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Siouxland Life

A GUIDE FOR LIVING IN SIOUXLAND

LOOKING BACK

LONGTIME PHOTOGRAPHER
GEORGE LINDBLADE LOOKS BACK
ON A CAREER OF MEMORIES



WHEN DOG RACING RULED

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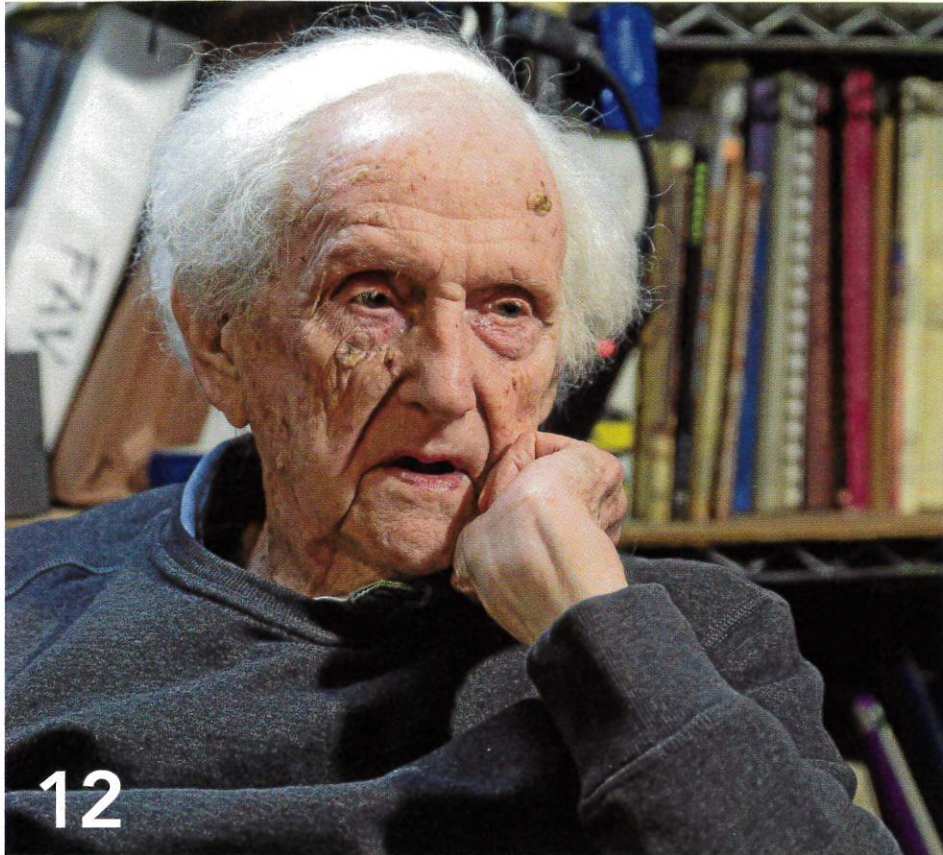


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Siouxland Life

While you're purging old clothes, souvenirs and pictures, we thought we'd go back and look at people, places and things who made Siouxland what it is. In this edition, we take a nostalgic look at Babe Ruth, 'Children of the Corn,' Sodrac Park and a host of restaurants that have remained on residents' minds. We also get the scoop on Sioux City Sarsaparilla and where it's really from, the new Morningside University Ambassador and, clang, clang, clang, the trolley business. Hop on board and remember with us.



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ON THE COVER

During the course of his career, George Lindblade has been an eyewitness to natural disasters, race riots and horrific acts of violence. On the other hand, the Sioux City-born photographer has even made friends with such show biz vets like Frank Sinatra, Bob Hope and the Marx Brothers. Photograph by Tim Hynds

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4 BABE RUTH PLAYED HERE

Does your home have historic significance? We've got one in Sioux City that boasted a famous visit



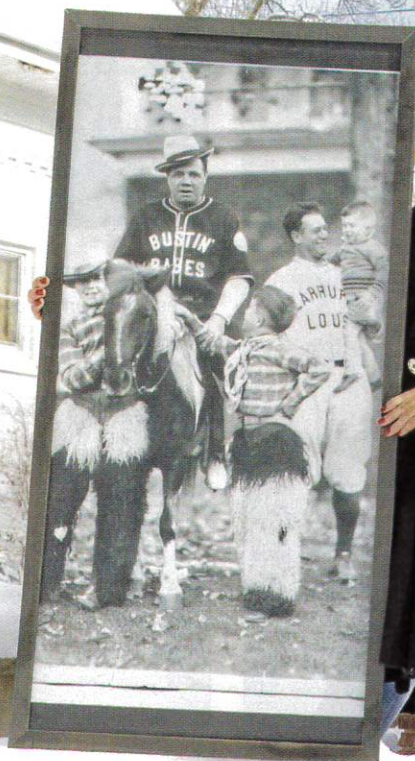
16 DOWNTOWN MALL

In order to compete with other retailing areas, downtown merchants created an outdoor mall designed to draw shoppers and new businesses.



28 'CHILDREN' SPROUTED HERE

The movie "Children of the Corn" was shot in Siouxland some 40 years ago. Find out what the experience was like.



Ashley Davis, a real estate agent with RE/MAX Experience, shows where this photo of baseball legend Babe Ruth was taken in 1927.

THE HOUSE OF RUTH



*The incredibly true
story of how a Sioux
City realtor purchased
a home made famous
by Babe Ruth*



Originally built in 1915, the house that Ashley Divis shares with her two teenage children has a unique history. Both Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig of the New York Yankees were houseguests during a brief visit to Sioux City.

Text by Earl Horlyk | Photographs by Jesse Brothers

In September 1927, Babe Ruth wasn't just one of the best-known baseball players in America. He was probably as celebrated as any movie star or head of state.

After all, the pitcher for the World Series champion New York Yankees was having a spectacular year, nabbing a record-breaking 60 home runs in a single season.

So what did Ruth — who was nicknamed both “The Bambino” and “The Sultan of Swat” — do to celebrate his victories? He went on what had been called “the mother of all barnstorming tours and a three-week victory lap.”

This included a stopover at the Sioux City home of John Donohue, owner of a livestock company and a local promoter of sorts.

Donohue — who was known to his friends as “Jiggs” — met with sports agent Christy Walsh. Together, the two men arranged an engagement for Ruth as well as his teammate Lou Gehrig — who had been selected the American League's most valuable player — to play an exhibition game at Sioux City's Stockyards Park a mere 10 days after the Yanks swept the Pittsburgh Pirates to win the World Series.

While the teammates were in town, they were also invited to meet Donohue's six young children.





Yes, that is Babe Ruth in the "Bustin' Babe" baseball jersey and Lou Gehrig, in "Larrupin' Lou" jersey, in the background holding a baby. The New York Yankee legends were both attending a backyard party in Sioux City on Oct. 18, 1927, less than two weeks after the Yankees finished a World Series sweep against the Pittsburgh Pirates. PROVIDED

A HOME WITH A STORIED PAST

Indeed, the visit by Ruth and Gehrig (aka "The Iron Horse") has been immortalized in a black-and-white photograph which was taken in the backyard of the Donohue Family's 37th and Jackson streets home.

Nearly a century later, the house is still instantly identifiable by its brick exterior and second-floor balcony.

"The first floor even has the same windows that are original to the house," Ashley Divis, who currently resides in the home with her teenage children, said. "The tree in the photo is long gone but I'm guessing the backyard is remarkably similar to the way it looked in 1927."

Divis, a Realtor with RE/MAX Experience, had no idea about her home's historical significance when she purchased it nearly four years ago.

"All I knew was that it was built around 1915 and had plenty of old-fashioned character," she explained.

That is, until Divis performed a Google search on her home's colorful past.

RIDING THE RAILS WITH THE BAMBINO

"I found several sources that had chronicled Babe Ruth's Sioux City visit," she said.

This included a chapter in "The Big Fella: Babe Ruth and The World He Created," a book by former Washington Post sports writer Jane Leavy.

According to Leavy's book, published in 2018, Ruth traveled by train to several Midwestern cities including Kansas City, where he was photographed holding a Black baby at the Wheatley-Provident Hospital for Negro Children.

Leavy said this created a storm of controversy during the less-enlightened 1920s.

After that, Ruth and Gehrig appeared at exhibition games and community events in Omaha, Des Moines and, finally, Sioux City.

MEET THE 'BUSTIN' BABES' AND THE 'LARRUPIN' LOU'

In Oct. 18, 1927's Sioux City Journal, the headline read: "5,000 S.C. FANS SEE BABE RUTH HIT HOMER."

Ruth and a team of area baseball players donned uniforms with the name "Bustin' Babes," while Gehrig and another batch of Siouxlanders took the field as the "Larrupin' Lous."

Indeed, this was how Ruth and Gehrig were dressed when they were guests at the home of 'Jiggs' Donohue, his wife Jo and their children Jimmie, Phil, Jack, Kenny and four-month-old twins Tommy and Joanne.



These windows in the dining room are still original from the time baseball legend Babe Ruth visited this home on Jackson Street in 1927, according to current owner Ashley Davis.

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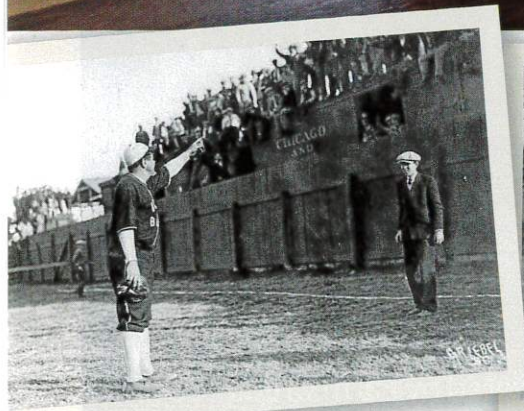


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Left: Babe Ruth gestures to fans standing on rail cars in the outfield of Stockyards Park on Oct. 18, 1927. Ruth's Bustin' Babes team slugged it out that day with Lou Gehrig's Larrupin' Lou's. Just 10 days earlier, the two Hall of Famers led the New York Yankees to a four-game sweep of the Pittsburgh Pirates in the World Series.
Right: Babe Ruth rounds first base as Lou Gehrig watches on Oct. 18, 1927, at Stockyards Park in Sioux City.
 PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE SIOUX CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM

Divis showed off an enlarged photograph of Gehrig, the Donohue kids as well as an incongruous Ruth, sitting on top of a pony.

"When you think of Babe Ruth, you think of him as being a strapping man," Divis said, taking a close look at the photo. "Maybe it's the angle of the camera, but Babe doesn't look that big here."

On closer inspection, Ruth also looks very uncomfortable on Molly, which was the name of Donohue children's pet pony.

"Babe doesn't look happy on the pony and the pony doesn't look happy with Babe on his back," Divis noted with a smile.

Ashley Divis, a real estate agent with RE/MAX Experience, had no idea her Jackson Street house had a celebrated history. When the home was owned by a prominent Sioux City businessman, it was the site of a party attended by Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, members of the New York Yankees famed "Murderer's Row."



The front room of Ashley Divis' home reveals the hardwood flooring and the fireplace that was original when it was built in 1915. The Jackson Street house has been Divis' home for the past four years.



Ashley Divis' home is both comfortable and in keeping with its more than 100 year history. The living room is dominated by a large sofa. The windows, tray ceiling and hardwood floors are original to the house.

