

**P2 / HISTORY OF HEALTH CARE
IN THE PARK**

It started before the Park was a village, and is going strong today.

**P6 / THE STATE OF HEALTH CARE
IN THE STATE**

HealthPartners grows and grows to become a behemoth.

P6 / BREATH OF LIFE

A longtime Park resident reflects on his 50 years in the biomed business.

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Health care, 1950-style.



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PARK HISTORY TODAY

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

There is something special about a family legacy in business. In this time of Covid, the Park's family-owned businesses deserve our support. And, whether we've wanted to or not, in 2020, people in the Park and everywhere have had health and healthcare on our minds. The pandemic has commanded our attention for nine months and promises to continue for at least another year. So, a brief history of healthcare in the state and in the Park seemed apropos.

- Bill Beyer, FAIA

PRESERVING MODERN HISTORY, FROM NORDIC WARE TO NELSON'S

By Lynne Carper and Bill Beyer

As we celebrate the family time of year, we recognize that it's hard to perpetuate a family business - your kids' passions are not likely to be your own, and why should they be?

The granddaddy of Park family business at 73 years is Nordic Ware, founded by brothers Dave and Mark Dalquist and friend Donald Nygren in 1946. They moved to a new building in the Park in the spring of 1947, and continue to thrive under family ownership, employing over 300 people at their factory and office headquarters. Business has been so good recently that the city just approved a 22,000 square foot addition to the firm's manufacturing plant.

Bohn Welding is a four-generation Park business, started in a two-stall garage at 5909 Goodrich in 1949 by Richard Joseph Bohn, Sr. and his son, Richard Jr. whose son Rick started working there at age 13, taking over the business when he was 20. Rick's son Ethan was also employed there. In the 1930s, the Bohn family had lived in a farmhouse where the Dairy Queen was on Excelsior Blvd. Unfortunately, their 6600



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Lake Street storefront today is empty, their phone number not in service, and the business appears to have been sold; their Facebook page redirects to a new website, bohnanddawson.com, with facilities in St. Louis, MO, El Paso, TX and Shanghai, which, we believe, isn't in Minnesota. Rick Jr. passed in 2014 at age 87, and the firm's last Facebook post was in 2016.

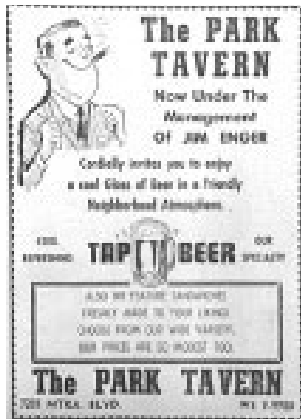
Bunny's was a family business for 55 years and Park Tavern remains one after 63. Each boasts of multi-generational patrons, and a family-like community of followers.

Hoigaard's was a thriving family business in Minneapolis for 55 years until moving to the west side of Highway 100 at 36th St. in 1960. After 53 more years, It moved again to Miracle Mile, got big and got out in 2013, remaining in the Park, now owned by the company that runs Vail Resorts and Afton Alps.

With daughter Jennifer on Keith's team, Nelson's is active in the community supporting Little League, gymnastics, and football, donating breakfasts and lunches for kids, financial support for Park police and fire, for the Birchwood and Sorensen neighborhoods, and the Lenox Foundation.

Keith expanded the butcher shop to a full-service meat counter with house made sausages, added a deli department and established a noon meal buffet and sandwiches for take-out, and a small eat-in, He operates a bakery on site with fresh breads, sweet rolls, cookies and custom decorated cakes, and also processes wild game for hunters.

Keith operates a BBQ catering operation for businesses and private parties, and has a new take-out called 'PaPa Q's'. He is a recognized "pit master" with certifications from the Kansas City and Minnesota BBQ Societies and is a certified BBQ event judge, and has won many first places and "best of" awards at regional and local cook-offs. Nelson's is exploring a PaPa Q's food truck, and aiming to become a well-known destination for KC-style BBQ. Or, maybe in a couple more generations, Park-style PaPa Q.



THE HISTORY OF HEALTH CARE IN THE PARK

By Bill Beyer

In 1883, before the Park formally became a village, the City of Minneapolis decided to buy 8.5 acres of future village property to construct a new complex for the quarantine of victims of smallpox, at the time, a virulently infectious, and sometimes deadly, disease. It became known as the Pesthouse. Better that the hapless, disease-ridden peasantry be foisted on the sparsely populated suburbs than be seen in the city proper. Our newly-formed village tried to get the

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LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear members,

Happy holidays! I was sorry we could not do our annual holiday lighting of the Depot this year. This would have been the sixth year for the event, but next year we hope we can do something similar, or maybe entirely new, to celebrate the holiday season and our treasured railroad depot!

