Look what the dog brought home

The Sounds of Fargo: Barking Dog Records releases local music — page 8
Temple of the Dog

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 Listgad
Contributing Writer

Every once in a while 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 begger all night with Chambrano's Tab chapming 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 44, 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 Whitewater and Anti, two Midwest bands. He earned his Master of Music degree in music performance and taught for 10 years at Moorhead State University as an assistant professor of music at the school. 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 on 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 studio T believes that this mixture between the two has produced their own music. Mike and Linda both agree that when it isn't fun or personally enriching for themselves 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.

"If you want to see Linda around for an hour while we're in the studio," said Mike. "She's usually the one to go out and check out new bands. She's coming 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 Weller, Jay Walters, Jim Langemo, Lisa Briggs, and Deborah Harris. Other artists who have recorded in their basement studio are Allamoo, Escaping Jacob, Pat Keene, Mara Hart, Elise Middledorf, Sarah Morrion, Silicon Monkey, Stahl Doubt, and Don Wagner. They are currently working on the new releases of Weller'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. We're just a part of the process." Mike is known to have a keen sense of what music should sound like better than they do. He just wants to lend his expertise and experience to others.

On local music venues

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

Mike says 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 which crowds are three to four people deep, 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 the best.

There are also three vital booking agents in Fargo-Moorhead. Now there is just one, which is up and coming due to their main act, Three Minute Hero.

In the 70s, venues abounded.

"Performance venues are in crisis," Mike said. "There use to be 20 to 30 bars in the Fargo-Moorhead area that would feature bands. You go from jazz to rock to country. The clubs paid well and they could because they were packed. 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 two or six drinks. Back then, 10 or 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 Coates are especially appreciative of these days for the likes of Fifth Avenue, or even Full Circle Cafe and Zandros 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 places like that, in these environments, 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 had back away with my asthma because of 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: Brown House Coffee Series" will feature their label artists and other local talent. The series starts near the end of January and will take place during each month, 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 Coates 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 is in the band is if they own their record," Mike said. "If you can't sell your act in your closest surroundings, how could you sell it nationally?"

The Coates see two of their label artists, 3 Minute Hero and Brenda Weller, with the potential to transcend the Midwest. With them, "an "unambushed party," the hottest acts in Fargo, which does plan on moving to Minneapolis in the near future to expand their listening base. Brenda Weller, 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 listen intently to every word she says," Mike said. "That's when you know you've got something big."

While Mike and Linda insists that money isn't their number one goal at all, they are looking forward to the day they have one label pick 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 Coates would like to see the studio and label pay for itself. They have their son get into the business with them, and have bigger investments in the present, which is the most 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.
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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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. 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 knock-knacks on the main floor... but downstairs there were drums, 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 west would find their way to our little town to stop at Marguerite’s. They came from Mississippi State and Marguerite’s moved to Moorhead, I too, have kept a close association with Marguerite’s — from the time that I dropped out of college in the 1970’s 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 businesswoman and as a person through all these years. I was impressed by the genuine affection and respect with which she treated all her customers. Now these were people who got little respect anywhere else — long-haired, often broke, rock musicians — who were welcome at Marguerite’s a place where they could feel at home, dream, learn from the pros and, even get emergency equipment repairs. Now Marguerite is watching her children grow up — and she spoils them with love and happiness. Too, it’s nice to know some wonderful things never change.”

Dr. James Connell (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, the last one being a Beatles record. 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 time 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 Meciea.”

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 was always dreaming of having a band. Marguerite and her store helped spawn the dreams of a lot of kids out of Fargo. Other music stores, in Minneapolis or St. Paul, just sales people. 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):

“I met Marguerite in the mid-70’s when I was a working musician. I then started working for her and did so for 11 years before catching on with the Fargo Civic Auditorium when we had a number of shows with sound. She was really good for starting artists who were short on cash. She really kept us all in the air. I feel it’s the greatest store in the world. And she is the most dynamic, energetic person I’ve ever known. She would work our legs off and still hold 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 Preydon for the 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 is a lot to say about her.”