RELIVING AN EVENTFUL AFTERNOON FROM 96 YEARS AGO

Always a bit of a history buff, Divis was intrigued at the thought of two legendary members of the New York Yankees' famous "Murderer's Row" in her backyard, however briefly.

She was also amazed at how well the incident was chronicled.

For the sake of this story, Divis borrowed the photograph of Ruth on top of the pony from its permanent home at Sioux City's Arena Sports Academy.

"I believe the Arena got it from the Sioux City Public Museum," she said.

A SOIREE AS SEEN ON TV

Incredibly enough, there is even

16-millimeter film of Ruth and Gehrig's visit to the Donohue's home. Clips from the film can be seen in "When It Was a Game 2" and "Babe Ruth," which were documentaries broadcast on HBO in the 1990s.

Hoping to learn more about the long-ago party, Divis reached out to the only surviving Donohue child by phone a few years ago.

"I spoke briefly to Joanne Donohue Sanderson, who, with her twin Tommy, was the youngest of the Donohue children," she said. "Joanne was very nice to talk to but she was only 4 months old when Ruth and Gehrig came to the house."

Still, it was part of the Donohue family lore for generations to come.

"Can you imagine what it must've been like to have two of the best-known men in America in your backyard for an afternoon party?" Divis said, shaking her head in amazement. "Joanne remembered being told they were very friendly and funny."

A HOUSE WITH CHARACTER, BOTH INSIDE AND OUT

Judging by the home's exquisite crown molding, hardwood floors and elaborate fireplace, the Donohues' home was likely a showplace back in the day.

"John Donohue was a prominent business owner in the livestock field when the Sioux City Stockyards was very prominent," Divis said. "I'm guessing he was well-to-do."



The fireplace is shown with runes lettering enscribed on the stone floor.

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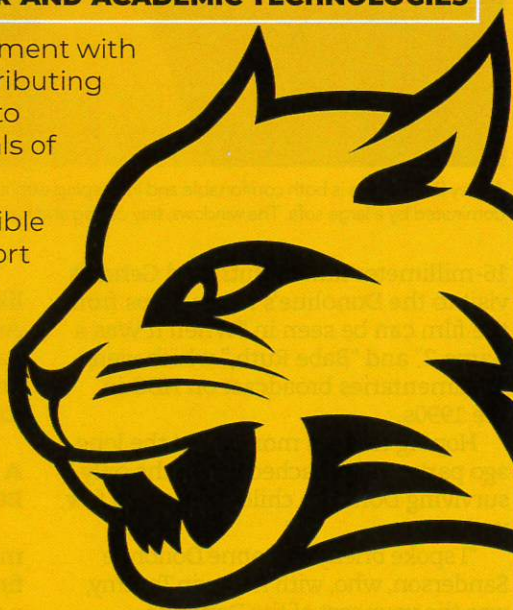
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Also having a house on Sioux City's upper Northside was very prestigious. "Nowadays, people buy houses on the Northside of town because the homes are older and have plenty of character," Divis said. "Back in the 1920s, this was a new section of Sioux City. People were buying houses here because they were recently built."

WHERE MEMORIES AND HISTORY WAS MADE

Divis said she chose the house because of its old-fashioned charm.

"You can tell how well the Donohue family and every subsequent resident maintained the integrity of this house," she said.

Divis also speculates that the home has been the site of many happy memories. Though, perhaps, none so famous as when the "Sultan of Swat" and the "Pride of the Yankees" came by for a visit.

"Every time I look out my window, I can say 'Oh, that's probably where Babe Ruth or Lou Gehrig once stood,'" Divis allowed with a smile. "That's pretty cool."



The goal of the downtown trolley is to help connect residents and visitors to entertainment and shopping locations throughout downtown. **PROVIDED**

CLANG, CLANG, CLANG

Trolley provides Sioux City residents, visitors with unique way to explore downtown

Text by Dolly A. Butz

Dave Becker is used to getting lots of looks when he drives a Hummer limousine down the streets of Sioux City. But after the owner of Black Tie Limousine & Shuttle purchased a more than 20-year-old trolley, he was somewhat surprised by the attention the nostalgic vehicle drew.

Becker bought the red trolley, which features original brass and woodwork, in Des Moines. He said people rent it for occasions such as weddings and anniversaries. Since 2022, Becker's trolley has also been offering residents and visitors a unique mode of transportation with which to explore downtown Sioux City.

"The reaction has been very pleasant," said Becker, whose trolley has appeared in local parades, too.

After TravelPlus, which previously provided trolley service, closed, Downtown Partners began contracting with Black Tie Limousine & Shuttle. Ragen Cote, Downtown Partners' executive director, said trolley service has been provided in Sioux City since 2015. Downtown Partners is an

organization that promotes business interests in the historic core of the city. The goal of the downtown trolley is to help connect residents and visitors to entertainment and shopping locations throughout downtown.

Cote said people can park their cars and ride around on the trolley. A map, which is posted on Downtown Partners' website, shows the trolley's routes and stops.

The Downtown Route is 2.87 miles. Stops along this route are: Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Sioux City, Historic Pearl Street District, Orpheum Theatre, RE/MAX City Centre and Sioux City Convention Center/Promenade Theatre. The Events Loop, which stops at the Tyson Events Center, is 0.7 miles.

The trolley runs from 7 p.m. to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays from Memorial Day through Oct. 1. It is operational, weather permitting, from 7 p.m. to midnight on Saturdays until Dec. 31.

"It's really nice to have that mode of transportation. It's been a hit," Cote said. "It's a great service."

Becker said the trolley, which is diesel-powered, seats roughly 30 people. He operates the trolley, at times, and also has specific drivers who take it out. In order to drive the trolley, Becker said a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) is needed.

"It's a lot easier (to drive) than my limos. It turns a lot better, even though it's longer. I used it on the Tour of Homes. There were some houses up on the north side that were almost impossible for a large vehicle to get up there. The trolley did just fine," he said. "At first, it's a little intimidating because it's so big and you're high up. But you get used to it."

Even if Becker hadn't been awarded the contract from Downtown Partners for trolley service, he said he still would have bought the vehicle.

"It's historic. It's just like you're going back in time when you're riding on it. A lot of towns don't have it, so I'm glad Sioux City has the downtown trolley," he said.

For more information on the trolley or to book it for your next adventure, call 712-274-4614.



Longtime filmmaker and photographer George Lindblade recounts the first time he captured a major fire on film. "I was 9 years old at the time," the now 86-year-old Lindblade said.

LENS CRAFTER

George Lindblade has seen life from the back of his camera for more than 75 years. He's not done yet

Text by Earl Horlyk | Photographs by Tim Hynds

Any conversation with George Lindblade can be derailed by squeals emanating from the ever-present police scanner.

That's because the veteran Sioux City-based photographer and documentarian has been chronicling the community, apparently, since he was 9 years old.

"The first big fire I photographed took place right by my house," Lindblade said, reminiscing in the artfully cluttered back office of his GR Lindblade & Co., which shares space with his wife Lou Ann

Lindblade's Sioux City Gifts. "When the Unitarian Church caught on fire, I was there before any of the firetrucks."

"From that moment on, I was hooked on covering news as it happened," the now 86-year-old said with a passing glance. "I always wanted to be where the action was."

BEING ON THE SCENE OF BREAKING NEWS

It's definitely true that for the past 75 years, Lindblade has been an eyewitness to natural disasters, race riots and horrific

acts of violence. He was also instrumental in the early careers of legendary anchorman Tom Brokaw, Sioux City-born animator Ron Clements ("The Little Mermaid," "Aladdin," "Hercules") and TV director John Behring ("Blue Bloods," "Law & Order," "FBI: International").

Lindblade's photos have captured everybody from Frank Sinatra in Palm Springs to diamond mine workers in Venezuela to the colorful characters who congregated on Sioux City's historic Fourth Street back when it was "the bad side of town."

PIONEER IN TELEVISION'S JOURNALISM

However, his initial claim to fame occurred in the infancy of television news.

"I went to work for KTIV in 1954, becoming the first cameraman the station ever employed," Lindblade said.

What was the best thing about photographing television news in the early days?

"We were all pioneers because nobody knew what the hell we were doing," Lindblade replied.

And what was the worst thing about being an intrepid TV journalist?

"Nobody would take you seriously," Lindblade said. "If you went to the Sioux City police station, the detectives wouldn't even talk to you until the newspaper guys showed up. You see, newspaper represented the press. TV, on the other hand, was a flash-in-the-pan."

Nevertheless, he was hooked on the new visual medium and was anxious to try his luck out in a warmer climate.

A SUNNY SOJOURN IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

"In the 1960s, I settled in Cathedral City (a suburb of Palm Springs), bought a camera store and began taking on assignments (as a contract cameraman) for NBC television," Lindblade said.

Then considered a playground for A-list stars, Palm Springs provided an opportunity to rub shoulders with glittery residents.

That included Frank Sinatra, whom Lindblade described as "nice and generous to a fault" as well as Bob Hope, whom he described as being "not very nice and not very generous."

"I met Bob Hope through his script supervisor, who was a girl from South Sioux City," Lindblade said. "I've always said to make it in business, it's not what you know, it's who you know. I connected with Bob Hope through this girl."

Lindblade even befriended the Marx Brothers, who all lived in Palm Springs at the time.

"Harpo and his wife Susan were my favorites," he said. "Harpo's comedic schtick was never talking on stage. Off stage, the guy would talk your ear off."

Lindblade must've had an affinity for comedians. He also enjoyed a friendship with funnyman Red Skelton.

"Red would rehearse and tape his TV show in a hurry at CBS and drive back to Palm Springs, which he preferred to Hollywood," Lindblade said. "The guy was just salt-of-the-earth and completely unpretentious."

While he enjoyed the California lifestyle, Lindblade was ready to return home.



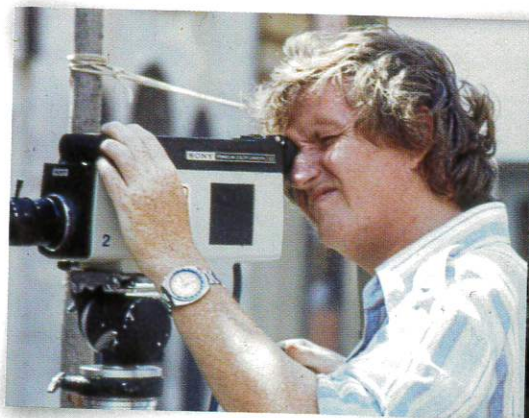
George Lindblade, a long-time Sioux City and California television and still photographer, holds out a photo of him working behind a camera while filming a commercial at the Sioux City Stockyards. He is shown during an interview at Sioux City Gifts, a gift store and photo studio that he and his wife, Lou Ann, own.



George Lindblade is shown in this 1950s photo. As a cameraman at KTIV-TV at the time, Lindblade uses both a still camera and a movie camera while covering the news. PHOTO COURTESY GEORGE LINDBLADE



Inside George Lindblade's memorabilia-filled office are photos, films and artifacts that come from a nearly 75-year career as a cameraman.



George Lindblade is shown in this undated photo. PHOTO COURTESY GEORGE LINDBLADE

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SIOUX CITY NEWS

Upon returning to Sioux City, Lindblade went to work at KMEG-TV before moving to KCAU-TV, where he was in charge of the station's creative services department.

