

**P3 / PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

As a transplant from Chicago, President Ekkers had to learn new food shopping venues in the Park.

**P4 / A GROCERY WORKER REMEMBERS**

Park High grad Mark Toretsky shares stories of grocery stores he worked for and grew up with.

**P12 / DISPATCH LOOK-BACK**

Our hometown newspaper launched into the teeth of a world war, recording an early decade of changes in the food-selling business.



# REeCHO

PARK HISTORY TODAY

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**Editor's Note:** My first job was in 1962 stocking shelves in a Mom & Pop neighborhood grocery in Appleton, WI. I earned 85 cents an hour and learned how dreary working for a living could be. Grocery stores have been among the only places we've all been allowed to go for these past couple of Covid-years, so we thought we'd survey their histories in the Park. We feature an article by long-time SLPHS member and SLP High School grad, Mark Toretsky.

## GROCERIES IN THE PARK

Norman Thomas tells us how people got their food in the 1890s, just after the Park became a village:

*Many of the people who lived in The Park in the 90's look back with a great deal of nostalgia on the days of their youth. Especially did home life seem comfortable despite the crudities which were forced upon them. Meals consisted of potatoes, meat, vegetable and pie, of which the fresh meat came from Minneapolis. Bread was baked at home because no commercial bakeries provided it...Milk was a food which could be had from the local dairymen but most families kept a cow which was pastured on the vacant lots in the neighborhood. Stray cows were taken to the village pound...nearly everyone had a cow and a garden and the more prosperous had a driving team. Clothing was also homemade, the mother buying cloth and making the garments, although shoes were most often purchased at a local store, of which there were two.*

Chickens were kept and eggs were laid as well. There were food stores in the "Brick Block," the Walker and Hamilton buildings which were supposed to seed the Park's "downtown." Trenkley's in the Hamilton started in 1900, was bought by Joseph Hamilton's son Charles in 1912. Dworsky's was in the Walker in 1917 when a fire started at the meat market of A.M. Shields and burned

the east third of the Walker Building to the ground. Swenson & Redeen's Meat Market moved into the Walker Building in 1923 and then crossed the road to Hamilton. Mark Toretsky tells us:

*It was a charge and delivery operation. The housewife would place an order and it would be delivered to her kitchen in a few hours. The "We Deliver" slogan meant that they made four separate deliveries each day at 8 am, 10 am, 1 pm and 3 pm. During the depression years Swenson and Redeen rarely refused a customer to charge groceries no-matter how high their bill might be. In 1942 Swenson bought out Redeen and the name changed to Swenson's Meats and Groceries. In 1948 the store moved across the street to the Hamilton Building until it closed in January 1952 when Nels Swenson passed away.*

As the village grew, early "Mom & Pops" sprung up near established residential areas. Freeland's at 3751 Alabama in 1919, Brookside Grocery at 4348 Brookside in 1912 or 1915, about when the Dan Patch Railway opened for riders passing by a few feet away; the store doubled as a transit stop.

Around the time of the 1917 Walker fire, the Piggly

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Wiggly was founded in Memphis, TN and revolutionized grocery shopping with its self-service, cash & carry concept, becoming the first national grocery chain. It finally showed up in the Park in 1940 with a small store at 4000 Minnetonka Blvd, which did not survive long.

Excelsior Blvd, as the town's main commercial drag, sprouted many smaller grocery operations, but National Tea, a national chain founded in Chicago in 1899, came to town in 1942 at Lilac Way Shopping Center. It moved to a new store on Excelsior at Quentin in 1953 which it sold to Hove in 1964, moving to another new store on the North Side in phase 2 of the Westwood Shopping Center. Hove's was bought and incorporated into Lunds in 1969, and the building has been part of the Park Nicollet campus ever since.

But the post-World War II boom started the real grocery rush, with baby boomers driving demand everywhere and Red Owl anchoring Miracle Mile and Penny's moving to brand new Texa-Tonka in 1951, and National Tea opening a second store in the Park, co-anchoring Knollwood Plaza in 1954 along with Red Owl.