Shannon Curran (musician, The Shannon Curran Band):

“She 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 she’s 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 Holm Band):

“I am Marguerite’s biggest customer. Nobody else is even close anywhere. I bought quite a lot of gear, and it’s all 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 our business now, but they don’t offer the kind of hospitality she does. I stop in and lease her all the time when I’m in Fargo. Her best line when it comes to borrowing equipment or paying bills, ‘Can no one else tell it to you, too?’ Oh, real fine, dear, we don’t worry about you. She’s got no doubts, I can’t confirm anything, but I bet her losses have been great over the years. Maybe that’s why she’s so popular.”

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

story and photos by Steve Listopad
Shannon Curtzman
Wanting the World
Shannon Curtman: Wanting the World

By Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

A

ge 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 Curtman of "The Shannon Curtman 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 Curtman, assure her everything is in order, while they continue working on Shannon's entry package for the 1998 Lilith Fair tour. Not the usual 12-year-old 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 drum for them. Shannon's father works for Burlington Northern Santa 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 Jonans, 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 last year. Brian Jensen, manager of the bar, was brought on as chair for a local minor into his local 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 kidder 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 curriculm 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 Curtman. "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 do 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. I 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 age average in the mid-20s?

"The only real difference I see between the rest of the band and me is that they're kids 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 Curtman Band," but the idea 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 kind of a given," Shannon said. "That's what people just pick out.

With a younger 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 guitar teacher pushing her to take guitar lessons on an old acoustic guitar that was just sitting around the Curtman residence collecting dust.

"She's always been a little singer," Terry said. "She's always had a microphone." "It was a gradual thing, and when she really started showing some talent...you've gotta support her."

"I relate to parents having their kids involved in hockey. I don't look at it any differently than that," Mary said. "We want her to have the time and money as they do, or to have her 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 interests is and that's probably where my interest will be forever."

As far as the Army Sports Bar, the Curtmans said that the manager had a choice to let Shannon play or not. The stage was set up and Jensen said he would go with it. He ended up with a $100 fine, but thanked 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 Curtman 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.

"Your working on putting out a debut CD. Hopefully we'll have it 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's definitively something they didn't want to rush into. Staying in the area and building a bigger fan base is the agenda for the immediate future.

"Once you establish those connections you could always come back to town."

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."
HIGH PLAINS READER

Gov. Jesse Ventura

Body, Mind, & Soul
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 DNA 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 trimviri rate of ruling men. His former self, "The Body," made an encore appearance as an optimistic and goal oriented 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!"
The Body

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

-Jackie Chan listing body parts he's broken

Ben James Jones, Gov. Ventura has taken every kind of his imaginable, from physical and mental abuse as a Navy SEAL, to professional backaches 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 not let the world come to you but to go to it," he explained. "And so I think that I've kind of lived that way during all my careers. Being aggressive and going out and going after your goals and chasing your dreams. So I think that probably was that 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 tougher 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 go over parents' "hey, we're going to the river," and that's all that was needed or that all that had to happen. I think just the freedom of growing up there was very nice."

Other than the teachings of his parents and the adventures of youth, Ventura has always idealized 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. 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 hold anyone 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 honestly - you know, but honestly 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 would 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 fighter in the 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's 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 is a bunch of goobers. So I think those are the biggest successes of all time, 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." He didn't mention another one 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 parliamentary embassy, the blood does in my veins, at the height of my pro wrestling career. It made me realize everything because as a pro athlete one never really realizes 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, 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 even get back in the ring again. I subsequently did. But I had been a wrestler for 11 years. So I knew, 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 Bataman 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.mediasaw.com, 41 percent of the 29 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 him I'll take the role. I'd love it. But I don't know about it. I don't know about anything, 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'd like the money and the hype of 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."

Hmmm...listen to Hollywood. "The Body" may strike again.

The Mind

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

-Herman Hesse

Jesus "The Body" Ventura, then 47, abruptly into his new career as governor of California promised that he had metamorphosed 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 some sort of "The Mind."

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 Dick Marcinko. He writes the Rogue Warrior books. He's a former SEAL team six. And I think that our type of leadership was born 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 in the decision-maker, but I believe I have great people who can run the ship and they have the ability to make the right decisions."

