so they have an opportunity to interact with other each other.

Laser Storm, located at 2701 9th Ave. SW, Fargo, serves a function much the same. Kids go to Skateland to work up a sweat and have some fun. Laser Storm has the same effect for many adults. Tracy Bruce, manager of this laser tag and arcade facility, said even though their average demographic is 8-14 year old boys, Laser Storm gets many private parties from large business like Great Plains and Rosenbluth who want to give their employees a chance to work off some steam.

Laser Storm has been open for three years. Bruce said the opening of Driverz and their Laser Runner facility hasn't affected their business, but summer is always a big factor.

And finally there is the Sports Bubble. That big, white, pillowy thing north of 13th Avenue in Fargo, has been an object of mystery for many passing drivers. "What

goes on under that giant marshmallow?" you may ask.

Lots of things, according to manager Matt Johnson. The Sports Bubble is primarily known for its golfing facilities that allow avid fans of the sport to hone their skills during the off-season or ill weather conditions. And that's all it was when it opened in December of 1993. But since then it has changed hands and incorporated a few other under-the-cover activities. For the golfer there is the range hitting, mini-golf course, simulators, and a pro-shop. For everyone else there are softball and flag football leagues that have been very popular.

"The biggest challenge with the Bubble is making the season longer. Getting people in to start practicing earlier and keeping them around longer in the summer," Johnson said. "Driverz hasn't decreased our business, but we have noticed that younger customers are down. Since they opened we have changed our marketing strategy to hit an older audience. Competition for the entertainment dollar is definitely increasing, but the more choices the consumer has is definitely better for all of us."

The Sports bubble will be starting softball and football leagues up again the end of April or early May when the golf preseason is winding down. During the summer they also offer golf lessons for all ages.

The great indoors, a concept that once meant watching a movie or bowling, is changing rapidly. Although a sheet rock ceiling will never take the place of a nice summer day, maybe in a few years a simulator will.

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Athletic training: a recognized medical profession

By Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

Leo Dougherty discovered his career destiny as an athletic trainer by tearing his anterior cruciate ligament in high school.

"The physician that took care of me, and the rehab and training I went through to restore function back to my knee, pretty much gave me insight as to what I would like to do for a profession," Dougherty said.

Dougherty, who received his degree from the University of Montana, Missoula, was working in Butte, Mont., when Dr. Mark Lundeen gave him a call.

"Dr. Lundeen called and said he was starting a sports medicine program in Fargo and wanted to know if I would come back and be a trainer for the clinic."

Red River Valley Sports Medicine Institute, a recognized allied health professional institute by the American Medical Association, opened its doors in 1984. As the only independent sports medicine institute in the area, its goal has been to create custom training programs for all of its clients. Promoted as "We aren't a health club," the institute offers a one-on-one relationship and is designed for athletes and non-athletes.

Since its arrival, the institute has helped recreational athletes as well as professional athletes from the Cincinnati Bengals, Minnesota Vikings, Detroit Lions, Miami Dolphins, Winnipeg Jets, Minnesota Northstars and other professional teams.

Dougherty has worked with elementary, high school, college, recreational and professional athletes. The F-M Bees and



RedHawks, Phil Hanson (Oakes, N. Dak.) of the Buffalo Bills and Darin Ernstad (Jamestown) of the Angels have all worked with him.

As a junior in college Dougherty chose athletic training over physical therapy

because of the age group and types of competitive people with whom he would be able to work.

"I wanted to work with healthy, active individuals, that if they did become injured would want to get healthy and get back to their athletics."

Dougherty was the head trainer for the Fargo Public School system in 1975, then moved to Butte to be the head trainer there until he was asked to work at Red River Valley Sports Medicine where he is director of athletic training services.

Athletic training has been an organization since 1950.

"Since that time," Dougherty said, "we have continued to grow in not only num-

bers but in education dealing with specific athletic injuries and the care and prevention of those athletic injuries."

