



NEW PRAGUE POPS POST

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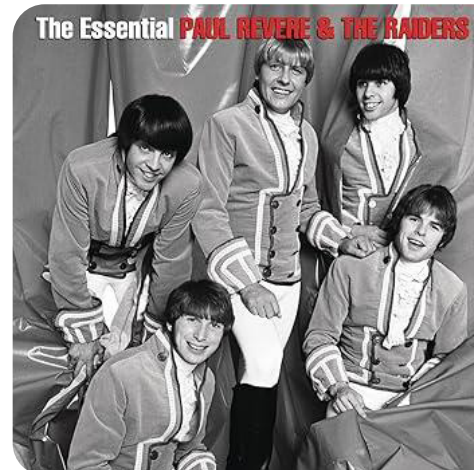
What we have in common with Paul Revere and the Raiders

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.) If you want any information about POPS, go to www.nppops.org for more information. Or call me at: 612/325-3981 or email me at dengardner@gandgcomm.com

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

You know, there's a revolution coming to New Prague. And it's a good one. Paul Revere and the Raiders (a great pop/rock group from the mid 1960s - see photo) spent their whole career performing in revolutionary war outfits. Get it? Paul Revere, Revolutionary War. They brought a revolution of great pop music in 2.5 minute bites to AM radio. Most people thought Paul Revere was lead singer Mark Lindsey (top, left, in photo). But it was the guy with blond hair, in the middle top photo, who was actually named Paul Revere (well, actually his full name was Paul Revere Dick). Not kidding folks!

What does all this have to do with the POPS building project in New Prague? Well, it might be a stretch (but I always loved Paul Revere and the Raiders), and recently I was listening to Sirius '60s when the song "Good Thing" was played. The lyrics just grabbed me.





"GOOD THING" Lyrics (Partial)
Seems this world has got you down
You're feeling bad vibrations frown
Well, open your eyes girl
Look at me (look at me)
I'm gonna show you how it ought to be (ought to be)
We're gonna have a good thing
Such a good thing, baby

And when your world don't seem just right
And when life's getting you uptight
You can change that wrong to right (wrong to right)
'Cause I was there myself last night (there last night)
Girl, I know we'll have a good thing
Such a good thing, baby.



Today is a period in our history where "your world don't seem just right!" Wars in Ukraine and Israel/Palestine, divisive politics, endless education issues in our schools (even here in New Prague) and much more. So when Paul Revere and the song lyrics say: "Seems this world has got you down, you're feeling bad vibrations frown," I say "OPEN YOUR EYES NEW PRAGUE, LOOK AT US!"



As 2023 comes to a close, a tight-knit (but not always agreeing) POPS Leadership Team is here to spread the good news - A "good thing" we'd say. With tremendous work by this team of New Prague folks, from all walks of life, we're here to tell you more than \$825,000 in three-year pledges have been garnered for the POPS building project as of early December.

Are we to our goal yet of \$1 million by the end of 2025? Certainly not. But are we ready to say "Thanks New Prague" for your devotion and contributions thus far? In the best Minnesotan accent, I can say: "You bet-cha!"



More than 80 entities (from businesses to individuals to families to non-profit service organizations) have given everything they have to get us to this point. Our goal of \$500,000 in pledges was passed in August. And best of all: Look how it's brought this community together.

The POPS Gala at the Park Ballroom (Thanks American Legion for donating the building) in October:



- Had more than 250 attendees!
- Had nearly 50 silent auction items that garnered \$6,500 in revenue. One month before the auction we had five items.
- The SUV giveaway (donated by Palmer and Sue Welcome) received \$14,500 in raffle tickets sold. Thanks to Dr. Jon Colling, his family and other Rotary members who helped in the sale throughout the summer.
- Two bands - The Eddie Shimota Band and Little Chicago - played for half of their normal rates, then turned around and donated most of that to raffle tickets or silent auction item bidding.
- Thanks to Carol and Larry Pint, Jacqueline Elizabeth, Shannon Allen, Mark Braaten for help with logistics for the Gala.

As winter approaches, you will hear more from us as we work to enhance our three-year pledges. I also want to acknowledge that we have received our first grant - from the Mayo Foundation for \$5,000 over three years. Thanks to Mary Rynda and her group for assisting in getting that accomplished.

Regarding site selection, The Location Feasibility/Design Sub-Committee, led by Steve Frost, says the following:

"As we await the final site selection action from the City Council, we encourage all interested in the POPS project to keep your eyes open for models of community outdoor performance stages that can give us additional ideas. We are looking at all options regarding appropriate features that can be considered as we move ahead with the planning of the design of our POPS.

"Getting ideas from beyond just our sub-committee will be a great help as we assemble ideas that might be incorporated in design proposals. Particularly helpful would be suggestions that will address needs you see that could be addressed in the design no matter which site is chosen.

"I'm hopeful we can not only build a facility that is functional in addressing the needs of the community but is something very special that stands out as an exceptional asset of New Prague. Feel free to contact anyone on the POPS committee with your ideas."