Critical acclaim has followed the governor as he has further refined his new role. His latest endeavor, "The Mind," will have him back in the ring this week as he continues to evolve. He is a man of many talents, and "The Mind" is just one of them.
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-managing 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 1996 in Ventura's favor a windmill was made to the powers that be - those people want reform. Now, there was this celebrity hand-diled 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, I'm scrutinized to the point that it is painful and it gets sometimes almost comical when they (particularly the media) want my opinion on things that really are irrelevant. It's meaningless with my opinion is that the meanings 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 he 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 they all want me on television giving my philosophi-

cal opinion on what's happening. I didn't even watch Super Tuesday where 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 so many of the things that I do that are irrelevant. I mean, I judge me for what I do when it affects numbers of people, but what do 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 policed and pressured for his thoughts about this and his opinions about that, why does he allow himself to get hauled into verbal patrols? And conversely, if he feels so strongly about his freedom to make 'drunk-on-inhalants' jokes on The Late Show with David Letterman and religious criticism 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 it. The firm 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, 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 Community is concerned, if I would've simply said 'sow' I've been all right. But I didn't say some. And 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 year. Well, I'm only human. And when Playboys 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 ask this...Answer this.' It becomes a lot harsher in reading than in a conversa-
tion. And the interview is done very conversational-
ly. You know, it would be like you spending the afternoon with me and riding with me and having con-
versation with me. So, if I said what I said was that some organized religions are a sham and a bunch 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 politi-
cal arena. "My niche is probably the title of my next book. It's called 'I Stand Alone.' Wait'll it comes out. I'll really sit 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 re-election, 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 emancipates me to continue to do this. I'll see what my family thinks."

Even though Ventura sees himself as being anduly scrutinized, he always finds time to draw attention to activities of others, especially when it comes to can-
paign tactics."

"My campaign, I already said that I'll spend less money than I did in this race. I set an all-time record for the least amount of spending. My view is that people spend so much money, any further ways used to say to me, speaking of politicians, and this is my father talking. He used to always say, 'You know how you know how they're all crooks? And I'd say, 'No dad, how do you know that?' And he'd say, 'Because they spend a million dollars for a job that pays a hundred grand a year. And, no I ran again my view will be very simple. My campaign will be very simple. If you think I've done a good job, and you 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 unfair. 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 really just shut the door on them and say, 'Well, no, that's not to get me elected but I won't care.' And, see, that's the one place that I think we should switch to socialism. And it's very clearly 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 competition, and let them spend it as they see fit. People will disagree with us. 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
political system."

Ventura, not ruling out a second term as governor, has definitely put the kickoff on a run at Washington in any capacity. In an early ‘90s "Today" Show interview, Ventura, adorned with a beard and a bandanna, said he "belonged in the White House. Not so anymore. He said, "That could’ve been Jesse "The Body"江南 Gulf." I don’t know if people have to recall that lot 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 stand 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, that. And as President you can’t go anywhere without mitigates of protection, and I just wouldn’t want to do that. I’m 48, and to do that for four years of your life where you literally are, you’re in your own life, 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 believe 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 books and magazine articles, Ventura was often compared to another political figure, whose death was also discussed in the same manner.

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, I’d be of times I’ll look back and think ‘Gee, why did I make that decision.’ There was no reason to do it, to see 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. No, 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 would never have had a career on television. 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 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, isn’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 unconsciously 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 it then it would be briefs."

Nevertheless, the threads that tie this physicallyDY0handling, mentally superior, and spiritually elusively figure are tenuous at best. But for this reporter, a thirty minute interview intended to get one good soundbyte changed course and nursed into a mentally taxing tale of personal personal belief, minute, Doctor’s, political malignancy, and spiritual solubility. 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.

Join Us for the Huge, Wild Celebration!

Thursday, March 30, 2000
5:00 - 8:00 PM
for the opening of these two
Huge, Wild Exhibits:

John Buck
Recent Sculpture and
Woodblock Prints

Plains Art Museum
704 First Avenue North
Fargo, ND 58102
701.232.5821

March 30
BILLY
McLaughlin
National recording artist on the Narada label, acoustic guitarist enchanting audiences with his virtuoso two-handed fingerboard technique. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette says, “The way he plays, you may swear (he) is the best two guitarists you ever heard.”