In this edition of our newsletter you will be reminded of a few long-time local businesses. There are of course many more small (and large) businesses throughout our city that continue to face challenges to operate, but most have held strong, and we are hopeful they will persevere through the winter and will continue to add to the story of St. Louis Park. There are also several stories about health care, another industry greatly impacted by the pandemic. One of those stories was submitted to us by Dr. Frank Freedman. We so appreciate getting stories from our members, so if you have some short memories you want to share, please reach out to us – they don't have to be published, but they offer a great narrative to better understand our local history.

It has been nine months since the pandemic lockdowns went into effect, at least in Minnesota. I have read that there are expectations for a dip in births over the coming year or more which could have a long-term impact on our economy. I am curious how this cohort of babies born the next couple of years is viewed, especially if the dip is significant. Declines in school enrollment impacts school funding (much as it is right now), and it can result in changes to everything from housing to labor markets. The end of the baby boom resulted in the closure of eight schools just in St. Louis Park between 1970 and 1980. What will things look like by the time we get to the graduating class of 2040?

It has been a mild and dry winter so far in St. Louis Park. I was reminded reading through some stories from our website of the severe cold snap in January 2014 when the schools were closed for five days due to extreme cold - high temperatures were negative 10-15. Our oldest child was in Kindergarten that year and, not having grown up in Minnesota, we worried that the next decade would bring similar interruptions each winter juggling work and school. Fortunately, snow/cold days have been relatively rare in the ensuing seven years. But never did we think a global pandemic would keep them home full time for at least half of the school year. However, no matter how much snow or how cold it might get this season, at least (virtual) school will continue un-interrupted. And maybe a silver lining of learning how to run school online is that future snow/cold days can simply be shifted online.

On an administrative note, thank you to those who contributed to our Give to the Max fundraising campaign in November. We raised over \$1,000 which will be used to make up the miss in our annual budget as we lost some of our traditional revenue opportunities due to Covid-19. In January we will be sending out our annual membership reminders – I hope you will continue to support us for another year. I am happy to note that the organization is financially sound, with a full and engaged board of trustees, and a strong and caring member base.

With Park pride,

Ted



CONNECT WITH US

Stop by: 3546 Dakota Ave. S., Suite C
St. Louis Park
Saturdays, 1-4 p.m.,
and by appointment

Call: (612) 465-9288

Email: slphistory@gmail.com

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Founded in 1971, the St. Louis Park Historical Society collects, preserves and shares the history of St. Louis Park. The *ReEcho: Park History Today* is an official publication of the Society.

Editor

WILLIAM BEYER

Writers

TED EKKERS

Contributing Writer

JEANNE ANDERSEN

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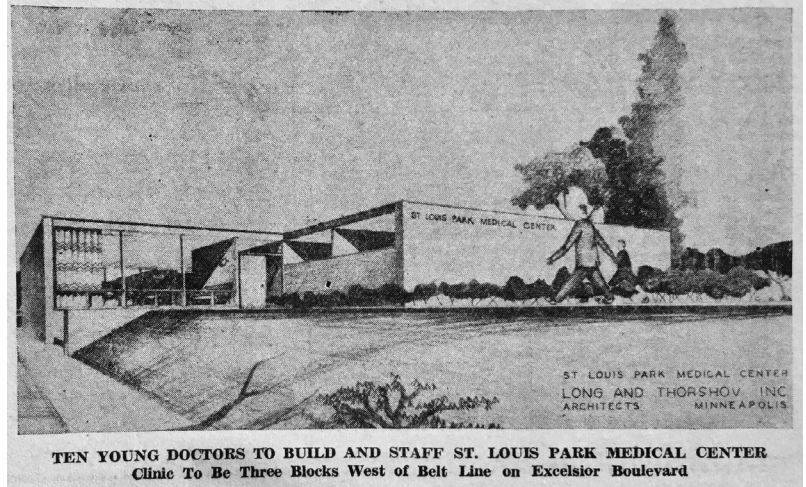
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place closed for the next 35 years, finally succeeding in 1918, (photo above).