The amount of education and experience, according to Dougherty, of a trainer coming out of college is significantly greater than what it used to be. Most athletic trainers in this area have also gone through Emergency Management Training, and all are certified in CPR. Athletic trainers must also have 80 hours of continuing education every three years after college.

"The difference between an athletic trainer and any of the other allied health professions is that we handle the injury immediately. All of the other professions continue to take care of the injury after all of the emergency situations are said and done."

He said that since the National Athletic Training Association has recognized the need for a trainer in the public school systems the field has become much larger.

"The changes that have come about are the same changes you would see in any medical field." Some examples he gives are modalities: devices that use electric current to stimulate rehabilitation, repair muscle tissue or numerous other functions.

There are 86 certified athletic trainers in North Dakota, and 17 of them are employed at Red River Valley Sports Medicine. Dougherty is the president of the North Dakota Athletic Trainers Association. He has also been past executive director of the NDATA and was responsible for initiating the state licensure bill. The bill states an individual can not practice athletic training without being licensed.

"I am an athletic trainer," said Dougherty, "and some people have asked what kind of training do you do. I've told them I'm an athletic trainer and they've responded, what sort of horses do you work with. And this is still in the 90's where people are still not really cognizant of what a certified athletic trainer is. This is a recognized medical profession."

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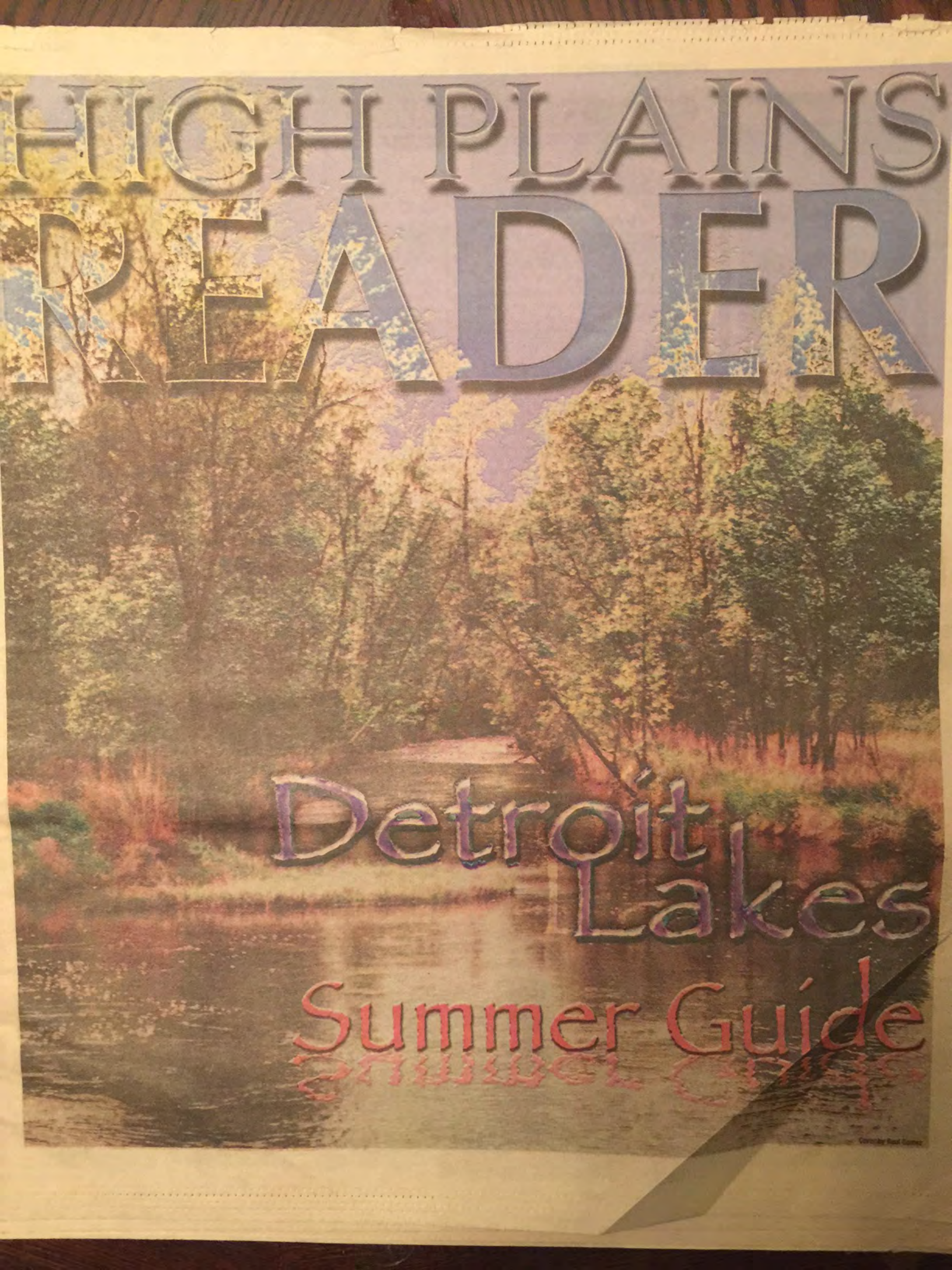
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HIGH PLAINS READER