Red Owl, founded in Rochester, MN in 1922 by Ford Bell, a General Mills heir, opened its first Twin Cities' store in Hopkins in 1948 and grew by 1970 to be the largest grocery chain in the Twin Cities. In 1961 it went public and had 172 retail stores, selling wholesale to 472 independent outlets.

Red Owl became one of the most beloved brands in Minnesota and in the Park and anchored the first phase of Miracle Mile until a disastrous fire in 1973, after which it did not rebuild.

Red Owl was purchased in 1967 by Gamble-Skogmo, then headquartered in the Park. Gamble was later purchased by Wickes Companies. By 1983, corporate mismanagement had reduced the Red Owl brand to 75 company-owned namesake stores and Country Stores. In 1988, the Red Owl stores and distribution system were acquired by Supervalu. The Twin Cities had 11 Red Owl stores remaining then, with nearly 40 in Minnesota. By 1990, seven stores were left. In 2018, a Red Owl in Green Bay became the last of its kind.

At its peak, Red Owl had 55 percent of the grocery business in Minnesota, according to a 2018 *Star Tribune* interview of Alan Stone, a former food distributor and owner of a Red Owl store in St. Louis Park, "They were the most important people in the food business in the Midwest in their time."

As the grocery industry has evolved, we're returning

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



## FLYNN'S NEW PARK FOOD

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Freedland's store building survives today on Alabama Avenue. Gone since September 2017, the Brookside Grocery building, (later Brookside Antiques), was founded in 1912 by Dana M. Thompson and his bride Anna who lived at their cottage on the Creek behind the store. The store served as a station on the Dan Patch Railway in 1918, and might have changed hands multiple times; our records show Hanscome's Grocery in 1938; Lindstrom's Food Market from 1940-47, and Seifert's Grocery in 1948. Flynn's, in the new Lilac Way shopping center, advertised in the first issues of the 1941 *Dispatch*, but didn't survive long, while Red Owl became much beloved in the Park.



## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

This quarter, Bill has teamed up with long time member Mark Toretzky to provide a detailed history of grocery stores in The Park. Those of a certain age can probably recall all the various store brands and innovations through the post war decades as food selection grew tremendously while convenience and speed became important differentiators in the marketplace.

When my family moved to Minnesota in 2005, it took a little while to “figure out” the grocery scene. We had moved from Chicago, where at the time it felt like there was primarily the Jewel-Osco chain as the standard grocery store, which is equivalent to Cub Foods here. I remember an out-of-town friend who had grown up in the Twin Cities telling me about a grocery store called Byerly’s and that I just had to shop there because it had carpeting! There was also the option to shop at SuperTarget, which was not available in many states outside of Minnesota. Reading about the decades of grocery chains just within St. Louis Park shows how the industry is constantly evolving to meet our changing needs.

Also evolving are the COVID protocols in St. Louis Park and of course around the country. Local stores mostly removed mask policies in February. And after almost exactly two years, SLP schools are back to normal having dropped their mask mandate at the March 8th School Board meeting. Of course, the pandemic continues in many parts of the world, but it looks as if we may have finally turned the corner here at home.

Thanks to Mark Toretzky for contributing his article this quarter. Mark has done research for us over the years, and he is also the designer of our logo that you see on the front cover of this newsletter. If you have a topic of interest for a future edition of the ReEcho, please let us know – Bill is always looking for ideas and collaborators!

With Park pride,

Ted

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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.

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to the Swenson & Redeen personal shopper and delivery model. Instacart started up in San Francisco ten years ago and has expanded to cover most of the U.S. and Canada. Two years of Covid-19 has helped the business model grow massively, and many local Twin Cities grocery stores offer the service, including the Park's Lund's/Byerly's. As described by Wikipedia:

*Orders are fulfilled and delivered by a personal shopper who picks, packs, and delivers the order within the customer's designated time frame—within one hour or up to five days in advance. Customers pay with personal debit or credit cards, Google Pay, Apple Pay and EBT cards. The delivery fee is \$3.99 for orders of \$35 or more and \$7.99 under that amount. Regardless of the cost of the order, there is a 5% service fee with a minimum of \$2 owed.*

You can even shop Costco without being a member, but don't try Trader Joe's. They had a falling out with Instacart and, as of early 2020, TJ's had banned Instacart's personal shoppers from their stores.