"(Station manager) Bill Turner was intent on making KCAU the best ABC affiliate in the country," he said. "(Turner) had that ambition and he made it work."

It helped that Turner also had a healthy budget.

"The 1970s was the golden age of



George Lindblade is shown in Hong Kong in this photo from the 1970s. Lindblade was employed at KCAU-TV in Sioux City at the time. PHOTO COURTESY GEORGE LINDBLADE

TV news in Sioux City," Lindblade said. "I remember we had 47 people who were working in the newsroom at the time. Nowadays, they don't even have that many people working in the entire station."

In the end, Lindblade covered everything from 1973's Wounded Knee incident when approximately 200 Oglala Lakota members seized and occupied Wounded Knee, South Dakota, to stories as far away as Hong Kong.



George Lindblade is shown at KTIV Television in this photo shot shortly after the station first went on the air in 1954. PHOTO COURTESY GEORGE LINDBLADE

"Turner never said no to anything," he said. "Turner wanted the best and that's what we gave him."

According to Lindblade, Turner also had one strict rule.

NO 'LIFERS' ALLOWED

"Bill didn't want any lifers," he said. "You learned the ropes at KCAU and, then, you moved on to bigger and better things."

That was the case with Ron Clements, whom Lindblade said started working at the TV station while still in high school.

"I think we all realized how talented Ron was at a very early age," he said. "Ron came from very modest means and he asked us if we could lend him some film to use."

"Ron used the film to animate stuff that later became the basis of (Disney's) 'The Black Cauldron' and 'The Great Mouse Detective,'" Lindblade remembered. "It wasn't too long after that when he left us for California."

To be perfectly honest, Lindblade did use his California connections in setting Clements up with a gig at the Hanna-Barbera TV animation studio.

"We had a lot of very talented people who've passed through Sioux City on their way to success on either the East or West Coasts," Lindblade said. "Must be something in the water."

Taking advice from Turner, Lindblade, too, left KCAU for greener pastures.

A CONSUMATE NEWSMAN BECOME A DOCUMENTARIAN

"I began G.R. Lindblade & Co. in 1982, doing still and video assignments for various businesses," he said. "I'm also involved with a business that provides props for movies and television."

If that isn't enough, Lindblade has made countless documentaries that examine the history of Sioux City.



Vintage cameras once used by George Lindblade, a long-time Sioux City and California television and still photographer, are shown on a shelf during an interview at Sioux City Gifts, a gift store and photo studio that he and his wife, Lou Ann, own.

Often in collaboration with his wife Lou Ann, Lindblade's films have covered everything from the restoration of the Orpheum Theatre to the loss of meat production at the Stockyards.

Seated at a table inside his office,

Lindblade continued to hold court with a bottled cappuccino drink in one hand and the buzzing police scanner in the other.

"I've always wanted to be where the action was," he said with a shrug. "I've never wanted to miss a thing."



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Haley Aguirre shows artist's renderings of the then-proposed Fourth Street Mall. **TIM HYND, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL**

WHEN DOWNTOWN WAS 'MALLED'

Vision for Sioux City's Fourth Street Mall never fully realized

Text by Dolly A. Butz

The Fourth Street Mall was a 1970s urban renewal project that had potential, but that potential was never fully realized.

As part of the project, Brandeis, an Omaha-based department store chain, planned to build at Fourth and Jackson streets. Toy National Bank and Morey's and Raymond's, a men's clothing store, were among the buildings that were razed to make way for it. A hole was also dug in 1976 in preparation for construction.

"In what is now the Ho-Chunk Centre, the city had cleared all of the buildings. We have pictures of most of them coming down. It was actually a real fight to save the Badgerow Building," said Haley Aguirre, the Sioux City Public Museum's archival records clerk, who noted the Badgerow held First Federal Bank at that time. "So they leveled all of those and left a big hole, because they were going to put Brandeis there."

Colorful artist renderings depict a bustling city center, where shoppers mill

about outdoor plazas positioned in the middle of the department stores. The mall, as drawn, featured small pools, greenspace, trees and benches.

"It was an urban space to encourage people to spend time downtown. We weren't the only player in the game. Lots of cities were doing this," Aguirre said.

The plan fell apart the following year. Brandeis pulled out of the deal, after the Sioux City Council decided to allow construction of Southern Hills Mall on the city's east side.

What was left was an eyesore that locals called "Lake Brandeis," a hole filled with stagnant water and a lot covered with weeds. Someone even reportedly put carp in the hole.

In 1978, the city declared the lot a nuisance and cleaned it up. Eventually, the \$18 million Terra Centre — now the Ho-Chunk Centre — was built on the site.

"Urban renewal is controversial because it's this idea of removing urban blight, removing old crusty buildings, buildings that are falling apart. Sioux City had some urban blight," Aguirre said. "There was this idea that we were going to progress and bring all this up and totally revitalize Sioux City's downtown. The idea was there. In the execution, people started to question: does change equal progress? Are you actually improving things or are you just changing them?"

BREAKING DOWN THE MALL

Aguirre said the mall can be best thought of in three separate parts:

The first was the "permanent" portion, built in 1974 between Jackson and Jones streets (700 block of Fourth Street was built first) and Nebraska and Jackson streets (the 600 block was built shortly after). Fourth Street was completely removed in the permanent area to make way for the mall. Throughout the mall's lifetime, the north-south streets always went through, with the mall stopping at each intersection and picking up at the next block, according to Aguirre. The section between Jackson and Jones was mainly to service the new Hilton Hotel, Riviera Theater and the Federal Plaza Building, all which are still in that block. The section between Nebraska and Jackson streets was to service the new JCPenney building and the aforementioned Brandeis store, which was never built.

Beginning in the spring of 1974, the Chamber of Commerce and Junior League (Junior Chamber of Commerce) launched a program called Project PEACH (Planned Environmental Action Can Help).



Sioux City's Fourth Street Mall is shown in these historical photos from the Sioux City Public Museum. **SIoux CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM**



A copy of an artist's rendering of the Fourth Street Mall on Fourth Street looking West at Douglas Street is shown at the Sioux City Public Museum. The Fourth Street Mall was part of a downtown revitalization project in the 1970s. The last vestiges of the mall, the Penney Plaza where the museum building is now, were removed in the early 2000s. **SIoux CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM**

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Haley Aguirre points to a photo of a portion of the Fourth Street Mall being built, 2000s.
TIM HYND, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

According to Aguirre, Project PEACH was behind the “temporary” mall between Pierce and Nebraska (the 500 block) and Douglas and Pierce (the 400 block). Aguirre refers to this part of the mall as “temporary,” because portions of Fourth Street were not removed. Although large, round planters blocked off the street at each intersection, wooden boardwalks and platforms made space for people to walk on and greenspace areas were filled with dirt and sodded, the street was still there underneath. In some places where the concrete showed through, she said it was painted for decoration. This part of the mall provided access to the smaller retail shops and major stores.

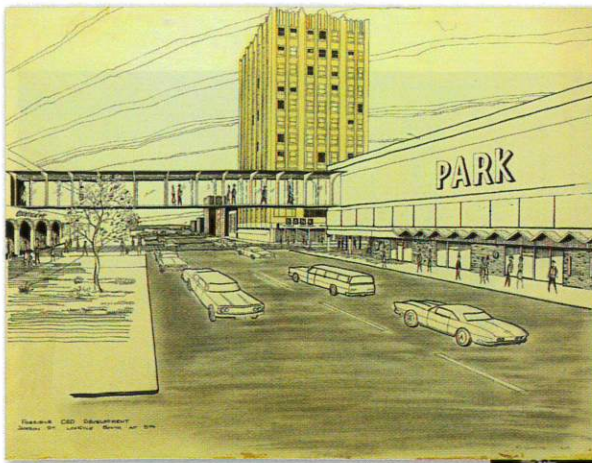
The last portions of the mall were to go in at either end of what was already in place, between Pearl and Douglas (300 block) and between Jones and Virginia (800 and 900 blocks). These portions coincided with a Bomgaars (now part of the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino’s parking lot) and the Sioux City Convention Center. In the Bomgaars area, Fourth Street was vacated and a greenspace with benches and a winding sidewalk was implemented. Rather than putting in a mall by the Convention Center, this portion of Fourth Street was cleared for parking, a vehicle drive-up, and a small plaza specifically designated for the center.



Sioux City’s Fourth Street Mall is shown in these historical photos from the Sioux City Public Museum.
SIOUX CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM

“There was this idea to revitalize and continue a retail space downtown, rather than having to deal with the streets, the street cars, all the parking and everything that you were having to deal with back in the day,” Aguirre said. “It was all in this spirit of progress —

this is something that the Chamber of Commerce has used frequently. It was this idea of, in the very, very early days of what we now know as the indoor mall, to try to save downtown from major shopping centers and suburban centers like that.”



A copy of an artist's rendering of Jackson Street looking South at Fifth Street looking West at Douglas Street. **SIoux CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM**

A DIFFERENT TIME PERIOD

Fourth Street was a natural choice for such a city center with retail space that people walked around. Initially, Aguirre said the city sent out bids for retailers. She said they learned rather quickly that retailers, such as Brandeis and JCPenney, weren't interested in already established buildings. They desired new spaces.

Aguirre said Brandeis wanted its own department store on the mall with an enclosed glass skylight plaza, which would extend over the street and have viewing platforms and retail spaces.

"This Brandeis Plaza was going to be amazing. It was going to have skylights and be something much more like I would associate with a much larger city," she said. "As urban renewal continued, just in general, people started running out of money. Cities started running out of money. Retailers started running out of money. Plans were made and fell through, eventually."

Back in the 1970s, Aguirre said the mindset was "just replace, replace, replace." She said people didn't really have the connection to historic buildings they do today, although she said the historic preservation commission existed at that time.

"You don't see people really fighting to save something like Historic Fourth Street — a completely revitalized and amazing retail and shopping center and mostly restaurants, today," she said. "The initial idea was to tear all of that out, because all of those buildings were torn apart, and totally make that the parking lot for the Convention Center, which was supposed to be much bigger than it ended up being."

Aguirre said it wasn't until the 1980s, after Aalfs Manufacturing Company restored its original facade that people began to recognize the "really neat stuff" already existed in Sioux City. While Aguirre said tearing down



Sioux City's Fourth Street Mall. **SIoux CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM**



Sioux City's Fourth Street Mall is shown in these historical photos from the Sioux City Public Museum. **SIoux CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM**

historic buildings is a "tragedy," she also recognizes that the late 1960s and early 1970s was a different time period.

"I'm a history person. I have to advocate for the historicity of our town and our buildings," she said. "But, at the same time, you read these design guides and you try to put yourself into the mindset and you see what they were trying to do. I remember shopping as a kid at JCPenney. You got to go to the big city and park in the supercool parking ramp and walk across the skywalk. It was just on a smaller scale than what

they intended."

Concrete planters, metal railings, wheelchair ramps and greenspaces in front of the former JCPenney, which now just so happens to house the Sioux City Public Museum, were the last portion of the Fourth Street Mall to be removed.

"That was where all of the concrete was, where the street was truly and totally removed. Fourth Street had to be completely cut through and completely repaved," Aguirre said. "I want to say the very last vestiges of the mall were removed in 2008 or 2009."



Bette, Morningside University's mascot dog and ambassador dog-in-training, is shown in the Krone Advising Center where her owner, Alex Watters, back, works.