Steve and his team are now working on the next stage - looking at preliminary designs.

As I've noted previously, 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 getting 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).

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

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

We have so much to be thankful for as we continue this "New Prague Revolution" of bringing the community together. So, as we look skyward for guidance and inspiration in our quest to bring this family-friendly, fine arts outdoor building to reality, let's not forget the lyrics to another great Paul Revere and the Raiders hit song - "Mr. Sun, Mr. Moon:"

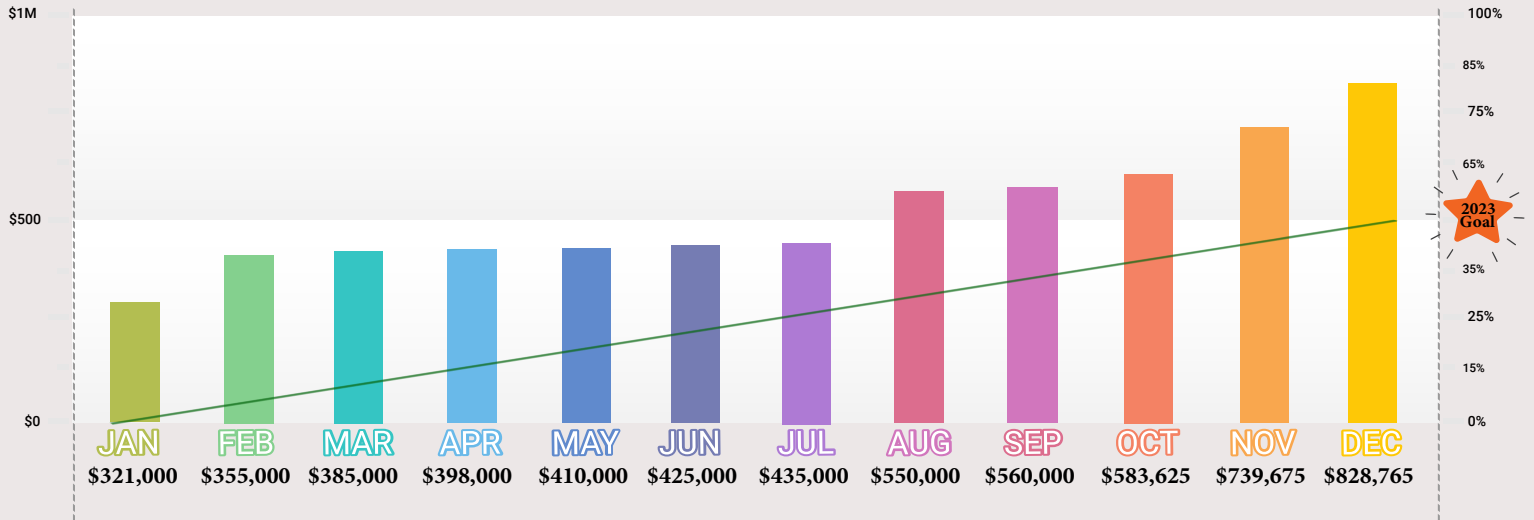
*Mr. Sun make it fine
Shine on down for this baby of mine
Mr. Moon come on through
When Mr. Sun goes we'll be counting on you.*

*We've counted on the New Prague community to step up.
Until we reach \$1 million: "It's Time!"*

Slaviks, Palmer Welcome Equinox raffle winners



POPS Fundraising Jan. 1, 2023 – Dec. 1, 2023



POPS Says Thanks for Silent Auction Donations

The POPS Committee would like to send a big “shout-out” of thanks to all those who donated to the POPS Gala Silent Auction. Nearly \$6,500 was raised for the POPS building project. And thanks to silent auction chairs Mark Braaten and Shannon Allen. We look forward to the POPS Gala II in October of 2024.

Eddie Shimota, New Prague Music Institute, Downtown Sound, Little Chicago, Radio Shack, Nancy Moulton, HyVee, Amy Ahrens Fine Art, Brooke & Ryan Sticha, Steve & Cheryl Skluzacek, Giesenbrau Bier, Generations Theatre, Corner, Window Communications, Roots on Oak, Hannah Kalisch, Anya Menk, Richard Hanzel, KCHK Radio, Natalie with Hairchitects, Gardner & Gardner Communications, New Prague Auto, Coborn’s, Lengsfeld Creations, Don & Joni Myers, Hotel Broz, Sugar Rose, MadeSmart, Uncle Earl’s Pet Center, Sue’s Quilt Shop, Starlight Productions, New Prague Golf Club, New Prague Neighbors & Luxroom, CDB Answers 101, Shannon Allen Design, and River Valley Dog Training

POPS Says Thanks for Those Who Purchased Silent Auction Items at POPS Gala

On the behalf of the POPS Committee, a huge thanks to all those who purchased silent auction items at the POPS Gala. It all helps on our way to three-year pledges totaling \$1 million. Your contributions help us get there. “It’s Time!”

