

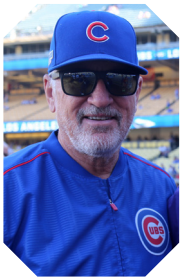


# NEW PRAGUE POPS POST

**VOL. 1 -- NUMBER 7**

## **Joe Maddon and the Beatles Got it Right - 'It's Time!'**

*Editor's Note: "It's Time!" is a monthly column by Den Gardner, chair of the Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Committee of the Forward New Prague Foundation. If you can read, we ask you to read it at your leisure! If you missed reading class in elementary school, an audio version may be available in the next three years. (OK, just kidding.)*



**NOT DEN GARDNER**

*By Den Gardner, chair, Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Committee*

Somebody called me an "outlier" the other day. I wasn't sure if that was a compliment or a criticism. Then I remembered reading Malcolm Gladwell's book "Outliers."

I remembered his 10,000-hour theory to be successful and his references to the Beatles. To summarize: In 1960, the Beatles were invited to play in Hamburg, Germany. Hamburg didn't have rock and roll clubs at this time; they had strip clubs. The Beatles were seen performing by a club owner, who asked them to come play in Hamburg. These clubs didn't pay well; the acoustics weren't good; the audience didn't care much about what they were listening to. What made this experience exceptional was the sheer length of time the band was expected to play: sets were eight hours long -- and they played seven days a week. By the time the Beatles began having major worldwide success in 1964, they had played live performances approximately twelve hundred times (more than most bands today ever play live in their lifetimes). Even after 25 years I doubt our band Little Chicago can match that feat, much less the talent level of the Fab Four. At least speaking for myself!

This all seemed a bit similar to the POPS project.

- Hamburg didn't have a rock and roll club - New Prague doesn't have an outdoor performance venue.
- The Beatles got paid very little for their work - the POPS Committee is an all-volunteer group of NP folks doing something for the betterment of the community.
- What was exceptional was the sheer length of time the Beatles played - long sets, sometimes seven days a week - The POPS project length of time making presentations, doing the marketing, working on site selection, setting up the financial and legal arrangements... Well, we could go on and on. It's been a LOT of hours.



The bottom line: I'm going to begin calling the POPS Leadership Team "outliers!" They deserve it for all the work they've done in the past year. Yet, there's so much more to do. Thanks to ALL those businesses and individuals who have stepped up to support our project.

Secondly, what's the connection to Joe Maddon that I use in the headline? For those who follow baseball, he's the three-time Manager of the Year award winner in major league baseball, managed the Chicago Cubs to their first World Series title in 108 years back about four years ago and was known as a true outlier as a baseball manager and leader. His uncharacteristic managing style made players throughout his tenure adore the guy. And be better players - and people. If we could all be so lucky.

Tom Verducci's book about Maddon - "The Book of Joe" - captures not only 50 years of anecdotes and "Maddonisms" of his philosophy of coaching baseball, but his leadership style is one I try to emulate daily - for better or worse. Not just for baseball, but for life!

When you start a project like POPS (as one leader in the community told me at the time a year ago - "The city will build 20 more sports parks in this town before they build an arts venue!"), you need fearlessness as a leader. Here's how Maddon describes this:

*"The process is fearless because I don't want to spend time on the outcome. For me, it's really about staying in the moment and not worrying about the outcome of the game or managing toward the outcome. The 'process is fearless' means if you stay with the process you can stay in the present tense, and you won't be fearful of taking chances. It's easy to get out of that and get emotional or get attached to the game [or any major project you're working on]. And when I do that, I get really upset with myself internally. That's not helping anybody. Leadership is about being fearless, which is about staying in the moment."*

The **POPS process** to raising \$1 million and leading the community for the betterment of its families is this:

- **Diligence** (work as long and as smart as you can to make a difference).
- **Persistence** (it takes an average of eight times to touch potential donors about supporting us and get a decision on whether or not they want to contribute).
- **Passion** (believe 110% in your mission and spread your positive beliefs to others).
- **Dedication** (commit yourself to success; focus on what's in the moment).