MORNINGSIDE'S BEST BETTE

Animal ambassador helps students relieve stress

Text by Caitlin Yamada | Photographs by Tim Hynds

Bette's favorite toy is anything that crinkles. To her, tissues from the trash are a delicacy. She loves to harass the campus squirrels and rolling in the snow is her happy place.

But Bette's favorite job is being the Morningside University animal ambassador.

Bette, a 2-year-old golden retriever, has been chosen to serve as Morningside University's first animal ambassador. Bette's job is to be an on-campus presence, available for students, faculty and staff to pet and spend time with during the day.

Bette is owned by Alex Watters, Morningside's alumni engagement director and Sioux City Council member.

She can be seen in the Krone Advising Center and around campus most days of the week. With her own office hours and fans, Bette has become a fond member of the Morningside community.

Bette is from a breeder in Kentucky. Watters is familiar with Bette's grandmother, and when the breeder announced they would be having one last litter with that bloodline, Watters was contacted to see if he was interested.

Watters picked up Bette on Valentine's Day 2022. As he started bringing her around campus more often and introducing her to the campus community, the staff at the advising center began discussing what

it would look like to have a service animal on campus.

Erin Edlund, vice president for Morningside engagement, said they saw how students, faculty and staff were reacting to her presence and the comfort she brought people.

Throughout the nation, more and more colleges and universities are offering on-campus therapy dogs as a way to help students cope with mental health issues and college-related stress.

While Morningside has offered on-campus dog events during finals week, the past few years it has been canceled last minute and is only offered for a temporary amount of time.

Edlund said once they got the go-ahead, they created a sign on the door of the Krone Center to tell students and staff when Bette was in and out of the office.

Bette's first official day was in September. Since then, she has amassed quite the following, with many students stopping by each day to say hello before classes and exams.

Edlund said when asking students what they like about Morningside, the number one aspect is that they feel the campus is like a family.



Alex Watters pets his dog, Bette, who serves as Morningside University's ambassador dog and therapy dog-in-training.

"To have this dog that's sort of the family dog, just felt right," she said. "It's very much in line with our overall culture and what our students feel and experience here."

Edlund said many students who visit talk about their family dogs at home and share how Bette has made them feel less homesick. Other students stop by before or after exams to destress.

She said one student stopped by after learning her family dog had been put down.

"She got on the couch with Bette and the tears started, she petted Bette," she said. "She started to talk about her dog and by the time she left, she was better, you could physically see that she was better."

Edlund shared another story of a student who showed up and laid on the floor with Bette. She said the student needed a break and some time to decompress.

She said the mental health crisis in the country is serious and there are still stigmas around seeking help and what help is offered.

Watters added many students stop by just to pet Bette for a few minutes before going on their way, and it's unspoken that they just needed a few minutes to decompress.

"If we can add one more thing for students so that they have a way to defuse their tension, to try to relieve some of that stress, or anxiety, this is a simple thing to do," Edlund said. "It's such a generous gift and we're so grateful for it."

Edlund and Watters said the goal is for Bette's presence to be expanded to admissions visits and events throughout the community. If the program is successful, Edlund said there is a chance the university could get a second animal ambassador.

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Meghan Eisma, a mental health therapist for New Beginnings, UnityPoint Health — St. Luke's outpatient therapy program, looks out her office window in early January.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Therapist discusses seasonal affective disorder symptoms and treatments

Text & Photographs by Dolly A. Butz

Take a brisk walk with your four-legged friend. Turn on a light therapy lamp. Sit by a window and soak up some rays instead of hunkering down this winter. Your mental health could benefit from it.

The American Psychiatric Association reports that about 5% of people living in the United States suffer from seasonal affective disorder (SAD), or the "winter blues." This form of depression, which is associated with changes in seasons, can leave a person feeling fatigued, irritable and lacking in motivation. SAD can also negatively impact an individual's sleep cycle and lead to an increase or decrease in appetite.

"It is a type of recurrent major depressive disorder, and it has episodes of depression that occur during the same sort of season yearly," said Meghan Eisma, a mental health therapist for New

SAD SYMPTOMS

SAD symptoms
Difficulty concentrating
Fatigue
Lack of motivation
Increased appetite
Carbohydrate cravings
Trouble sleeping
Irritability
Depression
Isolating from friends and family
Weight gain

Beginnings, UnityPoint Health — St. Luke's outpatient therapy program. "It's different from major depressive disorder in that seasonal affective disorder has times of full remission."

According to Eisma, seasonal affective disorder can impact people in the summer, as well as in the winter.

"When you're seeing a mental health professional about it, what they're looking for is that you're having these episodes of times where you're experiencing those depressive symptoms and, then, times when you're not at all," she said. "It definitely can be in the winter or more so in the summer. They look for it over a two-year pattern."

Eisma said SAD isn't common in children, but she noted that research shows that women seem to be more susceptible to it than men. She said symptoms associated with SAD include fatigue, low energy, low mood, lacking motivation, increased sleep and drowsiness, losing interest in things that used to bring you joy, increased appetite for carbohydrates, weight gain and increased irritability.

For those who suffer from SAD in the winter, Eisma said symptoms appear when the days are shorter and there's less daylight.

"It ends up triggering a chemical change in your brain, specifically in your melatonin and serotonin levels, which lead to those symptoms of depression," she said.

While Eisma said there isn't necessarily anything you can do to prevent SAD, she said there are ways to reduce symptoms. She said getting more exposure to daylight and sunlight, even when it's cold, is beneficial.

"There's also light therapy. A light box or a light therapy lamp is used to help improve circadian rhythm, like your sleep cycle, which is thrown off with decreased times of daylight," she explained.



"It is a type of recurrent major depressive disorder, and it has episodes of depression that occur during the same sort of season yearly."

MEGHAN EISMA,
mental health therapist for
New Beginnings, UnityPoint Health

"Cognitive behavioral therapy and interpersonal therapy can help relieve symptoms, as well."

Eisma said cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) focuses on modifying dysfunctional emotions, behaviors and thoughts by integrating and uprooting negative thoughts and irrational beliefs.

"It basically just helps change your

thought process. So take those negative thoughts and really change them into more positive thoughts," she said.

"Interpersonal therapy, it just focuses on relieving symptoms by reliving your interpersonal function."

Oftentimes, Eisma said a primary care physician or psychiatrist will prescribe an antidepressant just for the season to a patient who has a history of SAD. She said the patient may start taking the medication in September or October and discontinue it come April.

As soon as symptoms of SAD begin to surface, Eisma said people should reach out to a provider for help. She said they can call St. Luke's New Beginnings program at 712-279-3906. She noted there are a number of mental health services providers in the area, including Sioux Rivers Regional Mental Health & Disabilities Services, Siouxland Community Health Center and Siouxland Mental Health Center. She said the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is another option.

"If you ever have thoughts of harming yourself or anyone else, directly come to the emergency department," she said.



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In addition to providing Community-Based Neurobehavioral Services and Residential Rehabilitation Services, OU also provides Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) to children and adults with special needs. Individuals eligible for waiver programs can access services for a predetermined number of hours each month, set by the individual's caseworker. These services are offered at the Opportunities Unlimited Community Center, out in the community, and in the

privacy of the person served's home. OU also has two HCBS homes for individuals requiring assistance with skills needed to live in a more independent setting.

The Employment Services Department offers many vocational services to individuals with special needs to access meaningful employment.

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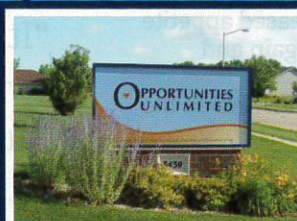
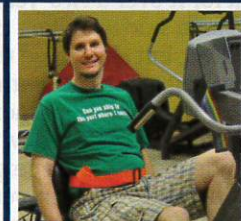
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SIoux CITY JOURNAL ARCHIVES

Greyhound races at North Sioux City's Sodrac Park are shown in this photo, taken in 1991. By the time this photo was taken, live dog races at Sodrac didn't have much time left.

WHEN RACING WAS THE RAGE

Sodrac reigned supreme when gambling was only allowed at racetracks

Text by Mason Dockter

In the long-ago days when gambling was confined to racetracks, Sodrac reigned supreme.

The Sodrac Park greyhound track in North Sioux City, just off the southbound lanes of Interstate 29, opened in 1955. Sources differ on the meaning of the Sodrac name — it was an abbreviation either for the Southern Dakota Racing Club or the South Dakota Racing Commission; archival materials exist to support both possibilities.

In the 1950s, Sodrac was one of three racetracks just outside Sioux City — and outside Iowa state lines — along with the Tri-State horse track two miles north of Sodrac, and the Atokad horse track in

South Sioux City. Gambling was illegal in Iowa at the time, but South Dakota and Nebraska allowed gambling at racetracks.

Atokad is the only one that remains, though races are held there only once a year; its enormous grandstands have been replaced with modest bleacher seats.

Greyhound racing (and to a greater extent, horse racing) was hugely popular in the middle of the last century, in part because it was the only legally sanctioned form of gambling in states that allowed it. Smaller greyhound and horse racetracks entered a terminal decline around the time that states began loosening their gambling laws, permitting casinos and

lotteries.

When the 60-day greyhound racing season closed at the end of Sodrac's first summer, the parimutuel handle (the sum of all wagers) came out to more than \$3.1 million, described as an "astounding figure" in contemporary news coverage. On the final night of that season, Sept. 15, 1955, a record \$120,520 passed through the betting windows, surpassing the record set the night before of \$101,000.

The annual handle peaked at around \$26 million in 1984; a rapid reversal of fortune set in not long after that high watermark. The track reportedly welcomed as many as 25 to 28 busloads of gamblers a night in its better days.

The annual betting handle at North Sioux City's Sodrac Park peaked in 1984 at roughly \$26 million, not adjusted for inflation. SIOUX CITY JOURNAL ARCHIVES



By then Sodrac was on death's doorstep. Vince Wuebker worked at the track as a young man during its latter years, in the late 1980s and early 1990s; his job title for the first two years was public relations ("I don't know what my job was," he said, but it involved some writing and also running bets). He later became the track's announcer after Donaldson left.

"I always called it the Fenway of dog tracks, because it was so old," said Wuebker, now 57 and a resident of Fargo, North Dakota.

"Sodrac was just, in a good way, it was a dump," he added.

NOT THE FIRST GREYHOUND TRACK

Sodrac was not the first dog track to operate in North Sioux City — another had operated near the airfield there during the mid-1930s. (North Sioux City at that time was called Stevens, South Dakota.) That dog track, operated by a firm called the Dakota Racing Stables and Amusements Company, opened in the summer of 1934.

On its busier days the track reportedly attracted more than 3,000 people with as many as eight races a day, according to contemporary Journal coverage.

A month after that track opened, in August 1934, the Associated Press reported that the legendary bank robber Baby Face Nelson — who was gunned down three months later — was spotted at the dog track. (The veracity of his alleged visit to the track is unclear, though the Sioux City Police investigated, and Union County Sheriff Tom Collins, who "made a nightly check of of the crowds at the dog races," told The Journal he hadn't seen Nelson there.)

'PROBABLY THE AREA'S LARGEST INDUSTRY'

In its time Sodrac was a moneymaker, and respectable enough that at the end of the 1971 racing season, Gov. Kneip was a featured guest, in honor of the track's longtime charitable contributions.