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Summer Guide

Detroit Lakes in the Summer!

By Steve Listopad

Contributing writer

Imagine this: It's summer. One lonely Saturday afternoon finds you mowing your lawn. Maybe you just got done mowing your neighbor's lawn which you did in the hopes he'll give you that rototiller he's planning to sell. That very large mass of incandescent gas sitting high in the afternoon sky is causing sweat to pool in uncomfortable places. As you work, you start feeling regret about your weekend planning. Other than the fact that lawn barbers are vastly under appreciated, you would have much rather been slamming down a few cold ones. Actually, you desire to be slamming down a few cold ones while floating down a river with a few buddies. And after that, you wish you could have the cool spray of the wake your slaloming over offset the solar downpour. And maybe later that evening, you wish you could continue the slamming down of cold ones at a local bar packed with people that just got done doing the exact thing you wish you were doing instead of

mulching.

Well, fear not my brothers and sisters! Relief is not that far away. As you may have guessed, this issue is featuring the wonders of Detroit Lakes. We at the *High Plains Reader* have compiled for you, our faithful reader, a D.L. calendar of events, a "Best Bets" style summary of what to watch for this summer, and several features on interesting summer fare from our favorite party town. But this little issue is just the beginning, because the *Reader* would like to keep you updated throughout the rest of

the summer on what's happenin' all over lake country. So let us begin our journey into the wet and wilderness....

Staci Monson, Amanda Drees, Lindsay Stokes of West Fargo, ND



Detroit Lakes Summer Guide

The City in Question

The following excerpt was taken from the 1999/2000 Detroit Lakes and Surrounding Area phone directory published by USWEST.

"For decades fur traders gathered at Ga-ia-wa-wan-gag, Ojibwe for 'lake in which there is a crossing in a sandy place.' Settlers could not pronounce the name, so a French priest called it Detroit, the French word for 'strait.' French explorers and Hudson's Bay Company agents established the first trading posts. The village of Detroit was incorporated in 1881. Today, Detroit Lakes is the Becker County seat. It is near the geographical center of North America, and 412 lakes are within a 25-mile radius of the city. The headwaters of the nation's two principal north-south rivers, the Red River of the North and Mississippi River, are found here."

Detroit Lakes is a city with a large population fluctuation problem. The current population is 7,295. But that number is inflated tenfold every summer during special weekends like Independence Day and WeFest. D.L.'s Chamber estimates that during WeFest, the city is home to over 100,000 people. Lucky for homeowners that tourists don't mind sleeping outside somewhere in the 117 acres of City park land or in one of the 15 campgrounds around the area.

The city's entertainment establishments are focused more towards the summer season.