Maddon believes leadership is about fearlessness, hoping others will follow that lead. As I've said often, New Prague has great leaders but can benefit from more thinking at the 30,000-foot level.

This is how you get other leaders in the community to take risks, think outside the box, find a way to, in this case, provide donations to get us to \$1 million. And do it privately - not with our hand out to the city for public funding, but by helping all of us to "be the best!"

It goes without saying we are thrilled to be working hand-in-hand with the city as it is providing a space for us to build POPS.

So, help us because:

- We're going to pass \$600,000 (I'm convinced) in donations by the Oct. 28 FREE Gala at the Park Ballroom. Be there from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. to:
  - Enjoy music by The Eddie Shimota Band and Little Chicago.
  - Bid online for Silent Auction items.
  - Enjoy food and drink (for purchase) from the American Legion.
  - See who wins the 2020 Equinox donated by Palmer/Susan Welcome as the raffle concludes. Have you bought your ticket yet?

*Thank you Palmer and Susan Welcome!*



Herb Brooks famously said to his players before game time the night of the U.S. hockey team's upset of Russia in the 1980 Winter Olympics: "This is our time!" He was fearless. He was living in the moment. Our theme is: "It's Time!" Hey, we could do worse than listen to Herb Brooks.

I want to thank again the POPS Leadership Team (and their sub-committees) for its work the past year:

- Den Gardner, Chair
- Karen Steinhoff, Vice-Chair
- Bruce, Wolf, Treasurer
- Sandi Loxton, Secretary
- Joe Barten
- Andy Beckius
- Lisa Brusseau
- Shannon Brusseau
- Tony Buthe
- Jon Colling
- Gina Fadden
- Steve Frost
- Pastor Ben Hilding
- Larry Pint
- Brooke Sticha



Tell all your friends about the Oct. 28 gala. Do you want to help? Email me at: [dengardner@gand-gcomm.com](mailto:dengardner@gand-gcomm.com) or call me at 612-325-3981. Be part of this historic effort. Yep, "It's Time!"

## **Park Board Moves Site Selection Process for POPS on to the City Council**

The New Prague Park Board on Oct. 10 approved a motion to accept the Bolton & Menk study conducted on the three possible sites for the Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) project in New Prague. Additionally, the board's general consensus to the city council was that the City Center site was its preferred location.

"We are thrilled with the decision of the park board," said Den Gardner, chair of the POPS Committee. "Our mission has always been to raise the money to fund building an outdoor performance venue. The city is gracious in offering some potential sites for the building. We've always had our sites on raising the money. The park board is now moving the decision-making process to the city council."

The Bolton & Menk study had ranked Memorial Park as the number one site for POPS, with the Sliding Hill Skate Park and City Center ranking about the same. However, the study pointed out that all three sites could work for building the facility. Ken Ondich, community development director for New Prague, also noted the following information regarding the project: "The Park Board's general consensus was to rank the 'City Center' site as the preferred option by the Park Board and that the Park Board supports committing up to another \$15,000 in funds, along with potential city council funds, in developing a City Center/Central Park revitalization project master plan to accommodate the POPS facility and other potential uses such as a city hall facility, commercial space and housing units."

The POPS Committee leadership and a representative of Bolton & Menk will present to the city council at the Nov. 20 meeting. It is unknown regarding the timeframe of the city council for action on the site selection.

## **Fundraising Subcommittee Nears \$600,000 in Three-Year Pledges in Year 1** **Shannon Brusseau/Den Gardner - Fundraising Subcommittee Leads**

As we prepare for the Oct. 28 POPS Gala at the Park Ballroom, the POPS Fundraising subcommittee is pleased to report that donations are getting closer to \$600,000. Just \$400,000 to go to meet our goal of \$1 million by the end of 2025. Our goal by the end of 2023 was to be at \$500,000. Special thanks to those who have assisted us in our fundraising efforts - Brooke Sticha, Tom Vanasek, Mark Braaten and Dr. Jon Colling. Thus far, more than 65 businesses and families have donated to the POPS project. That includes donations from buying a \$25 t-shirt to three-year pledge donations ranging from \$100 to \$100,000.