"There would be huge buses, huge crowds bused from Kansas City, and bused from Minneapolis, and the parking lot would just be packed," said Jeff Donaldson, 58, who was employed as the track's announcer in the 1980s.

Donaldson's present-day home in North Sioux City was built on the former Sodrac property.

COLORFUL OWNERS

Beginning in 1960, Sodrac was owned by colorful, out-of-state gentlemen — that year it was purchased by Jerry Collins, a high school dropout, self-made-millionaire Floridian and state politician; during his lifetime, Collins owned greyhound tracks in Florida, Colorado, Oregon and Cuba, along with four circuses.

Sodrac was briefly the subject of a race-fixing scandal in the first year of Collins' ownership: On July 29, 1960, a group of three Miami men reaped huge profits by betting on an implausible combination of long-shot dogs. Somehow or other they'd arranged to give barbiturates to the dogs favored to win the races. Three trainers and dog-owners were subsequently fined \$50.

"We feel we have uncovered a national betting ring," Collins said at the time.

Years after he parted ways with Sodrac, in 1987, Collins made headlines nationwide when he wrote a \$1.3 million personal check to the televangelist Oral Roberts. In March of that year, Roberts announced that God had ordered him to end his life with a hunger strike unless he could raise millions of dollars for Oral Roberts University. Collins, who was still active in the dog racing industry, answered that call.

Collins sold the track in 1974 to Joseph M. Linsey, a septuagenarian ex-bootlegger

of the Prohibition era who later made millions in legal liquor distribution and dog tracks in several states. The publicity-averse Linsey lived on the East Coast and wasn't much of a presence at Sodrac; the track's day-to-day operations were largely handled by Irving Epstein, the track's manager.

A steady drumbeat of news reports indicating that Linsey had connections to organized crime were vehemently denied in 1974 by Alfred S. Ross, Linsey's nephew and business associate who later co-owned Sodrac.

Then-South Dakota Gov. Richard F. Kneip said the state investigated the sale of the track and was satisfied that nothing was amiss with Linsey's background. Linsey had in fact spent a year in prison in 1927 for his bootlegging activities and had come to the attention of state and federal agencies, including the FBI, on a number of occasions. He also had documented acquaintanceships with several Mafia people, which he acknowledged — still, he denied any direct ties.

Linsey, who lived to be 95, unloaded the track before the 1990 racing season.



SIOUX CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM

The Sodrac Park greyhound track, shown here probably in the 1960s, once attracted busloads of gamblers from Omaha and other distant points.

The majority of Sodrac gamblers came from other states. In 1981, Jim Masmar, then the Siouxland Chamber of Commerce administrative vice president, called Sodrac "undoubtedly one of the biggest boosts to Sioux City's economy." Epstein, the track manager, said it was "the leading tourist attraction in Siouxland."

During its best years Sodrac would see roughly 300,000 people cross its threshold annually. The track was conservatively estimated to stimulate the Siouxland economy to the tune of \$5 million a year, while the State of South Dakota took in \$2 million a year in taxes from the racetrack.

Sioux City had suffered economic reversals during the 1970s: "The past few years have not been thrilling," Epstein said in 1981. "Sioux City is so economically depressed it's a wonder people are even willing to leave their homes."

But Sodrac didn't suffer at all.

"We're probably the area's largest industry," Epstein said at the time. "The money we generate is staggering."

DECLINE CAME SWIFTLY

Flash forward to the late 1980s, and Sodrac was dying by a thousand cuts. A competing dog track in Council Bluffs,



SIoux CITY JOURNAL ARCHIVES

"Sodrac was just, in a good way, it was a dump," said Vince Wuebker, who worked at the North Sioux City greyhound track in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

called Bluffs Run, siphoned the bettors from the Omaha and Kansas City metros. Iowa legalized the lottery in 1985, followed by South Dakota.

Other states were legalizing dog racing. Soon casinos opened in Sloan and Onawa, Iowa, and North Sioux City welcomed

video lottery machines. And a riverboat was on its way to Sioux City.

"On the weekends, you would get a decent crowd," Wuebker said of the late 1980s and early 1990s. "But during the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38



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COURTESY IMAGE

"Children of the Corn" follows a cult of creepy, murderous kids in the fictional Nebraska town of Gatlin.

HARVESTING 'CORN'

40 years on, 'Children of the Corn' holds sway over Siouxlanders

Text by Jared McNett

Sioux City natives Debbie Bernstein LaCroix and Mike Altman have never been big fans of scary movies.

"No. I don't particularly care for horror movies," Altman said. He prefers action flicks and the sort of fare that routinely tops the box office.

"I don't love horror movies," Bernstein LaCroix said. "I think about them way too much afterward."

And yet the two Sioux City North High grads wound up as part of the cast for a 1984 film adaptation of a short story by the so-called "King of Horror," Stephen King. Bernstein LaCroix and Altman were two of a number of Siouxland residents who filled the call sheets for "Children of the Corn," a folk horror tale about a fictional Nebraska town where all of the children, under the sway of a demonic

spirit, murder all of the adults. The motion picture, which starred Linda Hamilton and Peter Horton and dropped the same year as a take on King's "Firestarter," made enough in theaters (about \$14.6 million) to yield 10 additional "Children of the Corn" titles (most of which were direct to video).

"I watched maybe two and three but was not a fan of them. I never did watch the remake, I heard it wasn't very good," said Mike Frizzell, a Sioux City resident who appeared in three scenes and got to do stunt work for Robby Kiger (the actor playing Job, one of a precious few kids to not participate in any parricide).

MENACING AND SCARY FACES

Though the movie was framed as being set in Gatlin, Nebraska, it was largely

shot in Hornick, Salix, Sergeant Bluff and Whiting, Iowa, in fall 1983. Which is how Altman, Bernstein LaCroix and Frizzell ended up in the finished product.

"So when I was in third grade, my dad was on the board of the Sioux City Community Theatre. And I was with him and I remember him saying something about needing to stop at the theater. And so when we got there, they were doing auditions for a movie. And I must have asked my dad if I could audition and he did not know what the movie was about and said yes," Bernstein LaCroix said. "And so with the audition they took my picture and then asked me to give them my evil face. It was just a really simple audition and then I got cast."

The scene where Bernstein LaCroix is easiest to spot just so happens to be the

one where the character Amos is being ritually sacrificed in a church.

"You can see me when the camera pans to the children. My hair looked really red. And when everyone is running up the aisle, you see me grabbing this little boy's hand and we're like the last two out."

Frizzell pops up there, too. "I can pick myself out of there because I've got corn dust in my eye and I'm messing with my eye when the camera goes by."

Frizzell and his brother, Corey, were big horror fans as kids and their mom read plenty of King's work. She was a waitress at the former Howard Johnson on Gordon Drive in Sioux City where the "Corn" crew was staying.

"They were having lunch or dinner at the restaurant and they asked her if she would like to be in the movie. She didn't want to be but volunteered us," Frizzell said. "(I) didn't know what I was doing but (I) looked like one of the kids who would be there."

Altman, a high school senior in drama, speech and theater, had pictures and measurements taken at the Community Theatre but never did an interview for a role. He remembered: "They called my younger brother and asked him some questions and said: We need you to look menacing. Can you look menacing?"

His brother, Ron, heard back in a timely manner. It took Mike weeks. And when he finally got the call, the crew asked if he'd like to be in the film.

"They didn't even didn't even ask me



TIM HYNDS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

A flagpole (top) located in the middle of the intersection of Whittier and Blair Streets in downtown Whiting, Iowa; along with the Whiting Office of the Sloan State Bank, 524 Whittier St.

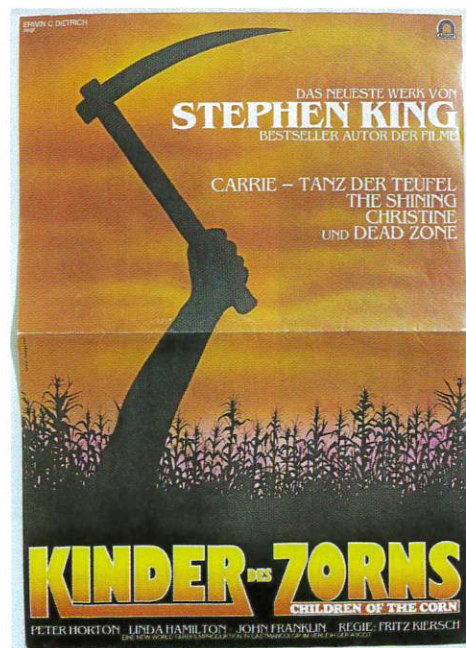


PHOTO PROVIDED BY JOHN SULLIVAN

"Children of the Corn" historian John Sullivan has a number of posters for the film including this German-language piece.

to come down. Still, to this day, I don't really know why," Altman said.

He has a theory though.

In an early scene where the adults of Gatlin are massacred in a diner (which existed in Hornick as the Star Lane Cafe and Main Street Grill until a December 2008 fire), two kids enter just before the bloodbath begins.

"I'm still convinced the primary reason they called me is that they wanted two guys who looked like brothers and we were the only two brothers with the correct age gap who looked like brothers," Altman said.

So Altman got the part and got to be filmed taking a meat cleaver to a guy's back.

Despite the gruesomeness, Altman said his own parents weren't a bit concerned about their son being in an R-rated horror production.

"They knew that it was something I was completely interested in and at the time I thought that was direction I was going to take my life. I ended up not going that way for a variety of reasons. But they were pretty supportive of the idea and knew filming something like that is very different from watching it," he said.

IT ALL LOOKS THE SAME

Northeast Missouri native John Sullivan didn't catch up with "Children of the Corn" until 1986 when he saw the movie on television at the age of 14. It left quite the impression on the longtime horror fan, in part because of how much the film's location reminded him of his own environment.

"Not a summer went by that there wasn't a cornfield that was always something I drove by or something that we always had, like a field across the street

from our house. So in the summertime, when that movie came on, if they had a cornfield filled up over there, it was really strange, strange and scary to me as a kid," Sullivan said.

Since the initial viewing, Sullivan estimates he's seen the feature close to 100 times. He owns "Children of the Corn" on 10 or more formats (including Betamax and RCA Selectavision). He has posters from multiple countries (the French one calls it "Stephen King's horror kid"). He contributed to the special features for an Arrow Films remastering of the movie. And, for 17 years, he's operated the website: childrenofthecornmovie.com which is a kind of encyclopedia for the 1984 work.

"I just wanted to have a site where everybody could go and find out information about the movie," Even now, he's revising and adding to the site.

John Sullivan

"I just wanted to have a site where everybody could go and find out information about the movie," Sullivan explained. Even now, he's revising and adding to the site.

The year he started the website (2007) is the year he made his first pilgrimage to Northwest Iowa to see where the movie magic happened. Sullivan said so many spots were instantly recognizable to him.