Darrin Ahrens, Shannon & Rick Allen, Darbie & Dirk Berger, Dan & Dara Bishop, Annette & Mark Braaten, Lisa & Shannon Brusseau, Mary & Michael Busch, Jon & Katie Colling, Chris & Nichole Davis, Heather DuCharme, Angie Frykman, James Eriksrud, David Evans, Gina & Joel Fadden, Paul Frykman, Sandy & Den Gardner, Brenda & Dan Gardner, Jill Gauby, Rosann Goetti, Matt & Maggie Goldade, Kim Grack, Brenda Gratz, Nancy Hanson, Carol Holland, Jenni McDonald, Molly Minar, Barb & Church Nickolay, Larry & Carol Pint, Patty & Scott Proshek, Andy Richter, Vera & Doug Schoenecker, Heather Schuller, Jim Schultz, Eddie & Jen Shimota, Dan Smisek, Randy Smisek, and Pat Sullivan

We apologize if we’ve left anyone off and PLEASE let me know - dengardner@gandgcomm.com. We will get you recognized in our next issue of POPS Post in early 2024.

Ten Reasons to Support the Arts

The arts are fundamental to our humanity. They ennoble and inspire us—fostering creativity, empathy, and beauty. The arts also strengthen our communities socially, educationally, and economically—benefits that persist even during a pandemic that has been devastating to the arts. The following 10 reasons show why an investment in artists, creative workers, and arts organizations is vital to the nation's post-pandemic healing and recovery.

1. Arts unify communities. 72% of Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity” and 73% agree that the arts “helps me understand other cultures better”—a perspective observed across all demographic and economic categories.

2. Arts improve individual well-being. 81% of the population says the arts are a “positive experience in a troubled world,” 69% of the population believe the arts “lift me up beyond everyday experiences,” and 73% feel the arts give them “pure pleasure to experience and participate in.”

3. Arts strengthen the economy. The nation's arts and culture sector—nonprofit, commercial, education—is an \$876.7 billion industry that supports 4.6 million jobs (2020). That is 4.2% of the nation's economy—a larger share of GDP than powerhouse sectors such as agriculture, transportation, and utilities. The arts boast a \$33 billion international trade surplus (2019). The arts accelerate economic recovery: a growth in arts employment has a positive and causal effect on overall employment.

4. Arts drive tourism and revenue to local businesses. The nonprofit arts industry alone generates \$166.3 billion in economic activity annually—spending by organizations and their audiences—which supports 4.6 million jobs and generates \$27.5 billion in government revenue. Arts attendees spend \$31.47 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals, parking, and lodging—vital income for local businesses. Arts travelers are ideal tourists, staying longer and spending more to seek out authentic culture experiences.

5. Arts improve academic performance. Students engaged in arts learning have higher GPAs, standardized test scores, and college-going rates as well as lower drop-out rates. These academic benefits are reaped by students across all socio-economic strata. Yet the Department of Education reports that access to arts education for students of color is significantly lower than for their white peers. 91% of Americans believe that arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education.

6. Arts spark creativity and innovation. Creativity is among the top five applied skills sought by business leaders—per the Conference Board's Ready to Innovate report—with 72% saying creativity is of “high importance” when hiring. Research on creativity shows that Nobel laureates in the sciences are 17 times more likely to be actively engaged as an arts maker than other scientists.

7. Arts have social impact. University of Pennsylvania researchers have demonstrated that a high concentration of the arts in a city leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty rates.

8. Arts improve healthcare. Nearly one-half of the nation's healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff. 78% deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.

9. Arts for the health and well-being of our military. The arts heal the mental, physical, and moral injuries of war for military servicemembers and Veterans, who rank the creative arts therapies in the top four (out of 40) interventions and treatments. Across the military continuum, the arts promote resilience during pre-deployment, deployment, and the reintegration of military service members, Veterans, their families, and caregivers into communities.

10. Arts strengthen mental health. The arts are an effective resource in reducing depression and anxiety and increasing life satisfaction. Just 30 minutes of active arts activities daily can combat the ill effects of isolation and loneliness associated with COVID-19.

By Randy Cohen, staff member of the Americans for the Arts in italics. ALSO in italics:
Provided by AmericansForTheArts.org.

Save Money and Support POPS Fundraising Efforts!

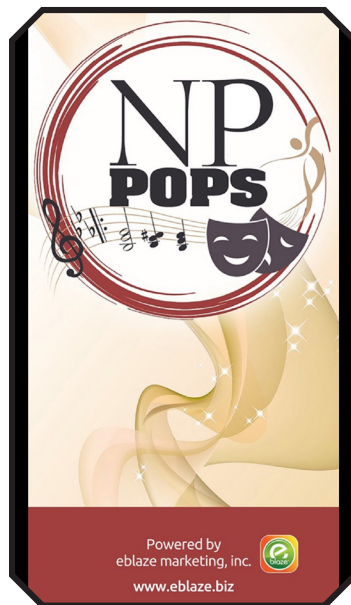
The Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Committee is thrilled to announce that a new app will be available soon for area residents to support the effort to build the outdoor venue.

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.

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



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