Efforts over the past couple, of months have included:

- Sending solicitations by regular mail or email to more than 300 businesses and individuals asking for support. This included an invitation to the Oct. 28 POPS Gala at the Park Ballroom, which will hold a special reception for potential donors from 3-4 p.m. The actual event for the public begins at 4:30 p.m. and ends at 7:30 p.m.
- Personal visits to a number of companies asking for three-year pledge donations and/or possible in-kind donations of services.
- Dozinky weekend - a booth for two days selling raffle tickets for the 2020 Equinox donated by Palmer and Susan Welcome.
- T-shirts and raffle tickets were also sold at the Variety Show.
- Re-connections with dozens of potential donors.
- Silent auction solicitations. There will be 50+ items in the silent auction on Oct. 28, with items ranging from \$50 to \$500+. A great way to support POPS and get some needed items for your family.

## POPS Offers New App for Support in Fundraising Efforts

The Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Committee is thrilled to announce that a new app will be available soon for area residents to support the effort to build the outdoor venue.

The New Prague POPS App will cost just \$30 per year and provide great discounts and free offers at dozens of local retail establishments in the area. Most importantly, when you purchase the app, \$20 of your purchase price automatically goes as a donation for POPS!

The new POPS App is brought to New Prague residents through South of the River Fundraising, a Prior Lake based company. Mark Braaten, POPS Committee member, and June Phillip, lead the effort. Braaten also publishes the new magazine - New Prague Neighbors. The second issue has just been published in New Prague.

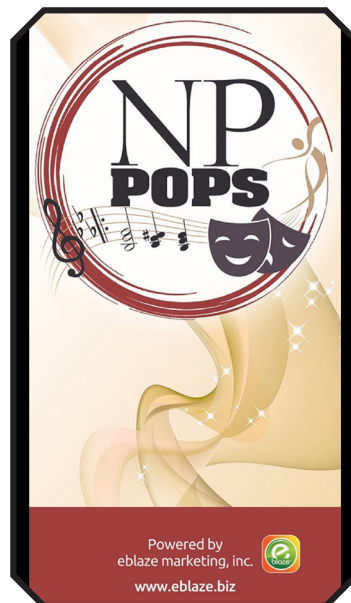
"We are excited that Mark and June are stepping up in yet another way to promote and raise money for POPS," said Den Gardner, chair of the POPS Committee. "His magazine has been great thus far in promoting POPS as well and his service on our fundraising committee has opened up new opportunities for us to raise the \$1 million we believe is needed to build our outdoor venue."

POPS has received pledges of a little over \$500,000 thus far in its 10 months of raising money. The goal is to raise another \$500,000 in 2024 and 2025.

"The POPS App will have many local retail businesses where great deals can be offered, plus it can be used in other communities in Minnesota and other states throughout the country," Gardner said. "From golf course discounts to restaurants and other retail establishments, it's a terrific way to support POPS and get great discounts."

Already these local businesses have announced they will be part of the POPS App:

- New Prague Golf Club
- 1319
- NPower Nutrition
- Sugar Rose Bakeshop
- Corner Bar
- Small Town Girl
- Euroworx/Legacyworx
- Downtown Sound
- ID Threadz
- El Tequilla



The App Store QR Code



Google Play Store QR Code



If you want more details on the POPS App, visit [www.southoftheriverfundraising.com](http://www.southoftheriverfundraising.com) or email Mark/June at [southoftheriverfundraising@gmail.com](mailto:southoftheriverfundraising@gmail.com).

The POPS Committee says thanks to South of the River Fundraising for supporting POPS!