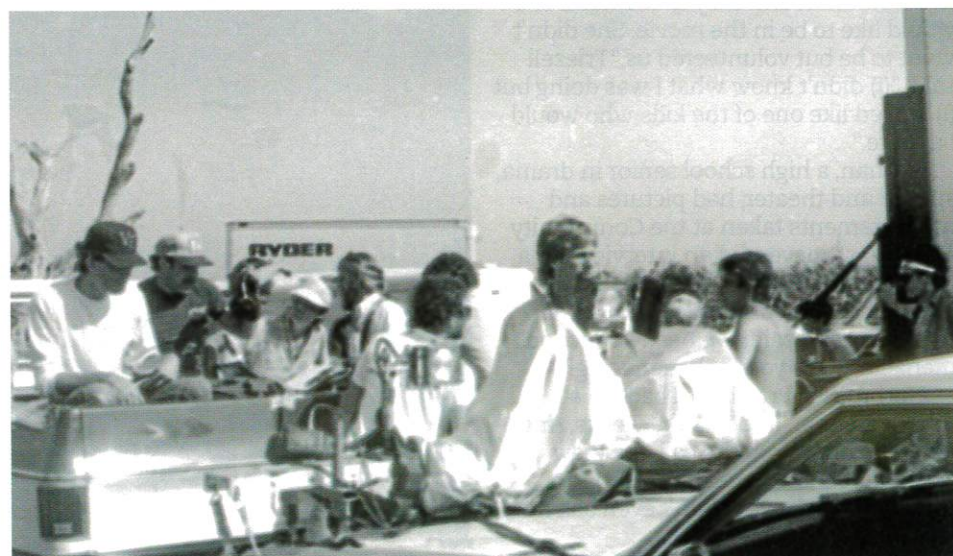
"Definitely the main street in Whiting, where it was supposed to be the town hall, it all looks the same. And then you got your flagpole and things like that," Sullivan recalled. "In Sergeant Bluff at the very beginning of the movie, where it shows Burt and Vicky in their car, sitting out in front of a hotel, the interior used was Howard Johnson's in Sioux City. But the hotel that's in Sergeant Bluff, it pretty much still looks identical to the outside ... The church in Holly Springs, that was used for the church scenes, the exterior, it's no longer there but the church that was used for the interior it's in Sioux City. And the interior still looks a lot like the movie."

Having walked where Hamilton, Horton, John



BRUCE MILLER PHOTOS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

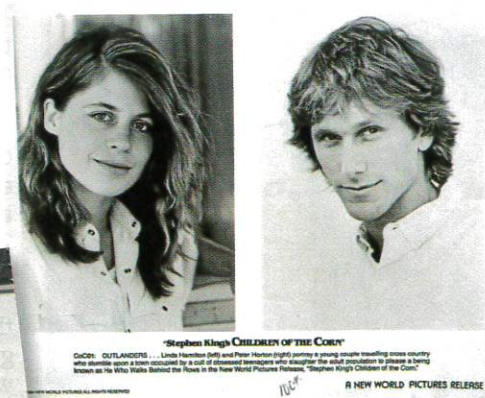
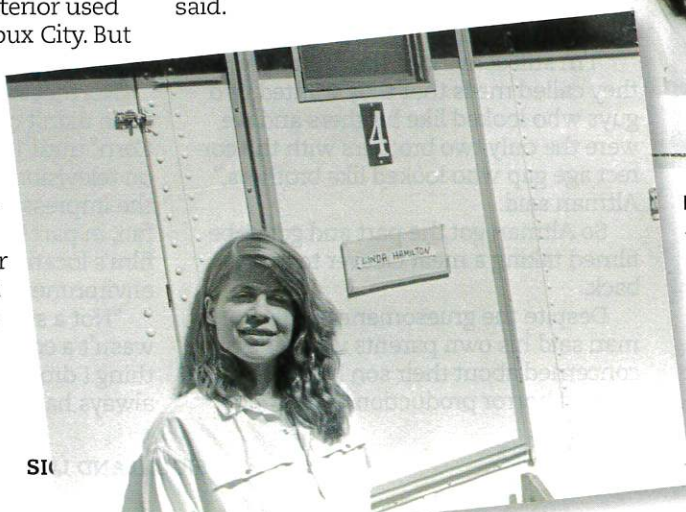
Scenes from the shooting of the 1984 production of "Children of the Corn" are shown in these Sioux City Journal file negatives. The adaptation of Stephen's King's short story was shot in the Sioux City area.



A scene from the shooting of the 1984 production of "Children of the Corn" is shown in this Sioux City Journal file photo.

Franklin and Courtney Gains once trod, Sullivan got peek behind the curtain.

"They'd turn a corner and they were in Salix and then they were in Whiting and Hornick. We thought it was funny but if you're not from there, you wouldn't know that," he said.



NEW WORLD PICTURES

A publicity still provided by New World Pictures shows stars Linda Hamilton, left, and Peter Horton from the 1984 production of "Children of the Corn."

Star Linda Hamilton is shown in front of her trailer during the shooting of the 1984 production of "Children of the Corn."

15 FEET FROM FAME?

"None of them were famous at the time. They were pretty much regular people," Bernstein LaCroix remarked about the main cast of "Children of the Corn."

Franklin and Gains, who played Isaac and Malachai, the two most prominent members of the cult, had never made a film before. Horton had been in CBS' single season take on "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" from 1982 to 1983. Production for "The Terminator," the sci-fi action epic Hamilton played Sarah Connor in, wouldn't begin production until March 1984, the same month "Children of the Corn" hit theaters. Bernstein LaCroix remembers the future star for a small act of kindness.

"Linda Hamilton was so sweet. I didn't like the Porta Potty, it scared me, and she let me use her bathroom in her trailer," she said.

Frizzell's memory of Hamilton is tinged with warmth, too.

"The scene where you see me running up and giving her a hug, I was really nervous about that and wasn't sure about hugging her because she wasn't my mom but she was super nice about it," Frizzell said.

Altman's on-set reminiscence drifts toward the filming of a scene where the kids are chasing Burt (Peter Horton) through the town.

"The way the scene was shot, I thought I was in the scene but I see it and I realize I'm just a couple of feet off camera," Altman said. "There's one kid that says: 'You two go that way, you two go over there and the rest of you follow me,' or something like that. That kid is Dan Snook. Since they left his voice in the final cut, they had to make him a Screen Actors Guild member. And I remember standing 13 feet from him and the director kind of waving his finger over the group of guys and girls standing there, to figure out which one he's going to give the line to, and points at Dan. If he had been even 15 feet to his right, I might have gone to California with a SAG card and ridiculous dreams to see if I could pull something off."

Forty years on from those ridiculous dreams, Altman's content to attend what are now near-yearly get togethers in Northwest Iowa for the members of the cast and crew, including director Fritz Kiersch.

Sullivan got acquainted with Kenny Caperton who promotes "On Set Cinema" which allows people to see movies where they were actually filmed. Sullivan contacted Caperton three years back and asked about his interest in screening "Children of the Corn" in Whiting. Caperton

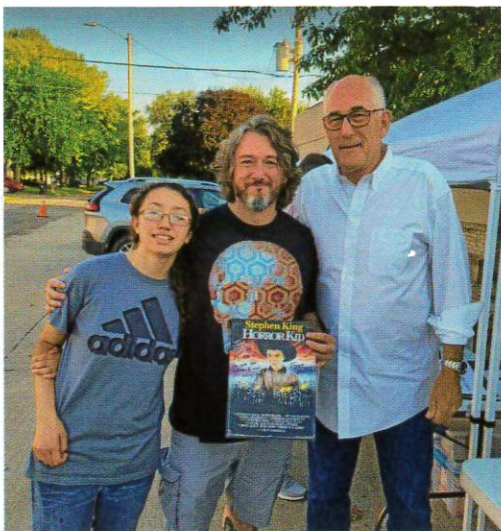


PHOTO PROVIDED BY MIKE FRIZZELL

Mike Frizzell, center, and his daughter Grace, left, stand with "Children of the Corn" director Fritz Kiersch in Whiting during a celebration of the film which shot on location around Northwest Iowa.

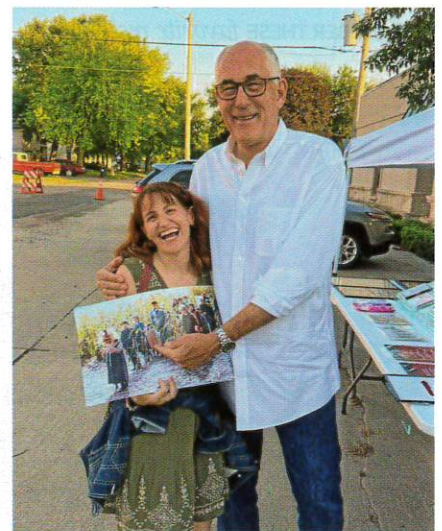


PHOTO PROVIDED BY DEBBIE BERNSTEIN LACROIX

Debbie Bernstein LaCroix stands with "Children of the Corn" director Fritz Kiersch during a local celebration of the 1984 movie which filmed around Northwest Iowa.



NEW LINE PICTURES

A early movie poster in the form of a child's drawing is shown for the 1984 production of "Children of the Corn."

ton was game. As were folks in the town.

"They said it was the first time the movie had ever been shown there in the town where it had been filmed," Sullivan said.

The initial event, in 2021, included a walking tour. In '22, a bus tour to the other towns was added.

"Seeing all these people and remembering back in 2007, when I first pulled into Whiting and saw that flagpole and knowing how I felt, that's where they filmed the movie, it was just like: Oh my gosh. And then I was one of the people who helped bring this event to Whiting and talking with all the people who were

fans of the movie and they were standing by the flagpole and they had big grins on their faces," Sullivan said with pride.

Altman, Bernstein LaCroix and Frizzell have all attended.

"It very much exceeded my expectations," Altman said.

For Frizzell, it's turned into a family affair. "It's super fun. I take my daughter. She's seen the movie 100 times, too."

With the 40th anniversary looming, Sullivan has hopes for a 2024 celebration of some kind.

"I'm really hoping we can get as many people back as possible for an anniversary event."



JIM LEE, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

Green Gables Restaurant, pictured Thursday, August 28, 2014, is now closed.

TASTY MEMORIES

Favorite restaurants from Siouxland's past

Text by Caitlin Yamada

Food is an integral part of people's memories and some restaurants leave a lasting impact on people. For Sioux City residents, there are a variety of restaurants that stand out in time.

The Sioux City Journal asked readers what restaurants they miss that have closed throughout the years. With more than 250 responses naming more than 50 restaurants, here are the top choices.

GREEN GABLES

Green Gables closed on Aug. 23, 2014, after 85 years of operation. Sioux City residents miss the restaurant's matzo ball soup, hot fudge sundae, hot beef sandwiches, and carrot cake.

"We have loved being a part of your lives," a sign on the door said when it closed.



SIOUX CITY JOURNAL ARCHIVES

A 1929 Sioux City Journal ad for the opening of Green Gables.

Green Gables Sandwich Shop was opened on Sept. 28, 1929, by Albert Seff and was family-run for three generations. It was known for its one-of-a-kind sandwiches, according to Journal archives.

"Specializing in barbecued meats and fried chicken. Something new for Sioux City—The Dixie Automatic Machine barbecues meats before your eyes," according to a 1929 ad for the opening of the restaurant.

Seff's sister, Rose Krueger, joined the business in 1931, managing Green Gables until 1973, when Seff's son, Bob Seff, assumed ownership.

"Aunt Rose believed in having friendly people cooking great food for a fair price," said Mark Levine, a great-nephew of the restaurant's original owners. "In the 1950s, a person could get soup, salad, an



PROVIDED BY THE SIOUX CITY MUSEUM
Green Gables, 1974



PROVIDED BY SIOUX CITY PUBLIC MUSEUM

Bishop Cafeteria, also known as Bishop's, was located on the first floor of the Commerce Building at the southeast corner of Sixth and Nebraska streets until the 1980s. This photo was taken in the late 1940s.

entree, potatoes, another vegetable side dish, a beverage and dessert, all for \$1."