This program was made possible in part by the Lake Agassiz Arts Council 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.

March 30
BILLY
McLaughlin
with his virtuoso two-handed fingerboard guitar technique from 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Special Café Muse
Hors d’oeuvres available
for purchase:

Roast Beast and Hatbird Sandwiches,
Devil’s Island Eggs, Fruit and Cheese on
Unicorns’ Horns, Grasshopper Pie
Jungle Juice Punch, Fine beers and wines

Ten Minute Gallery Tours at
5:15 PM, 6:15 PM and 7:15 PM
Jonny Lang
Rising Star of the North
“Shit, I might live here,” Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones quipped when the packed Fargo dome roared after a stellar solo performance.

All 19-year-olds are like this, you know. Stanley Lang, the soloist from the Stones’ No Security Tour Feb. 17, currently resides in Minneapolis. But it was the way he lived in the Caswell-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 Fargo domes stage. “I wasn’t expecting a reaction like this. I was there to play, but I didn’t know what to think.”

The Fargo dome is the only place Lang has performed in Fargo-Moorhead. Lang has performed at Freebird’s, The Old Broadway, The Tree Top, and other smaller venues. His style is unique, but his presence is undeniable. Lang’s mind is on his music and on his craft.

Lang has always been praised and criticized for his musical style. Many people have told him he is too young to sing the blues. Lang’s 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 comes over and says ‘good job,’ who needs to listen to anyone else.”

Lang’s style is unique, but his presence is undeniable. Lang has performed at Freebird’s, The Old Broadway, The Tree Top, and other smaller venues. His style is unique, but his presence is undeniable. Lang’s mind is on his music and on his craft.

Living in Minneapolis has helped change Lang’s perspective on music. The funk scene has had a big part in his more recent musical ventures. “My favorite band to see is Dr. Marbo’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 home 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.

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“When I first saw Garth Brooks I was 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. “I was so impressed, I tried 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 Caswell 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 then that was the worst, you know.”

As far as the future of Lang’s music is concerned, he said, “I could be the first underworld violinist, or something. Everybody says 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 is pushing his horizons within the folk genre. “And you know, I would never want people to have to listen to the same thing out of me,” 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 it does offer this nugget of personal philosophy: “If anything is a well thought out plan, it’s 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 ‘cos it’s not what you wanted. I pretty much live day to day, fly by the seat of my pants sort of thing.”
Two girls on the run

Chicas, 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 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 she radioed for 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 festivities as an excuse 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 accidental 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 jumping in and running seems insane. What do the parents of two young girls think when their daughters 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 accidental world.

Rose started her story in the 5th grade, when her family moved to their present location. Rose and Violet 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 15 and was sent to a clinic for rehabilitation, leaving Rose 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 overpowered an 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 ***ed up so 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 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 told the shy Anthony 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 silence, her puffy eyes rest, lips 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 pro-

fessed 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 recovering alcoholic, but her recovery wasn't going 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 modeled when she was a girl, but she doesn't talk about that with the rest.
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 were 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 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 city. 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 city that she knew would help them out. All they had to do was get there.

"My parents have 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 city, 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, sooner or later. Violet was indifferent, but was very concerned when Rose gave out her parents' home number to several of the boys who met on their own.

Violet said, "We just started. This is like an adventure. Let's get on our adventure. We can't go home yet… so we are 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.

The posters held little piece of information: They were 14 and 15-year-olds. Rose and Violet had successfully made it to Minneapolis that day. They stayed over night with the driver and were dropped off the morning next at a gas station near the area where they could find some of the people they were looking for. Then they were gone.

Violet's only reason for running this was to save face. As elaborate as Rose's plan didn't get along with her, 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 and blue; they looked 15.

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, Theresa 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 Bad 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 changed. They had been drinking. Jake looked like a nice guy, and one thing led to another.

Another night brought a different adventure. Rose and Violet wound up with some other boys. The travelers and their three or four male companions were cruising around on University near North Dakota State University campus.

They came upon a car filled with young men.
Youth gone...
...still wild
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 bootin' and beer drinkin' and you know, smoking a little weed."