Just in time for another health event – the Spanish Flu Pandemic - which killed 12,000 Minnesotans statewide, about half-a-percent of the populace, between 1918 and 1920. (Covid 19 will have claimed over 4,000 Minnesota lives in 2020 as of this writing. Half-a-percent of today’s state population would be about 28,000 people.)

Doctor John Watson, who married Louise Hanke of the pioneering Hanke farming family in 1895, was the first doctor to practice in the Park, served as Village Physician from 1911 to 1914, and continued his practice until retiring in the mid-1920s. On former Hanke farmland in 1931, Doc and Louise built the house that still stands at 3800 France Avenue.

On July 2, 1951, ten doctors who were WWII veterans and had worked together at the VA Hospital, each with a different specialty, opened the St. Louis Park Medical Center at 4959/4961 Excelsior Blvd. By 1956, the Center had 17

doctors and expanded. In 1960, they formed the St. Louis Park Medical Center Research Foundation to promote medical research and community education. By 1961, staff had grown to 24 doctors and a total of 100, serving an average 300 patients a day, and by 1967 they had annexed the building next door, a former grocery store in a chain that became Lunds.

The 3800 building, originally known as the Northland Building, was dedicated in 1969, with the top floors as shell space; it was the tallest building in the Park at the time. More additions and more new buildings followed in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1983, the St. Louis Park Medical Center merged with the Nicollet Clinic to form the Park Nicollet Medical Center.

METHODIST HOSPITAL

Methodist Hospital began life as Asbury Methodist Hospital, founded in Minneapolis in 1892 (top photo, page 5). As noted by historian Bill Beck in the centenary publication, Methodist Hospital, A Tradition of Caring, the original hospital was built, “...to provide Free Dispensary services to the poverty-stricken immigrants of the Twin Cities and surrounding

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areas...established as an act of faith by a group of women who believed that Methodist theology required more of them than attending church and contributing to good works. Sarah Harrison Knight, the founder of the hospital; Lydia Miller, Knight's successor as hospital administrator; and Sybil Palmer, the hospital's superintendent of deaconesses for some 30 years, were pillars of Methodism in the Twin Cities and true representatives of their faith to the community they served."

In the early 1950s, facing a deteriorating building and a baby boom that left the area short of hospital beds, it decided to build new in the suburbs. In 1954 the property at 6500 Excelsior Blvd. was purchased; the swampy site next to Minnehaha Creek had to be filled and 100-foot pilings had to be sunk to support the structure.

An open house held in January 1959 attracted over 10,000 people who toured the facility before it opened for business. The first baby was born and the first patients admitted on February 16, 1959. The hospital has been expanded many times since then.

In 1991, just as the hospital was beginning to celebrate its centenary, discussions began about a possible combination with their neighbors, Park Nicollet Clinics, and in 1993 the two groups merged.

REPLUMBING THE CREEK AND REPLUMBING MY HEART

Full disclosure on my relationship with Methodist – five years ago, I was admitted to have my heart replumbed, a successful move allowing me to become the editor of this newsletter.

Methodist Hospital collaborated with the city and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District in 2004 to better engage its on-site amenity, the creek, and to better manage its stormwater on-site. According to the District:

The goal was to incorporate stormwater management within the landscape by creating areas where people could interact with the outdoor environment while simultaneously providing educational opportunities...MCWD hired a consultant to develop a concept plan of potential environmental improvements for the site to improve the existing conditions, restore natural features, provide amenities to the hospital and its visitors, increase public access and provide for educational opportunities.

...The boardwalk trail through the wetland at Methodist Hospital provides a safe and secure way for patients and their family and friends, as well as the surrounding community, to enjoy the diverse natural environment along Minnehaha Creek. Resting stations with seating and interpretive signs, access to the creek, wildlife habitat and observation, and the ever-changing palette of native grasses and wildflowers throughout the seasons make it a rich sensory experience.

The concept was inspired by Methodist Hospital's new Heart and Vascular Center. Like the human heart's four chambers, the trail design is composed of four spaces: three trail loops and an area designed to attract wildlife. A new re-meander in Minnehaha Creek, which restores the channel more closely to its original morphology, is the hydrologic circulatory system that ties the entire design together.





THE STATE OF HEALTH CARE IN THE STATE

By Bill Beyer

In 2013, Park Nicollet/Methodist merged with HealthPartners to become the state's second-largest health provider and hospital system behind only the Mayo Clinic. As noted by the Star Tribune, the 2013 merger brought together: "...two of the Twin Cities' premier hospitals -- Regions in St. Paul and Methodist in St. Louis Park. HealthPartners brings 44 primary care clinics, 18 urgent-care clinics and 20 dental clinics to the mix, while Park Nicollet brings lucrative specialty clinics, including the Frauenshuh Cancer Center and the Melrose Institute for eating disorders, plus 26 clinics."