Over the years, the menu expanded to include breakfast, lunch and dinner fare.

"If you went to Green Gables, you always had to try their matzo ball soup," Marcene Heeren, of Akron, Iowa told The Journal in 2014. "That and the hot fudge sundae, which came with a bowl of vanilla ice cream and a mini pitcher of hot fudge."

Heeren said at least four generations of her family dined at Green Gables.

"It was where we went with our par-

ents and grandparents," she said. "It was also the place where we'd teach our kids how to act inside a nice restaurant."

Located on the corner of 18th and Pierce streets, the restaurant closure was a family decision and was prompted by financial reasons.

BISHOP'S CAFETERIA

Bishop's Cafeteria closed on Dec. 30, 1997, after 72 years of operation.

Many people who responded recalled fond memories of visiting the buffet with their grandparents and great-grandpar-

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SIOUX CITY JOURNAL ARCHIVES

A 1997 Sioux City Journal ad for Bishop's Cafeteria.

ents. The custard, chocolate silk pie and corn fritters were favorites.

Bishop's originated in 1920 when Benjamin Franklin Bishop opened the first Bishop Cafeteria in Waterloo, Iowa, according to Journal archives. Instead of printed menus, his restaurant offered displayed foods with dining room services.

Bishop Cafeteria first opened in Sioux City on May 9, 1925, at 516 Pierce St.

"Hello Folks of Sioux City!" an ad from the opening of the restaurant posted.

"Every fixture in the dining room and every machine in the kitchen one of the latest design to insure cleanliness and speedy production of tasty foods," according to a 1925 Journal ad. "One of the interesting innovations is the cork tile flooring, the first to be laid in any business establishment in the state of Iowa."

The restaurant could seat about 200 people and would employ 35.

By the beginning of 1930, Bishop's moved to a new location, the Commerce Building.

"The remarkable public acceptance of the Bishop Cafeteria at Sioux City demanded that we seek a larger place – a place big enough for us to serve our patrons as they should be served," according to a 1930 Journal ad.

After 59 years, Bishop's Cafeteria closed on Aug. 31, 1984. Patrons stopped in one last time for a cup of coffee and a piece of chocolate ambrosia pie, according to Journal archives.



PROVIDED BY THE SIOUX CITY MUSEUM
Bishop's Cafeteria, 1938

More than 400 people showed up for breakfast the last day, manager Kim Walton said. And the lunch hour brought in 688 people, 200 more than an average Friday noon.

"The facility is worn out," said Edward C. Bartz, president of Bishop Buffets Inc. "To replace everything in good operating condition, the investment wouldn't be worth it."

At the time, the buffet chain had more than 30 restaurants in a seven-state region with new ones scheduled to open in Des Moines and Kansas City.

A new Sioux City location was opened in 1980 in the Southern Hills Mall. It could seat 310 customers and had 135 employees.

By the time it closed in 1997, the restaurant had 43 employees.

CONEY ISLAND WIENER HOUSE

Coney Island closed on Nov. 30, 2017, after 96 years of operations.

"Where your dollar has the most cents," according to a 1926 ad for the restaurant. It not only served popular New York-style Coney Island hot dogs but preserved the original Ye Old Tavern recipe.

Coney Island was opened on Oct. 15,

1921 at 510 Nebraska St., by Greek immigrant George Margeas. At the time, it was Sioux City's first hot dog restaurant.

It was said that Margeas felt Sioux City needed a "good five-cent hot dog," according to Sioux City Journal archives.

While it is unclear why he decided to name it Coney Island, George Margeas' grandson said they guessed "when he got off the boat in New York after coming from Greece, probably the first thing he saw was a Coney Island restaurant."

"While his friends told George they didn't think he could make any money selling hot dogs, hamburgers, soft drinks and milk as five-cent items, and featuring chili at 15 cents, George went ahead with his plan," according to a 1976 Journal story.

Coney Island had a variety of famous visitors including Elvis Presley, Guy Lombardo, the Osmond Brothers and more. The restaurant featured a wall of pictures of all of the politicians and celebrities who visited the shop.

George's son, Steve, later took over the operation after he died in 1973.

When Steve died in May 2017 his wife, Virginia, took over the operation located at 510 Nebraska St. After six months of

looking for someone to purchase and continue the business, she decided it was time to close the doors.

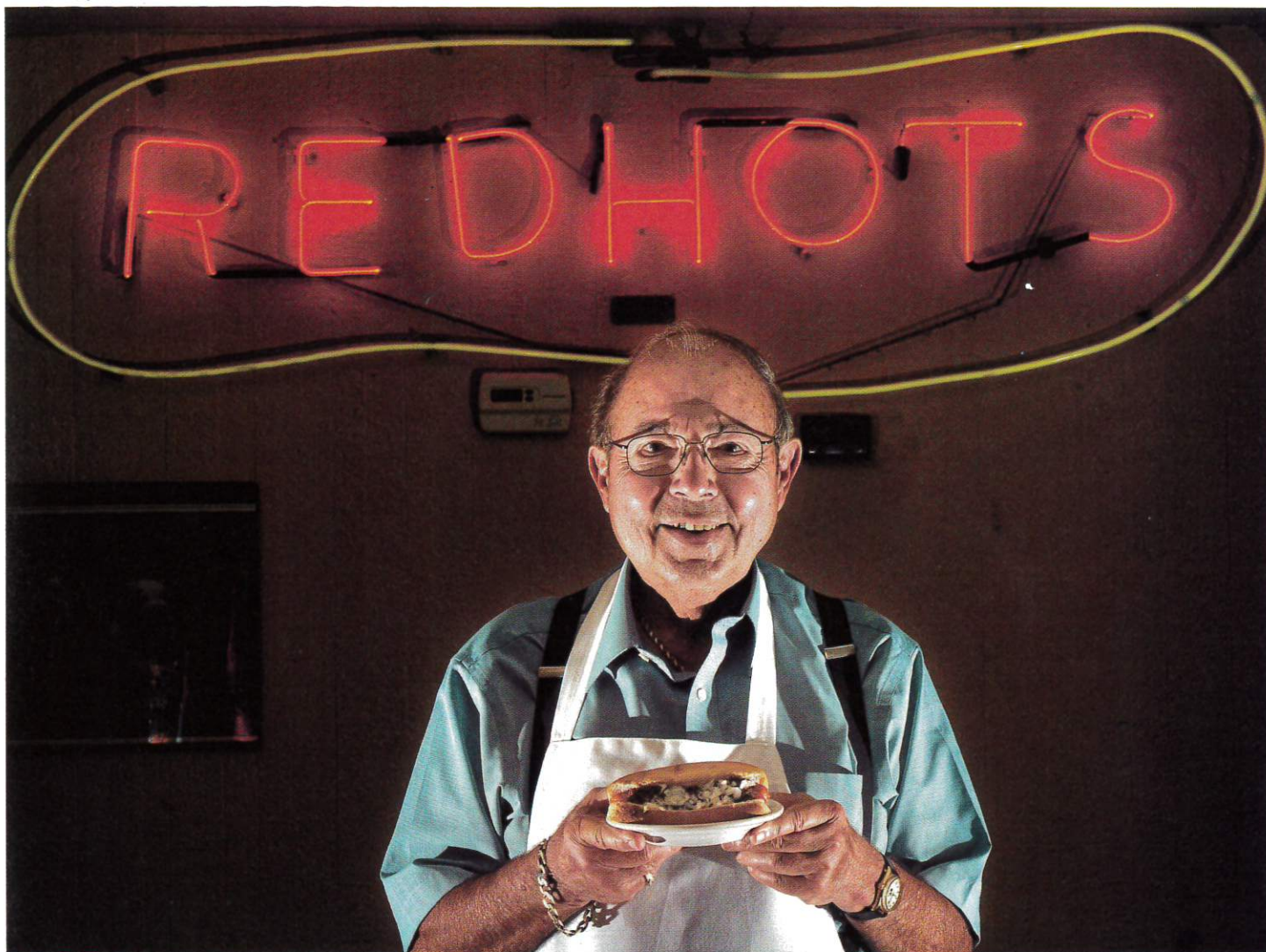
A second Coney Island location, 3013 Hamilton Blvd., was opened on July, 30, 1973 and was operated by the Margeas family until being sold in 2009. It closed in 2020.

THE U.S.A. STEAK BUFFET, ALSO KNOWN AS THE GREAT AMERICAN SIRLOIN BUFFET OR BONANZA

The U.S.A. Steak Buffet closed on Dec. 1, 2008. It had many names throughout the years but it officially started as a Bonanza.

U.S.A. Steak Buffet offered a daily lunch and evening buffet that featured grilled steak and other entrees, including burgers, chicken, BBQ ribs and fried shrimp, as well as an assortment of side dishes and desserts.

Larry Miller, owner of U.S.A. Steak Buffet, started working at the restaurant when it was a Bonanza in 1968. He moved his way up the ranks, eventually moving on to buy a different Bonanza in Omaha. In 1978, he and a partner bought the Bonanza area distributor rights for Nebraska, Iowa and part of South Dakota.



TIM HYNDS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

The late Steve Margeas at the Coney Island Wiener House in Sioux City.

Miller eventually individually owned 21 Bonanza restaurants. In June 1996 Miller changed the name of his Bonanzas to the Great American Sirloin Buffet. The Sioux City location changed its name in December 1996 with a new menu, look and expansion.

"The Great American Sirloin Buffet was a great name," Miller told The Journal in 1999. "We tried to trademark it and ran into a problem with that, so we converted to U.S.A. Steak Buffet."

In the summer of 1999 the restaurant undertook a new name change, but this time it was only a name change.

No reason was given in 2008 for its closure.

HONORABLE MENTIONS

With more than 50 restaurants mentioned by Siouxlanders, some other fan favorites include: The Normandy, Biltmore, First Edition, Black Bear Dinner, Ruth's Cosina, Casa Del Rey, Normandy, Paddock, Theo's, Windy City Pizza, Bread Basket, Coyote Canyon, Garfield's and



PROVIDED BY THE SIOUX CITY MUSEUM

Coney Island, December 1926. George Mallinas and an employee in front of Coney Island.

Various flavors of Sioux City Sarsaparilla are shown at Palmer's Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe in Sioux City, Iowa.



A SIMPLE ATTRACTION

How Sioux City Sarsaparilla came to be

Text by Caitlin Yamada | Photographs by Jesse Brothers

The granddaddy of root beer may be named after Sioux City, but its origins aren't local.

Sioux City Sarsaparilla, Sioux City Root Beer and Sioux City Cream Soda are easily recognizable western-themed 12-ounce amber bottles. They can be found at grocery stores, novelty stores and the popular Palmer's Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe.

But how did they get their name and where did they come from?

Sioux City Sarsaparilla was created by White Rock Beverages. The company was

founded in 1871 in Waukesha, Wisconsin, but is now located in New York. It is a fifth-generation family business started by current President Larry Bodkin's great-grandfather.

Most of the items sold under the White Rock name are mixers like club soda, tonic water, seltzers, ginger beer and ginger ale, Bodkin said.

During the 1980s and '90s, craft soda was beginning to rise in popularity and Bodkin's uncle wanted to create a western-themed craft soda.