Among the Mom & Pops was Sol's Superette which was a favorite of SLPHS Board member and Park High grad Jane Hagstrom growing up.

Grocery stores, much like churches, were purpose-built, and they changed ownership and names often. It was not unusual for a single building to have four or five proprietors. In our survey and photos of stores, and Mark Toretzky's article below, we've missed some, but hope to provide a reasonable overview of the 136-year history of shopping for food in the Park.



## THE HISTORY OF GROCERY STORES IN ST. LOUIS PARK

BY MARK TORETSKY

Since about 1900 there have been many grocery stores of all types and sizes in St. Louis Park. Three of the earliest grocery stores in St. Louis Park were: Trenkley's Grocery, Brookside Grocery, and Freeland's Grocery.

**Trenkley's** is possibly the oldest and first grocery store in St. Louis Park. It was started by E. M. Trenkley in about 1900 and was located in the east section of the Hamilton building on what is now Walker Street. Trenkley's was bought in 1912 by Joseph Hamilton's son Charles and he took control of it sometime after 1925. Brookside Grocery, not to be confused with Brookside Market (6007 Excelsior Blvd.) was owned by Dana M. and Anna/Anne/Ann Thompson. On April 19, 1919 **Freeland's Grocery** owned by John and Isabelle (Belle) Freeland opened at 3751 Alabama Avenue. In 1943 John and Isabelle's daughter Beulah and her husband Ralph L. "Wag" Wagner bought the store from her parents. After Ralph died Beulah continued to run the store and some customers knew it as "Beulah's Store. It closed July 15, 1977.

Nels Swenson and Carl Redeen opened **Swenson and Redeen Meat Market** in October 1923 in the Walker Building at 6512 Walker Street. It was a charge and delivery operation. The "We Deliver" slogan meant that they made four separate deliveries each day at 8 am, 10 am, 1 pm and 3 pm. During the depression years Swenson and Redeen rarely refused a customer to charge groceries no-matter how high their bill might be. In 1942 Swenson bought out Redeen and it became Swenson's Meats and Groceries. In 1948 the store moved across the street to the Hamilton Building until it closed in January 1952 when Nels Swenson died. Koch's or Oak Hill Grocery as it was also known was built in 1928 and owned by Reinhold N. Koch until 1973 was located at 3701 Quebec Avenue, next to Wagner's Drive-in. In the 1940's the store had gas pumps.

In 1933 Oscar Johnson opened his **Fairway Fine Food Store** at 5508 Excelsior Boulevard. By 1938 it was called IGA Groceries also run by Oscar Johnson. In 1939 it was Grossman's Food Market (Fairway Fine Foods). Hanscome's Grocery at 4348 Brookside Avenue opened in 1938 too.

The first two grocery store chains that opened in St. Louis Park were **Piggly-Wiggly** and **National Tea**. In 1940 and perhaps as early as 1935 Piggly-Wiggly opened at 4000 Minnetonka Boulevard. Piggly-Wiggly was the first cash and carry chain grocery store in St. Louis Park. Park grad Harold Hendrickson was the manager in October 1940. Piggly-Wiggly was replaced by **Penny's Super Market** in

the 1940s. It was owned by the Simon and Levine families and its logo was also a pig. The store featured three Speed-Eze checkout counters.



The phrase "cash & carry" originated in the first half of the 1900's and refers to self-serve wholesale stores (typically groceries) that sell goods to retailers, authorized companies, family associations authorized by law and regular people registered in the seller's database.

**Witt's Food Center** owned by August Witt opened 1940 it later became Witt's Supervalu. Also in 1940 to 1941 the New Park Food Market managed by C. C. Amundson occupied 5508 Excelsior Boulevard. And from 1940 to 1947 was Lindstrom's Food Market at 4348 Brookside Avenue owned by Reynold D. and Mildred Lindstrom.

National Tea opened at 5420 Excelsior Boulevard in 1942. It would move to 4951 Excelsior Boulevard in 1953.