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Annie Humphrey

if you don't snowmobile, ski, or ice fish, you'll find yourself feeling out of water during the colder seasons. But if you have any doubts about the excitement that lies ahead, refer back to 1993 when Detroit Lakes was named as one of *Playboy's* hot spots for partying over the 4th of July.

Lake in Question
Average summer weekend, Detroit Lake, both the Big and Little are more spectacle than relaxing vacation spot. The water is a veritable derby of activity and you'll be hard-pressed to find a 14-year-old without a pair of scissors on the mile-long sugar sand beach. You'll witness the sinful pleasures of topless sunbathing while at the beach, enjoy a game of chicken between a jetski and a speedboat. Each has a fishing and observation pier from where you can take in the mayhem. However, if you are brave enough to venture out on the lake, there are several boat rentals and landings that will provide you with a large docking system with boat slips located directly on the beach. If you do not live or rent a cabin on the lake, and do not have a watersport utility vehicle then plan waiting for long periods of time to rent something. The best thing to do is call ahead and make reservations as early as you can for boat or jet ski rentals. (The same advice to lodging.)

If you don't get that jetski, never fear, the beach offers its own excitement with volleyball tournaments, frisbees flying at you in all directions, and get-assembled around by a scissor-wielding 14-year-old boy are all part of the scene. And with all of the beautiful people walking around, you'll feel, if-conscious. But that's part of the lakes experience, as well. Finally, what other paper would give you lake samples? This information was gathered in the fall of 1999 and was published on the Detroit Lakes Watch website. We have no idea what it means but it might be useful to somebody.

4th of July
is the first big weekend of the summer for D.L. Memorial Day week usually raining and still too chilly to fully appreciate lake country. But July rolls around and the lake goers are getting itching to strap on their hongs. D.L. becomes a veritable mecca of self-indulgence and round the clock superfun. Unfortunately the body count has been waning the last years. (Don't get me wrong, there's no place I'd rather be within driving distance on that date!) Some attribute the decline to bad weather, others to a new ideas on the part of the Chamber of Commerce, but whatever the reason, the fact remains that it isn't the same D.L. that was bringing in like Soul Asylum and Four Nonblondes less than a decade ago. On the other hand, if you've never experienced a 4th at D.L. you don't know what you're missing. The streets are teeming with people. The resorts are "No Vacancy" in unison. The fireworks display is unparalleled in this area. The unbelievable line to get into Zorbaz is the biggest buzz kill of the year. During the fireworks display, it is always customary to grab a cone of ice cream and Cream, located right on West Lake Dr. by the waterslide and marina. And kudos to anyone who can snag a parachute firework. Make great souvenirs and stocking stuffers.

Outdoors Experience
If you're not staying at your own or someone else's cabin, we recommend staying at the next best thing. The lakes experience is all about enjoying the outdoors while never being too far from a keg of your favorite brew. And in the lake you can accomplish both goals by camping next to a bar. So here is a list of campgrounds in or around D.L. within walking distance of a bar. There are obviously many other campgrounds available, so check around to find what suits your needs.

American Legion Campground on West Lake Dr. (Bars: Zorbaz and the 4th of July)
Ley's on Cotton Lake (A campground and bar all in one!)
Shorewood Campgrounds (Shorewood Pub)

Mouth Billy Bass
I've never seen anything quite as scary as Big Mouth Billy Bass. You can't see him in the Valley, thank God, but we saw three in one day in D.L. It's the Shop of Horrors revisited. Billy is a 1999 product of Gemmy Industries out of Irving, Texas. Billy is roughly a two pound rubber bass mounted on a wood plaque. If you dare to push Billy's button either "Don't Worry, Be Happy" or "Take Me to the River" will start playing. Billy's tail starts to wiggle immediately, and everybody thinks he's so cute. And then at key in each song, Billy's head flips up and he starts lip syncing while staring straight at you. Any fans of the Evil Dead series can relate this to the dancing moose head. I rate Billy very high on my disturbing scale, but it's one of those buttons you have to push once.