As of 2020, the ten largest non-profit organizations in Minnesota are all healthcare conglomerates.

In 1973, Minnesota had been the nation's pioneer for the concept of managed care via Health Maintenance Organizations. Our legislature mandated that they be non-profits, on the reasonable theory that YOUR health should be more important than THEIR profits. Park Nicollet Clinic was there at the beginning. According to the Minnesota Historical Society:

Minnesota lays claim to the idea of prepaid health plans—health services operated and administered by medical doctors and professional staff, and managed by health maintenance organizations (HMOs)—a design formulated in the early 1960s by Dr. Paul M. Ellwood, then executive director of the American Rehabilitation Foundation and the Sister Kenny Institute of Minneapolis. To Dr. Ellwood and his associates, the passage of Medicare legislation in 1965 seemed to portend a slide toward “socialized medicine,” unwelcome involvement of government in American medicine and patient care.

In proposing his concept of managed care, Dr. Ellwood intended it to act as a bulwark against a looming threat to the quality of medical care. In cooperation with the Park Nicollet Clinic in Minneapolis, Dr. Ellwood conducted a pilot program in 1972, testing the concept. The pilot program involved 5000 patients from General Mills, the Dayton Company, and other local corporations who were enrolled in this employer-

sponsored prepaid health plan.

Seven years after the 2013 merger, the HealthPartners St. Louis Park campus has gobbled-up and converted to healthcare uses a six-screen movie theater, a coffee shop, three fast food restaurants, a steakhouse/brewpub, a 4-story bank/office building (drive-through tellers converted to drive-through Covid testing), and assorted smaller properties.

While separate statistics for the Park are murky, it appears that HealthPartners, with 27,000 employees system-wide, is almost certainly now the Park's largest employer.

In 2017, Minnesota legislators modified the 1973 law to allow for-profit companies to be licensed as health maintenance organizations in the state. Governor Mark Dayton signed it into law to secure broader rate relief, despite concerns.

Three of the nation's largest for-profit HMOs, including Aetna, Humana and UnitedHealth were now allowed to sell health insurance in Minnesota. As MINNPOST noted a couple of years later:

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At the time, DFLers, led by then-Attorney General Lori Swanson, raised concerns about the bill's unintended consequences. Allowing for-profit health insurance and provider companies to operate as HMOs in Minnesota could lead them to purchase existing nonprofits, for one thing. In addition, the nonprofits already operating could decide to convert to for-profit status. If either happened, for-profit companies could potentially control billions of dollars in assets — including real estate, infrastructure and brand goodwill — along with the reserves accumulated by the nonprofits, which are meant to provide solvency for insurance plans and cover claims should premiums not be adequate to cover the costs.

The concerns about the conversions were not hypothetical. Advocates pointed out that other states had been caught off guard by HMOs switch to for-profit status and didn't have adequate protections in law. Reserves accumulated by HMOs were then used to award bonuses or stock options to executives, or they were simply transferred to the new for-profit entity.

Swanson argued that those assets and reserves needed to be used for the original purpose of the HMOs — providing health care to Minnesota residents — and the bill she supported would have required an independent valuation of HMO assets, a ban on self-dealing by nonprofit HMO executives, and public hearings prior to the approval of any conversion.

New Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison weighed-in, calling non-profit HMO assets “essentially public money.” Again, from MINNPOST:

“This is the bargain that we, the people of Minnesota, struck with nonprofit HMOs,” Ellison wrote. “We will reserve public markets for you and shelter you from taxes and competition, and you will use your assets and make improving our health your sole mission.”

The legislature could not reach consensus on Swanson's bill, so it compromised on a two-year moratorium on conversions of non-profit assets. Compromise was again elusive in the most recent legislative session, and the conversion deadline was extended to July 1, 2023.

As citizens of the Park ride out the yet unseen consequences of Covid, we hope that the permanent legislative fix due in 2023 will actually protect the health of our citizens rather than throwing them to the wolves.

BREATH OF LIFE

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Dr. Frank Freedman, a Park resident since 1967, and a biomedical engineer who was SciMed's (Plymouth, MN) representative to the U.S. medical community, recently retired after 50 years in the industry. He sent a couple of stories to our website, which we include here.