**Moritz Food Market** owned by Donald B. and Frances Moritz was at 4215 Excelsior Boulevard from 1946 to 1949. In 1947 the butcher shop in Moritz's Food Market was Stadther's Meats. In 1949 L.T. McGuire's Quality Meats replaced Stadther's Meats. **Gordon Brothers Red & White Grocery** opened at 7200 Minnetonka Boulevard. In September 1948 it became Hodroff's Big Ten then it became Hodroff's Food Market in late 1948 to 1964 owned by William and Monroe Hodroff and Robert Gordon. In 1947 Ted B. Koehler remodeled 6006 Excelsior Boulevard into the Koehler's self-service Food Store with Laurence Hirmer meat manager and Chester Kell grocery manager. The grand opening was held on March 21, 1947. Then in 1948 **Seifert's Grocery** opened at 4348 Brookside Avenue, ran by Francis Seifert.

On June 29, 1950 **Penny's** opened at 6322 Minnetonka Boulevard. On March 19, 1951 it was destroyed by fire. Klein's took over not only the space that Penny's occupied, but also expanded west into the space occupied by Brink's Variety Store.



On August 28, 1951 **Red Owl** opened in Miracle Mile shopping center with Clark Messman, manager. It was 12,000 sq. feet which featured a Kiddy Coral with a TV and comic books. The store

was remodeled in 1958 when Norman Stover was the manager. The store was gutted by fire on October 26, 1973. The fire started in the suspended ceiling above the produce department and spread quickly between the roof and the false ceiling. St. Louis Park firefighters were assisted by Edina, Bloomington, Richfield, Eden Prairie, and Hopkins firefighters aided by local teenagers who held down hoses.

On Thursday, November 29, 1951 at 10:00 AM **Penny's Super Market** had its grand opening at 8000 Minnetonka Boulevard; it was one of first stores in the Texa – Tonka shopping Center where it was one of the busiest, if not the busiest grocery stores in the Twin Cities and the first to be completely air-conditioned. This Penny's location was owned by George Levine and its manager was Irwin "Irv" Rubenstein and rest of the chain was owned by the Simon Brothers. Its slogan was "Be Penny Wise - Shop at Penny's and Economize." Penny's had "Speedy" turntable checkout counters and easy-gliding shopping carts. During the late '50s to the early '60s Sam Fogel managed the meat department. Penny's last day of business was Saturday, May 23, 1981.



In 1952 it was known as the **Milkhouse Dairy Store**, the Moritz Dairy Store and the Minikahda Dairy Store run by Robert E. Moritz at 4215 Excelsior Boulevard. It had a section that was called the Minikahda Hobby Shop. On February 21, 1952 Klein's Supermarket opened at 6322 Minnetonka Boulevard, Frank J. DeMay was manager.

St. Louis Park's second **Supervalu** opened on July 9, 1953 in the Lilac Way shopping Center and advertised its exclusive "rolling cold" facilities, which meant that meat was



refrigerated during all stages of preparation. It featured air conditioning, magic carpet doors, Witt's Bakery, Spee-Dee checkout counters, a Kiddie Korral, Gold Bond Stamps. Ivan Hagen, manager and Chet Janson meat manager. In December 1956, new owner-manager Burton J. "Bud" Amlaw purchased the store from the late Harry Botten. Also in 1953 National Tea moved from Lilac Way to 4951 Excelsior Boulevard and was there until late 1963.