Other fishing related news, D.L. being in the center of so many lakes is great fishing. Detroit Lake offers fishing tours, but if all the commo-

tion and hub-bub of that highly trafficked lake make for an unsettling experience, then I have the perfect suggestion for you. There is one lake in particular that is secluded from the mindless frenzy of vacationing youth. Pickerel Lake, north of D.L. next to Cotton Lake and not far from Ed's River Run (see map in tubing ad) is the perfect getaway for an afternoon if you have a boat and trailer. The lake is wooded on all sides with only a small public access. It is completely residential, there is not a single business on the lake, but it's not far from pubs and gas stations. Crappie, walleye and bass are plentiful, but the best part of this lake is its beauty. Long and narrow, the dense forest starts in the water and extends up rolling hills. The lake is spring fed with no inlet or outlet and can reach 85 feet deep in some places. The wildlife ranges from bald eagles to beavers to moose. Check this hidden treasure out if you get the opportunity.

Spiritfest Midwest

July 21-23

The big names at Spiritfest this year are Michael Smith, Rebecca St. James, Jars of Clay and speakers Meadowlark Lemon and Jim and Joyce Warner. There will be about 34 performers and 10 speakers at Soo Pass Ranch this year. For info: 1-800-493-3379.

WeFest

What can we say about WeFest. It's the largest country festival in the Midwest, arguably in a much larger area than that. Even though WeFest attracts some of the largest country stars in the world to the humble little town of D.L., the people that go year after year say they do it because of the camping experience.

The stars at this year's gig will be Reba McEntire,

Kenny Rogers, John Michale Montgomery, Toby Keith, Martin McBride, Neal McCoy, John Berry, Suzy Bogguss, Billy Dean, Chris LeDoux, Kathy Mattea, Johnny Rivers, Montgomery Gentry, the Clark Family Experience, Lace, the Lynns, & Lile McCann. For more info: see the Wefest web page at www.wefest.com

The Family Thing

Ah yes, the family thing. There are many of you who are wondering what are some good fun-filled family things to do in lake country. Boating, skiing, jetskiing, suntanning, yadda-yadda-yadda. There are three amusement parks in D.L. worth mentioning: Go-Putt N Bump and the Ranch are both located on Highway 59 S, and Wild Waters is located on West Lake Dr. Go-Putt N Bump and the Ranch offer go-karts and minigolf while the former also features bumper boats. Wild Waters has a three story water slide, a speed slide, minigolf and water balloon wars.

Better than any of that, however, is building a sand castle or playing frisbee on the beach with your children and your dog if you have one. They'll appreciate that much more when they grow up than reluctantly being pushed down a waterslide or watching as their parents argue about mini-golf scores.

Healthcare

...because you or somebody you know is probably going to need

it. Both St. Mary's Regional Health Center (218-847-5611) and Meritcare Clinic (218-846-2000) are both conveniently located on Washington Avenue.

Your Neighborhood Bondsman

...because you or somebody you know is probably going to need it. Goldberg Bonding Company (218-847-8122) is open 24/7 and accepts Visa, Mastercard, and Discover. You can also check out their website at www.goldbergbonding.com.

The Big Jesus

As an afterthought, I remembered the gigantic painting of Jesus praying positioned ironically on the north side of Highway 10 facing east. For all the Valley people returning home from a weekend of debauchery, the Big Jesus, who is possibly praying for our sins, is a Sunday night reminder of how much fun being bad can be.

Check out our Lake Country calendar next week! And stay tuned all summer for fab feature stories from Becker and Ottertail counties!

Tom Baere and Matilda, Marlee Jacobson and Jordan McDougall



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ZORBAZ

By Zteve Liztopad, Contributing writer

Tom Hanson, founder of the Zorbaz empire, was a school teacher for the Detroit Lakes public school system when he got a hairbrained idea to make better use of his summers. Before Zorbaz entered the fray in 1969, the hot spot in D.L. was a place called the Green Room. The Elks bought the Green Room and dismantled the business, leaving a void in nighttime entertainment. The building where the D.L. Zorbaz is now located used to be a candy store before Hanson got a hold of it.