Freedman was a pioneer in the development of modern-day artificial lungs. During the early 1970's, he crisscrossed the country to persuade surgeons to use SciMed's new type of artificial lung to breathe for patients during their treatment for severe acute lung failure. After several years, his efforts were successful. He then turned his attention to getting cardiac surgeons to use the SciMed lung to breathe for patients undergoing open-heart surgery.

In the early 1970s, a Bethesda Naval Center surgical research team, (where Presidents and other high-ranking government officials went for annual physical examinations or treatment), was pursuing animal studies to determine how well the SciMed Lung would work for acute lung failure patients. Based upon their success in the animal studies, the lung was used to breathe for a very sick sailor. Although he was too sick to survive, the lung worked perfectly.

Based upon this first ever clinical case using the SciMed lung, Bethesda's chief of surgery told Freedman his thoughts about the new therapy, and proposed to gain more attention for its surgical research program (and SciMed), by saving a dying U.S. Senator, ambassador or some other dignitary. When Freedman suggested a very prominent 79-year old candidate then dying from pneumonia - President Harry S. Truman - the surgery chief demurred.

A few months later, the University of Minnesota began using the SciMed lung to breathe for some of its most acute patients, but none of the initial patients survived due to severity of their condition.

Freedman attended each case at the University, buoyed only by two facts. The lung worked very well. A few survivors had been reported in the United States. But clinicians at the University and elsewhere recognized that only some types of patient candidates would benefit; it was too early to tell which ones would survive and which ones would not.

Their luck changed when they decided to use the lung for a dying young man whose lungs were filled with bodily fluid due to a motorcycle accident. He started recovering toward the end of the second day of treatment. Once the patient was weaned off the artificial lung, Freedman left for home, having been at bedside continuously for technical and emotional support during this time.

On his way home, Frank was pulled over by the St. Louis Park Police, who thought from his erratic driving that he might have been drinking. When he told them where he had been for the previous two days, they escorted Frank safely home.

In the introduction to a book of short stories Freedman wrote about his experiences at SciMed, he noted his mother's plea “to leave this earth in better shape than you found it.” He considers the plea honored.



3700 Monterey Drive, St. Louis Park, MN 55416

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DISPATCH LOOKBACK

Seventy years ago, the editors of the Dispatch were crusty and conservative old codgers, Republican-leaning for sure. But on February 1, 1950, as recovery from WWII continued apace, they were outraged that the American Medical Association had spent over a million dollars in a single year lobbying the federal government to defeat national healthcare.

The editors opined: "But something like the administration's current National health insurance program WILL BE PASSED, in the not too distant future...Only the government itself is large enough to provide the machinery necessary to bring health insurance TO ALL." The cartoon is from June 21st of the same year. As people lose their jobs and their healthcare in the Covid crisis, we are obliged to wonder how far in the distant future we still have to wait.

Health Insurance Is Coming

The biggest bill paid for lobbying at Washington in the year of 1949 was paid up by the American Medical Association. \$1,225,028. That's it. A MILLION AND A QUARTER, in one year, by the AMA, to defeat the administration's national health insurance program.

It is more than likely that more than this will be expended in 1950 for the same purpose. But something like the administration's current National health insurance program WILL BE PASSED, in the not too distant future, simply because American people feel they are entitled to such health insurance and protection as the medical profession is able to offer. So-called voluntary group insurance plans will never reach all the people.

Only the government itself is large enough to provide the machinery necessary to bring health insurance TO ALL. Health insurance is the right of all. Hence it will come, some fine day. The doctors, then, will accept it, just as they accept now the volunteer health insurance, such as Blue Cross and Blue Shield. There was a time, not so

long ago, it will be remembered, when the AMA was dead against such a plan.

Everything is going to be all right, in 1950. That's what the forecasters, commentators, prognosticators and assorted prestidigitators say anyway.

Business is going to be good. Taxes are not going up. Some of the nuisance excises are even coming off. The cold war is all over. No more war with Russia. The dollar, now worth 59 cents, is going up, will therefore buy a little more. There will be fewer strikes. Some prices are coming down a little. The big push for pensions for us old geezers will get started. Fewer big strikes. November elections won't change much. Life looks like it will be quieting down.

Good gosh, it ain't going to get tedjus is it?

Legally, says a writer, the husband is the head of the house and the pedestrian has the right of way. Both will be safe only so long as they do not try to exercise their rights.

Counterfeit 20 dollar bills are again reported in circulation. We don't have to worry though until the ones and fives begin circulating.