**The Giant Food Store** at 7105 Cedar Lake Road opened in September 30, 1954. In 1962 it became Westwood

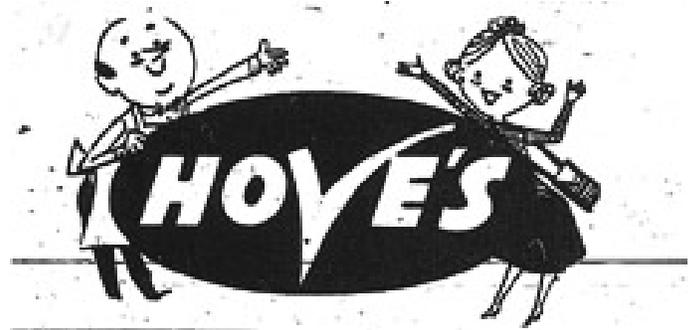
Giant IGA until 1966. In 1954 National Tea owned by Tom Wheaton opened at 4000 Minnetonka Boulevard. In November 1955 the store was badly damaged by fire. The National Tea grocery store, 8326 Highway 7, and Red Owl, 8120 Highway 7 opened on August 24, 1955. Red Owl's original manager was John Wilwerding. The store in 1955 promised a live lobster tank and perimeter stocking of perishables. In March 1960 the manager was Howie De Schmitt. The Red Owl at Knollwood closed in 1983. National Tea lasted until 1968 when it became Del Farm National Tea. In November 1959 Texa-Tonka Dairy Store opened at 8140 Minnetonka Boulevard owned by Polka Dot Dairy and Wally Pettit. It would last until either 1967 or 1968.

In 1960 **Stillman's Foods** opened at 4000 Minnetonka Boulevard. Harry Stillman and his sons George, Norman, Arthur, and Leonard claimed to have lower prices due to "carload purchasing" and low cost distribution. From 1962 to 1965 **Buddy's Super Market** owned by Burton A. Shapiro occupied 4000 Minnetonka Blvd. When **Sol's Superette** owned by Sol Bukstein opened in October 1961 it quickly became a landmark at 7240 Cedar Lake Road. At the grand opening customers were offered free salami while supplies lasted. Sol's was well known for its popular delicatessen. It had a card you could get punched each time you bought a deli sandwich and when you bought seven deli sandwiches the eighth was free. Sol's last day of business was December 26, 1997.

**The Target Store** at 8900 Highway 7 opened on October 31, 1962 after construction delays it was the second Target built and the third one to open. When Target opened it had a full size grocery store inside that was owned and operated by Applebaum Food Markets of St. Paul. The grocery department had its own set of checkout lanes and in the 1970's it had a parcel pick-up. In 1977 the Knollwood Target closed its grocery department. They demolished the original Knollwood Target store in January 2006 to make room for a **SuperTarget** store that was built on the same location. When it opened The Knollwood Target it was rebranded as a SuperTarget which is a very large Target store with a grocery department. St. Louis Park's second Target is located at 3601 Highway 100. It opened in 1987. It was renovated in 2016 to add a grocery department however it is much smaller than the one in the Knollwood SuperTarget.

In 1963, the Piggly-Wiggly store on at 6312 Minnetonka Boulevard became a **Mini-Max**. Donald A. Swanson and his wife Tillie then bought it and changed the name to Don's Mini-Max. In February 1965 the name changed to Don's Park Market which it remained until at least 1990. It became Tony's Park Market in 1990 and then it was Ty's Park Market.

In June 1964 Milton Hove leased 4951 Excelsior Boulevard for **Hove's Grocery Store**. Hove's was considered exclusive and upscale at the time, offering quality service and ambiance. In 1964 Russell Lund bought the Hove's chain and renamed it Lund's. The St. Louis Park store was still in operation in November 1964, but closed soon afterwards.



In October 1964 National Tea at 2326 Louisiana Avenue opened. Its grand opening was on November 12 thru 14, 1964. The front of the store was almost all plate glass windows and above the entrance was a revolving display. National Tea got their groceries from May Brothers wholesale warehouse. When I was in elementary school the bus I took would go past the National Tea grocery store 2326 Louisiana Avenue, it occasionally had to wait for the May Brothers truck, with gold tractor, to back into the alley behind the store. In 1979 National Tea acquired **Applebaums** and the National Tea at 2326 Louisiana Avenue became an Applebaums in 1980. National Tea also opened on 36th Street and Highway 100 in the spring of 1964 and closed on July 24, 1965.

**Shoppers' City** opened on November 15, 1965 at 36th Street and Hwy 100. Mel Roth was the owner and Frank Anslow was the first store manager. A teaser billboard announcing the store started with just the bird's eye, then the S, then eventually the name of the store. The grocery department, just like Target's, had its own checkout lanes and was a full size grocery store. Shoppers' City struggled until the end of 1979 when it closed.