He said, "The building hasn't changed much at all since we bought it. We added the outside bar and the patio area, but other than that it's pretty much the same building that was once a candy store." Zorbaz did get an internal face lift since last year. They put in new restrooms and expanded the back slightly to give the customers some more breathing room.

It didn't take long for Zorbaz to fill that void left by the Green Room. Most new businesses take a minimum of four years to start seeing profitable returns, but Hanson recalls how the first year they were in business was the part of his 31 year Zorbaz career. "We

started off just serving pizza and beer. We wanted a nice, relaxed place where people could come in off the beach in there suits and sandals and enjoy a drink and fresh pizza. It was really fun watching our baby grow. My soon-to-be wife was working with us selling beer for \$0.25 and pizza for \$3.00. Those were my best memories."

The 70's and 80's were really good for Hanson and Zorbaz. In 1983, Hanson was ready to open up his second store at Perham. And more stores followed quickly: Pelican landed in 1986, Ottertail opened in 1987, Cross Lake in 1988, Gull Lake in 1993, and the Millac Lake store in 1994. Also in 1994 Zorbaz joined forces with The Rock in Fargo to open up a pizza stand inside of the frequented Southwest Fargo bar.

Other changes that happened along the way included the adding of Mexican food to the menu in 1975 with the encouragement of D.L. store proprietor Rick Jansen. The Zuper Macho Nachos quickly became one of Hanson's biggest selling items. In 1990, full cocktail bars were added to all of the existing stores. And most recently, Hanson, with the help of his son Cole, has been expanding heavily into music, including DJs and live bands. His Pelican store is equipped with state of the art lighting and sound, and a very high tech MP3 player.

Now that Hanson and Zorbaz are moving farther ahead into the future, let us take a look at some the

more interesting facts of their past.

How did you get the name Zorbaz?

"It came from the movie Zorbaz the Greek starring Aidan Quinn who was a free spirit. Also Zorbaz the Greek goes along with Zorbaz on the Beach."

How many prizes have you given away as prizes?

"3 GMC pickups, 2 Mustang convertibles, 3 Tigershark jetskis, a Classic 57 Cadillac, a 69 Indy pacecar, one guy won pizza for life, and this year we're giving away a 69 GTO."

How many Zorbaz cups have been sold?

"I would have to say well over a million. And they're indestructible, too. When aliens land several thousand years from now in the Midwest, they'll see millions and millions of Zorbaz cups lying around."

What's the longest waiting line in Zorbaz history?

"I remember one 4th of July in the 80's we had 300 or more people standing all night to get into our D.L. store. We don't do that kind of business anymore mostly because of the raising of the drinking age limit and stiffer drunk driving penalties. Today we see lines of 50 to 100 people on busy nights."

What's the best publicity Zorbaz has ever had?

"In the early 90's when D.L. was so packed on the 4th that you could walk on a sea of people, both D.L. and Zorbaz were mentioned in either Penthouse or



Playboy as some of the top party spots in America."

How many kegs has Zorbaz gone through day?

"One year on the 4th of July, the D.L. store went through over 100 kegs in one day."

What's the record headcount for a week?

"On a past 4th of July weekend, all of our stores combined served over 100,000 customers."

How many bar fights have you broken up personally?

"I know I haven't broken up more than 10 bar fights personally in the fifteen years that I've worked the stores. I would say that that number is pretty good. Our atmosphere doesn't really invite fighting."

What's the craziest thing you've seen at one of your stores?

"That's a tough one. There's always plenty of streaking. One woman didn't have her I.D. so she lifted up her shirt and said something like 'will these work'. Well, of course, we had to say no."

There are plenty more stories and facts which came from. Stop on by your nearest Zorbaz and get the full experience this summer.

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