When Snake's "party bus", band included, rolled into Fargo's Granite City on August 18th, it is certainly his intention to send the fine dining establishment at crumbling 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 Billboard 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-blonde 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 pinnacle. 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.

"It's none 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's asked all the time if those shoes 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 discography's 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 bathroom rush," Snake said. "I've listened to every record and have been influenced by so many different musicians. The biggest influence is in general and what you want out of life. I've learned that one of the biggest keys 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 stepchildren 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 incus 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 lots and lots 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."
HIGH PLAINS
READER
SAVE THE
JAIL
By Steve Listopad
Associate Editor

Ron Ramsey, a 32-year veteran of the architecture department at North Dakota State University, provided the information in this story. His areas of study include architectural 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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Family Day: This Land is Your Land
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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 blueprints 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, the 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).
David Sol

DJ @ LARGE
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."

minute. To use Fatboy Slim as an example, his music ranges from 120 to 150 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 spic 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-80's with the dawnng of electronic music. It spread to the coasts in the early '90's. 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 partygoers needed to call private numbers to find out where to go. This trend spread inland from the coasts and was soon hitting middle America like Denver and Chicago by the mid-90's. 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 peppy 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 do drugs are the ones that cause problems for themselves and others."

It's this aspect that carries 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 parents don't want them to do.

"What people need to understand is that parties are social events," Dave told DPR. "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 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.
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 Moby 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 scene that is friendly to the environment that supports diversity, identity, and above all dancing.

For $1 million: What's the best part of what you do?
A: Fame
B: Money
C: Drug use
D: Because it's fashionable
E: None of the above, Regis.
F: Is that your final answer?
G: Yes, that's my final answer.

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Hip-Hop Gonna Knock You Out
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 "I'M RAPPIN' YOU'RE NOT." 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 suburban 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.'"
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 discrimi-
nated 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 Fargans
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 simi-
larities 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 per-
sons 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 ‘cos he’s big. But it’s some-
thin’ 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
‘lets me rap to you.’ Raps 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 talkin’ about," J-
Sauce said. "Like Eminem has that combat-
kid 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. (for-
merly 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 on the streets, it is present in most lyrics
and videos that are put out these days. For
example, Boys 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 Peas.

"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 per-
former, 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 capping one hand
over their mouth.)

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

"I’ve seen people that have been down and
out. ‘Cuse, 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 get-
in’ into it he just got all hyper and ***2, and
started dancin’,” and it’s like we kind of a
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 every-
body."
Even in Fargo.
Hardcore Crooning

Like any hobbyist, the karaoke crooners have 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-smith 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 seen on cable stations such as TNN and the Oxygen Channel. The more money you 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 Rinehardt, 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 Scott. "It was at its 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 Rinehardt and Scott are impressed by the quality singers that have come out to show off their goods.

Tammy Smith, karaoke singer (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 along. 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 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 crack-jack 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 more fun when the people are uninterested and the audience can laugh."

Kevin Baugh, 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," Baugh 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 Janny Lang's and Shannon Curfman'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.
High Plains Reader

MUSIC

By Steve Liskow
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 Priest Pete's, and Kirby's have cover bands and stuff. But can you really call that a scene?"

Well, true believers, this apparent lack of enlightenment is exactly what the HPR has been battling against. Have you ever heard of the Ruth Hour Concert Series at the Plains Art Museum? Have you heard about various local Christian rock artists like Jim Villander? 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 featuring 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 one native son himself. Jonny Lang. "Kid Blues" started his career with Jonny Lang and the Big Stang at the ripe old age of 14 in 1994. Reader enthusiasm were able to follow the rising star's progression into his 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...by the seat of my pants sort of thing."

All great things come in threes. The HPR kept its omnipotent eye open for this opportunity 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 coop and signed a record deal with Arista records.

Jake Wadets, Shannon's manager said, "Shannon was 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. Many 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 up on the scene in the big leagues; Brenda Weiler and 3 Minute Hero, both Fargo-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 Courtes of Barking Dog Records had read about friends 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 a contract!