**Milt's Food Market** owned by Milton H. Gutkin was located at 4000 Minnetonka Blvd. from 1966 to the mid 1980's. It featured "Charlie's Meats" Kosher Meat market which was operated independently by Charles M Turner in the back of Milt's Food Market. **Kenny's Food Market** at 7115 Cedar Lake Road opened in November 1966 and was there until 1972. In 1967 **Greenstein and Sons** kosher meat

market, owned by Allen Greenstein opened in Kenny's. My father (Morris Toretsky) worked at Greenstein's on Sundays to help Allen and Hymie Pesis, another butcher at Greensteins.

In 1967 or 1968 the **Texa-Tonka Dairy Store** at 8140 Minnetonka Boulevard became a **Tom Thumb** store. The Tom Thumb store was there until 2006 or 2007 when it became Yes Mart. In March or April of 2011 Yes Mart was destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt and reopened in December 2011. It lasted until 2018 or 2019. On July 10, 1968 the Knollwood Plaza National Tea had its grand opening as **Del Farm National Tea**.

# Country Club Markets

**Country Club Market** owned by Howard Alkire opened in 1970 at 8236 Hwy 7. It expanded into 8232 Hwy 7 in 1980 and closed in 1990. In 1972 Kenny's Food Market at 7115 Cedar Lake Road became **Rapid Shop** owned by Irving Goldberg. Rapid Shop was a convenience store with Greenstein and Sons Kosher meat market. It would become Westwood Deli in 1980. In 1977 Knollwood Village strip mall was built extending from the north side of the Knollwood Target towards 36th Street, at the north end is where **Applebaums** owned by Sid Applebaum opened in 1977. When Applebaums opened the grocery department in Target closed. Applebaums was rebranded as **Rainbow Foods** in 1983.



**Byerly's** at 3777 Park Center Boulevard was owned by retired Super Valu employee Russell Byerly and his son Don. It opened on March 16, 1980 it was more than a grocery store, it was a novelty that nobody had ever seen before. At 92,000 square feet it was one of the largest grocery stores in the United States at that time. Byerly's was such a unique sensation that it had write-ups in the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Business Week, and People magazine. Byerly's attracted more than 75,000 people weekly. I worked at the St. Louis Park Byerly's from

September 1986 to May 1989 and during one of my shifts I bagged Tim Conway's groceries and got his autograph. I remember delivering bagels from the St. Louis Park Byerly's to the Edina, Bloomington and Burnsville Byerly's stores. Some of the features of the St. Louis Park Byerly's when it opened were: a gift shop, Woods Chocolate Shop which sold ice cream cones, fudge and a multitude of candy, a cooking school, Hallmark card shop, Bachman's flower shop, It also featured a parcel pick-up with a conveyor belt that went down under the store and came up outside on the north side of the building, a catering service, and a live lobster tank.

Applebaums at 2326 Louisiana Avenue became **Robb's Supervalu** on October 19, 1980 because of an agreement with the Federal Trade Commission after National Tea violated antitrust laws when it acquired Applebaums it had to sell seven stores which included the aforementioned Applebaums which was sold to Fritz Tyra (this information was from the Minneapolis Star on Wednesday August 20, 1980). Robb's Supervalu was owned by Fritz Tyra it was run by Fritz's daughter Rhonda (Ronnie) and her husband Robb Breitenbach. They added a deli in the northwest corner of the store. Robb's Supervalu lasted until May 1985. Also in 1980 Rapid Shop at 7115 Cedar Lake Road was sold to Bob Hanson and it became Westwood Deli and Superette. Under the new ownership the Greenstein's Kosher Meat Market was converted into a Kosher Delicatessen. Westwood Deli sadly closed in 1986.