Two ideas were on the drawing board:

a Sioux City Sarsaparilla or a St. Louis Sarsaparilla.

"Those are the two ideas that he kicked around and he ended up going with Sioux City because he thought it had more of an authentic vibe to it," he said. "Which is kind of funny because I've been to Sioux City and know it's really kind of a modern city."

Bodkin said in people's imagination, Sioux City is associated more with the Wild West than St. Louis. The embossed bottles were officially developed in 1987 and were one of the first niche soft drink

brands in the country, according to White Rock.

White Rock is not the only entity to associate the Wild West and Sioux City. "Sioux City Sue" is a song by Dick Thomas and Ray Freedman. A year after the song came out, a western film of the name was released starring Hollywood legend Gene Autry.

In Spain, there is an American Wild West-themed attraction called Sioux City Park. Sioux City Park started as a film set in 1971 but has become one of Europe's most unique tourist attractions. It has a bank, blacksmith, cemetery, church, saloon, and sheriff's office and hosts western shows as well as nightly barbecues.

Bodkin said the alliteration of Sioux City Sarsaparilla rolls off the tongue, helping with the name recognition.

There are seven different flavors in the Sioux City beverage line—sarsaparilla, cream soda, root beer, birch beer, prickly pear, orange cream and ginger beer.

Each bottle features different Western-style imagery. The sarsaparilla has a cowboy leaving a saloon, the cream soda has a cowboy riding a horse and the root beer has a cowboy raising a toast.

"We put a lot of care into our formulations, sourcing only the best flavors available and using only pure cane sugar to enhance those flavors," according to White Rock.

Bodkin said the sarsaparilla is like a combination of root beer and cream soda.

"It has more creaminess to it and most root beers have

Bottles of Sioux City Sarsaparilla cream soda say "Sioux City" on the caps at Palmer's Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe.

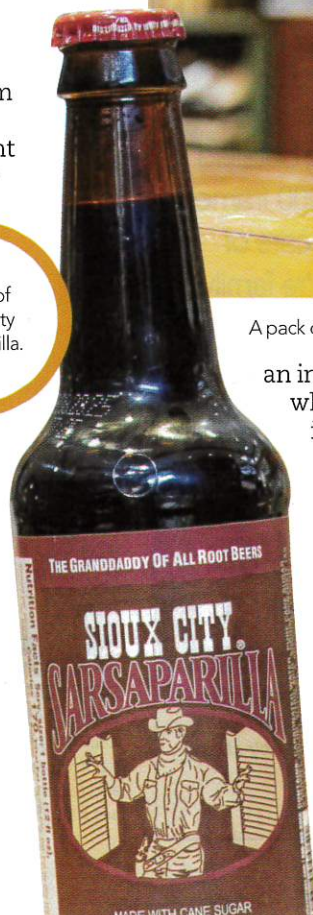


Different flavors of Sioux City Sarsaparilla are shown on a rack at Palmer's Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe.



A pack of Sioux City Sarsaparilla Cream Soda is shown at Palmer's Olde Tyme Candy Shoppe.

A bottle of Sioux City Sarsaparilla.



an ingredient called anise in it, which is like a licorice-type ingredient, and we don't have that," he said. "So the sarsaparilla is kind of unique."

Other flavors have come and gone over the years, but the sarsaparilla remains a fan favorite. The craft soda has been voted the No. 1 root beer in America by the Root Beer Report multiple times. Bodkin said it regularly wins or is

placed high on root beer ranking lists.

"Sioux City Sarsaparilla is characterized by its smooth and rich texture, enhancing the overall drinking experience. The taste is marked by a well-balanced blend of sweetness and herbal notes, resulting in a harmonious and enjoyable flavor profile," according to the Root Beer Club.

"In terms of flavor, Sioux City Sarsaparilla embraces the classic essence of sarsaparilla. It features prominent notes of sassafras, root extracts, and other botanicals, providing a distinct and nostalgic taste reminiscent of traditional sarsaparilla recipes."

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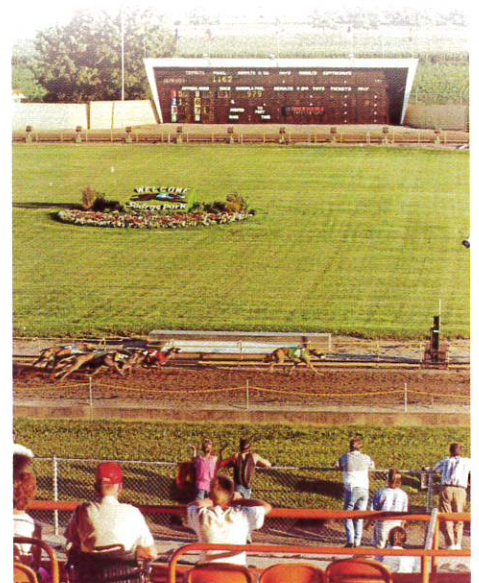
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

week — you were always reminded by the old-timers how busy it used to be, like in the '60s and '70s, when they'd bring busloads up from Omaha every night and it was packed."

1985 was the last year Sodrac still held a vestige of its quasi-monopoly on greyhound bets in the region; that year, \$22.8 million was wagered by 248,793 visitors. A year later, in 1986, only \$10.5 million was bet at Sodrac, and the number of visitors had been cut to 125,429. In an effort to woo back visitors, Sodrac underwent a refurbishment in 1987, and by 1991, the track installed video lottery machines to compete with the other video lottery terminals in North Sioux City.

It wasn't enough. In 1993, the year the Sioux City Sue riverboat casino came to Sioux City's riverbank, the track announced it wouldn't offer live dog racing, which had become unprofitable; the state's other dog track in Rapid City ended its races the year prior, and live dog racing was finished in South Dakota.

For a time Sodrac offered simulcasts of other races, which remained a profitable venture. The track's bleacher seats, kennels, bar, decoy rabbit, urinals and all other physical assets that could be moved went on the auction block in October 1996. The final humiliation came a year and a half later, on April 24, 1998, when Sodrac's Kennel Club building — then in the process of being demolished to make way for new development — burned down.



SIoux CITY JOURNAL ARCHIVES

Sodrac Park, shown here in 1991, was not the first dog track to operate in North Sioux City; an earlier dog track ran races near the airfield during the mid-1930s, and reportedly was visited by the legendary bank robber Baby Face Nelson.

SURVIVING THE BLIZZARD OF '24

I polished off a “party-sized” bag of M&Ms before 8 a.m. yesterday.

No, it wasn’t full – I’ve been chipping away at it for the better part of a week – but it did show how desperate I’ve become during the Snowstorm (nay, Blizzard) of ’24.

Yes, I’ve moved on to chocolate chips and, if necessary, I’ll eat the truffles I got two years ago and hid in the back of my freezer.

That’s the joy of bad weather. You can be desperate enough to eat everything you ignored since the last time you hunkered in.

In my refrigerator, I now see burritos, some mystery meat and an iceberg of leftovers that I can’t identify. I also have six cans of green beans, two cans of baked beans and some baking powder.

I have lots of pasta (why, I don’t know) but I figure I can always scour for a hunk of cheese and make mac and cheese. There is no milk, however, so I’m not vouching for the consistency.

My Coca-Cola stash is down to one bottle and three expired cans. I’m out of peanut butter and I doubt the jar spoon I got at the fair would have cleaned the Skippy container any better than I did during a moment of desperation.

Because I am currently in a stand-off with my thermostat (it thinks it needs to go down to 65; I don’t), I don’t have the wherewithal to wash clothes. That’s not really a problem, however, because I’ve worn two pairs of sweatpants over the

course of seven days. Showering, thankfully, is also not a problem. I have found it’s invigorating to stand in a warm shower for more than 30 minutes. Switching into a new sweatshirt and the “other” pair of sweatpants, I feel a sense of accomplishment.

Napping started out to be a pastime but that just cut into my night sleep, so I’ve avoided the urge and now find other tasks to keep me going. If this weather holds up, I’ll have my taxes done by Thursday.

Before you start to judge, I must admit I haven’t updated my Christmas card list, inventoried my decorations or begun an early shopping list.

I did get out to mail two packages (which were supposed to be for LAST Christmas) but the snow started in again and I barely made it up my driveway.

I peeked at my outside vent so it’s not covered with snow and realized a snow rake for my roof might be a good investment. I also think the gutters could be ready for replacement. (Note to self: Check out gutters at home show in February.)

Inside, I’ve discovered I can make a door draft stopper just by filling up plastic grocery store bags with other grocery store bags. It looks a little wonky but, yes, it does the trick.

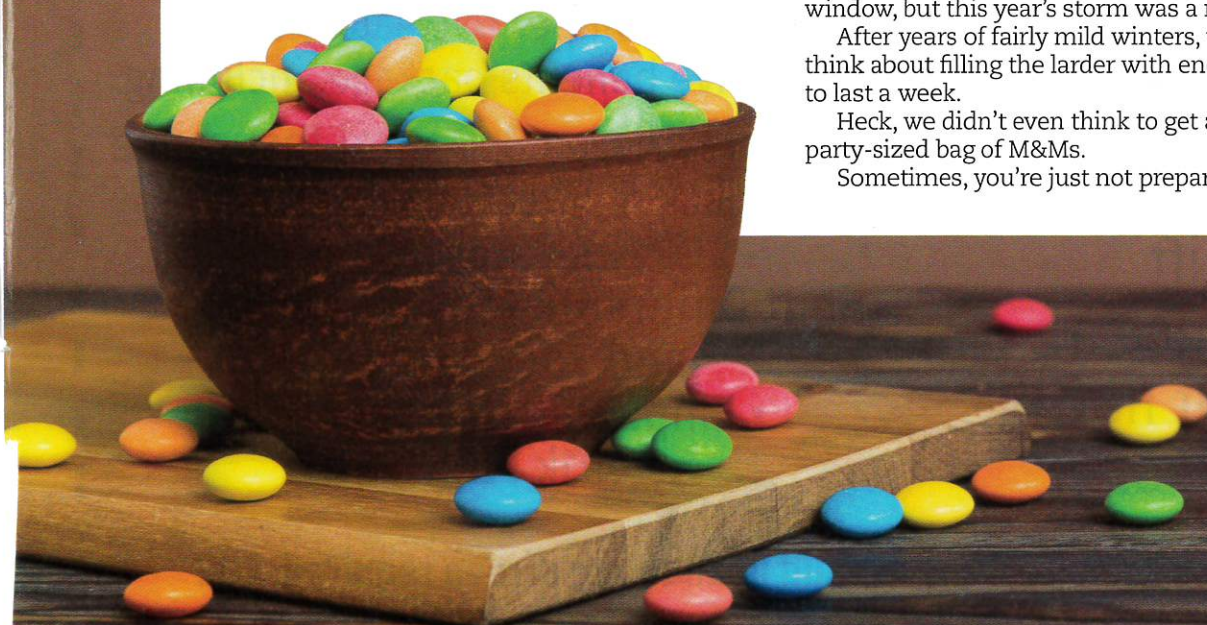
I know the “Little House on the Prairie” family battled snow like this and I’m sure there was a year we had to exit our house through a second-floor window, but this year’s storm was a real surprise.

After years of fairly mild winters, we didn’t think about filling the larder with enough food to last a week.

Heck, we didn’t even think to get a second party-sized bag of M&Ms.

Sometimes, you’re just not prepared.

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