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

Jennifer Nelson wrote, in a March 26, 1996, article, "They're incredible. By far the best band I've seen in these 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 Hight 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, Hibbing, or Houston. 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 something 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 like the Fargo-Moorehead 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 wasn't 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 Bowling Center have all become havens for fresh, original Valley music. And, guess what, a lot of these places tell us to keep it up;" said Lady V. Their struggle, among others, brings to the public the reliability of that industry in this part of the country.

According to I-Sauce, however, that shouldn't be hard in the long run, because, as he says, "Rap is in everybody."

Modern Christian artists like Jim Villander and Dave Labben 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 coffee house circuit with news 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 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 pesky 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 MNU student and former lead singer and guitarist of The Velvett Lush, said, "The Reader is definitely something I look at weekly. Especially the Best Bet's 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
6TH 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
~ Lead/MoJo Pin, 9 pm @ The Westward Ho on Saturday, 9/11
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 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 scene. 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, 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 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 songwriting 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 then 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 to each member of her audience...songs that inspire with fierce energy, witty lyrics, and a rich mixture of contemporary folk, Southern country mandates, country twang, jazz vocal phrasing, and powerful, groove-oriented guitar work.”
By Steve Listopad
Staff Writer

Despite all your fears aside, Martin Zellar and the Hardways are not done with the upper Midwest anytime 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 Daddies, 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 to 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 Weurner, and Nick Card (also a former Gear Daddies), 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 embrace 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 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 up with a guitar and perform. I 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 sneakily wrote one 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’ third LP album which Zellar has always shied away from performing.

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Rogers & Hammerstein's
Cinderella
April 22-24, 29-May 2 & May 6-9
Music by Richard Rodgers
Book & Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

The timeless enchantment of a magical fairy tale is reborn with the Rogers & Hammerstein hallmarks of originality, charm and elegance. Enjoy the story of Cinderella who, with the aid of her Fairy Godmother, outwits her evil stepmother and step-sisters to win the admiration of the charming Prince. Musical highlights include, "In My Own Little Corner," "Do I Love You Because You’re Beautiful?", "Impossible," & "Stepsisters’ Lament." Directed by Bruce Timmer.

This show proves that dreams do come true.

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Watch for the announcement of our spectacular 1999-2000 Season! Reserve your membership by June 30 to receive the Early Bird Special.

333 4th St. S., Fargo
THE GREAT INDOORS
THE GREAT INDOORS

By Steve Listopead
Staff Writer

"Oh the weather outside is frightful..." Well, all right, spring is starting to rear its meany 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 3.

So what's gonna do? Stand on your roof against a wall of rain, eat the high-yielding, "Come on, better!" 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 Skateboard Laser Stomp, The Sports Bubble, Skatetown by Discounlant, 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 1/8 mile multi-level racing track, an 18-hole mini-golf course, softball and baseball batting cages, a kiddy racing track, a driving simulator, a go-kart, party rooms, archery and rifle target simulators, and over 90 arcade games. Also at Driverz are a golf pro shop, Bulldogger's Pizza and Taco John's. The next big addition to Driverz will be a climbing mountain, a kiddie 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. "I found 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 really happy," Johnson explained that their biggest competitors for the family entertainment center are movie theaters and bowling alleys.

Customers Sean Albertson, a student at Ben Franklin Jr. High School, and his friend Steven Vogel of Dake, ND, spent most of their afternoon steaming from one 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 interactive course would definitely be a great addition to so we came here instead, She said. "We're doing something really good, It's a fun place to go." When asked about how the golf game was going, she replied, "We're going to go for the big thousand."

The first big challenge Driverz will face to keep business up will be to get a good ballance. Buildings in the area are going to be a problem. But Johnson has already begun planning for that.

"Right now we're primarily a family place but we're working on having live music and update some games when the weather will be slower," he said. "This will come with the" college age people and will also give parents more to do while their kids are having fun. And what's it to be fun and but hard to be out.
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 Engebrect said. "When in-line skates first came out they had bolst 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. NW, 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 businesses 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 season 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.
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-
HIGH PLAINS
READER

Detroit Lakes
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 rotary he's planning to sell. That very large mass of condensation 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 underappreciated, 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 you slamming 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 mowing.

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 happening all over lake country. So let us begin our journey into the wet and wilderness...