**Red Owl's Country Store** with Mead Stone as manager opened on May 18, 1981 next to Kmart on 36th Street and Highway 100. It was a no frills grocery store where you had to bag your own groceries. Red Owl Country Store closed in 1985. **Hauser's Supervalu** owned by Brooks Hauser at 8000 Minnetonka Boulevard opened on May 31, 1981. Tim Adelman was manager and Judy Johnson was the bookkeeper. Hauser's switched franchises in June of 1985 from Supervalu to IGA this changed the warehouse that supplied Hauser's from SuperValu to Gateway Foods which is why the store name changed to **Hauser's IGA** (Independent Grocers Alliance). In February 1986 it became **Stone's Foods**.



In October 1983 the Applebaum's store in the Knollwood Village strip mall was rebranded as Rainbow Foods.

In August 1985 Robb's SuperValu became **Bernie's SuperValu** under its new owners Bernard (Bernie) and Brigid Purdy. Tim Hayes was the store manager, Scott Greenfield was produce manager, Sue Johnson was deli manager, and Marty Wallin was dairy and frozen food manager. Tuesdays were senior citizen's discount day where they would get a discount on their groceries. On Sunday June 22, 1986 Bernie's was completely destroyed by a fire that started in the meat department about 7 a.m., about an hour before the store was scheduled to open. Firefighters from St. Louis Park and six other communities fought the blaze.

Bernie's rebuilt on the same location and it opened in the spring of 1987. During the time I worked at Bernie's (May 1989 to November 1994) Bernie's started a giving you five cents off of your purchase for each of their paper handled grocery bags you brought back to the store and reused. In 1995 or 1996 Bernie's SuperValu became **Bernie's Jubilee** under the same ownership. It became **Almstead's SuperValu** owned by Jim Almstead from November 14, 1997 to September 17, 2011. It was the end of an era because it was the last of the full-sized mom and pop proprietary grocery stores in St. Louis Park.

**Stone's Foods** owned by Alan Stone opened at 8000 Minnetonka Boulevard in February 1986. The store manager was Bob Guerin, meat manager Dave Eichens, deli manager Melanie Stone Klett (Alan Stone's daughter). Stone's Foods main grocery supplier was the Red Owl warehouse. Stone's Foods lasted until 1988 when it became a Red Owl Corporate store. In 1990 it was **Cooney's SuperValu** owned by Vic Cooney then from 1992 until July 1993 when it closed for the last time as a grocery store it was **Park SuperValu**, a SuperValu corporate store.

**Costco** wholesale club opened its first St. Louis Park store in 1987 at 3745 Louisiana Avenue. Costco closed in 1988; the company cited large losses. The wholesale club concept had apparently not caught on yet in the Midwest. On August 11, 1988, the **Wholesale Club Inc.** opened a 100,000 square foot \$5,000,000 building created nearly 100 jobs. Mayor Lyle Hanks spoke at the grand opening. The Wholesale club was there until about 1991 then **Sam's Club** opened in the same location. In 2006 Sam's Club built a new building next to the old one and demolished the old one in 2007. Sam's Club closed in 2019. In March of 1990 **Almstead's Newmarket** owned by Jim Almstead opened at 3710 Highway 100. The Newmarket concept was developed by SuperValu for the retailer who needed to improve their stores' look and style to meet

competition. The Newmarket format combined warehouse pricing with an upscale product line and services such as video rental, check cashing counters, and baggers. Almstead's Newmarket closed in 1999. In 1998 **Cub Foods** opened on Texas Avenue and 36th Street. It's operated by Jerry's Foods Inc. of Edina which was founded by Gerald (Jerry) Paulsen.

Costco's second venture in St. Louis Park started when it opened on November 16, 2000 at 5801 West 16th Street. Honeywell formerly occupied the property where Costco's 145,000 sq. ft building now sits.

**Rainbow Foods** opened in 2009 at 5370 West 16th Street in the West End shopping area. It was owned by Milwaukee based Roundy's and its main fierce competitor was Cub Foods. This particular Rainbow store was sold to SuperValu, parent company of Cub Foods on May 7, 2014 when that happened it became corporate Cub Foods Store.

# Rainbow®

The most recent grocery store to open in St. Louis Park is **Aldi**. Aldi is a no-frills type of grocery store that features many of their own exclusive brands and it carries all of the essentials. It opened in 2019 and is located at 8950 Hwy 7 and occupies about half of the space that used to be Rainbow Foods.