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

"Annie's vocals just SHINE on this wonderful CD... husky tones express volumes of emotion that few other folk-oriented singers can these days!" - Improvjazzation Nation

Anishinaabe singer/songwriter Annie Humphrey sings insightful love songs and thought-provoking political anthems. Her contemporary style has an extra edge...a stronger-for-surviving aspect that provides deep feelings to the words. John Trudell contributed poetry and vocals.

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- The Spirit Room 111 Broadway, Fargo

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Annie Humphrey

Saturday, June 3rd at 8:00
Annie Humphrey will be performing at The Spirit Room
Admission $10.00
In summer, you'll find yourself feeling rather well-provisioned during the colder seasons. But if you have any doubts about the quality of your food, you may find that it has improved since you last visited.

**Know the Location**

Canyon, Desert Lake, both the Big and Little Desert Lake, are not connected but are both located near the west side of the park. This area is known as the Little Desert Lake, which is the larger of the two lakes. The desert lake is a large sedimentary lake and is located in the middle of the Colorado Plateau.

**Things to Do**

1. **Visit the Desert Lakes**
   - **Canyon, Desert Lake, and the Little Desert Lake**
   - **Fishing**
   - **Hiking**
   - **Camping**

2. **Explore the Desert Lakes**
   - **Visit the Desert Lakes**
   - **Canyon, Desert Lake, and the Little Desert Lake**
   - **Fishing**
   - **Hiking**
   - **Camping**

3. **Enjoy the Beauty of the Desert Lakes**
   - **Canyon, Desert Lake, and the Little Desert Lake**
   - **Fishing**
   - **Hiking**
   - **Camping**

4. **Visit the Desert Lakes and the Little Desert Lake**
   - **Fishing**
   - **Hiking**
   - **Camping**

5. **Enjoy the Beauty of the Desert Lakes**
   - **Canyon, Desert Lake, and the Little Desert Lake**
   - **Fishing**
   - **Hiking**
   - **Camping**

**Information for Visitors**

- **Location:** Desert Lake, Arizona
- **Hours:** 24 hours, year-round
- **Contact:** (928) 754-2134
- **Website:** [DesertLake.org](http://DesertLake.org)

**Fishing**

- **Best Time:** Spring and Fall
- **Equipment:** Rods, reels, tackle, bait, and lures
- **Guide:** (928) 754-2134

**Hiking**

- **Best Time:** Spring and Fall
- **Equipment:** Hiking shoes, water, sunscreen, and a map
- **Guide:** (928) 754-2134

**Camping**

- **Best Time:** Spring and Fall
- **Equipment:** Tent, sleeping bag, cooking equipment, and water
- **Guide:** (928) 754-2134
everything you ever wanted to know about ZORBAZ

By Zeave Lustepas: 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 1986, the hot spot in D.L. was a place called the Green Room. The Eiko’s 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 by serving pizza and beer. We wanted a nice, relaxed place where people could come in off the beach in their 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 ’70s and ’80s 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. Polican landed in 1986, Offenbarger opened in 1987, Cross Lake in 1988, Gull Lake in 1993, and the Milaca 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 store.

Other changes that happened along the way included the addition of Mexican food to the menu in 1995 with the encouragement of D.L. store owner Rick Jansen. The Ziper Macho Nachos quickly became one of Hanson’s biggest selling items. In 1995, 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 Polican 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 of the more interesting facts of their past.

How did you get the name Zorbaz?

“It came from the movie Zorba the Greek starring Alan Quinn who was a free spirit. Also Zorba the Greek goes along with Zorbaz on the Beach.”

How many Zorbaz cups have been sold?

“I would have to say 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 cup lying around.”

What’s the longest wait time in Zorbaz history?

“I remember one 4th of July in the 80’s we had 380 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 stricter drunk driving penalties. Today we see lines of 50 to 100 people on busy nights.”

What’s the busiest public 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 Islands

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Monday, July 3
3 Minute Hero

Friday, June 30
Dirty Word

Tuesday, July 4
Boogie Wonderland

Saturday, July 1
C.B.O.

Thursday, July 27
Johnny Holmes Band

Saturday, August 26
Dirty Word

[Schedule subject to change]

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