**Fishman's Kosher Market and Grocery, Trader Joes, Fresh Thyme and The Kosher Spot** are the four specialty grocery stores that are or have been in St. Louis Park. Fishman's owned by Stewart Fishman opened in 1995 at 4000 Minnetonka Blvd and moved to 4100 Minnetonka Blvd in 2000. Fishman's closed in 2011. On May 15, 2006 Trader Joes opened at 4500 Excelsior Boulevard. In November 2017 Fresh Thyme opened at 4840 Excelsior Boulevard. Trader Joes and Fresh Thyme stores are similar because many of the products they carry are natural, cruelty-free, and are made without artificial ingredients. The Kosher Spot owned by the Weinberg Family opened in May 2013 at 4217 Minnetonka Boulevard. The Kosher Spot is an all Kosher grocery store the filled the void when Fishman's closed.

There were a large number of small mom and pop grocery stores that are not mentioned in this article because of space limits. My apologies to those stores not mentioned.

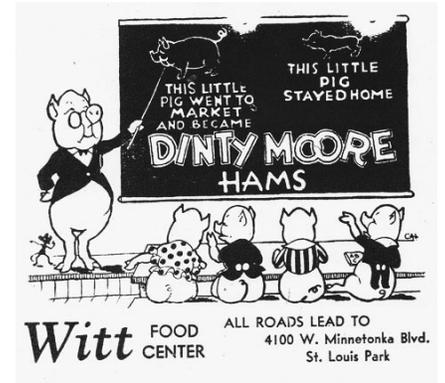
**Source material for the article comes from the St. Louis Park Historical Society's website and from the book "Something in the Water" Jeanne Anderson, Editor; Minneapolis StarTribune, St. Louis Park Dispatch, St. Louis Park Sun, St. Louis Park Sailor, St. Louis Park Sun Sailor.**



The Fern Hill Store (top) still relied on horsepower when August W. Nyberg opened it around 1917, located about where the Park Theater was later built, on Minnetonka Blvd just west of Ottawa. The store was purchased by the Moldestad family, who proceeded to build a more substantial, two-story brick grocery just to the east around 1939. Messrs Swenson and Redeen posed for a portrait in their Walker Building slot, (middle), and Koch's Oak Hill Grocery was maybe the first mom & pop to include gasoline sales – think 7/11 – next to Wagner's Drive-In on Hwy 7.



The Lilac Way shopping center got its start around the beginning of WWII, making growth problematic. National Tea got a slot there in the early 1940s, but the construction of Miracle Mile across Excelsior Blvd in 1951 sucked all the air out. Red Owl was the eastern anchor for the first phase of MM, occupying the space that now belongs to Ace Hardware. Witt's Market replaced Piggly Wiggly at 4000 Minnetonka Blvd around 1940, but was replaced itself by National Tea in 1954.



In 1962, before it was Shoppers City, it opened as a Topps Discount City store. Most new Topps stores were opened in partnership with supermarkets; a National (Tea) Foods Supermarket was attached a in the spring of 1964, but Topps went bankrupt in 1965. In November of that year Shoppers' City, local chain started in 1959, opened. The store featured a department store, grocery store, bakery, barber shop, beauty salon, optical shop, auto repair, gas station, dry cleaning, shoe repair, tire store, garden store, and a furniture and appliance department on the mezzanine. It became Zayre's Shoppers City in 19?? then K-Mart for short spell. In 1990 the south end of the building became Almstead's New Market which survived until 1998. Now the ever-popular MicroCenter, selling bytes instead of bites. After Piggly Wiggly disappeared from town, Witt's and Penny's adopted the porcine logo, although it had not yet appeared at the grand opening of Penny's in 1951 (bottom).





# REeCHO

PARK HISTORY TODAY

An official publication of the St. Louis Park Historical Society

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## DISPATCH LOOKBACK

The St. Louis Park Dispatch rolled out its first edition a week before Pearl Harbor in 1941. Hardly a great time to be starting anything new. Food advertising in 1941 reflected the times. Swenson and Redeen touted their four-a-day delivery schedule but was soon forced to adapt to the war and cut back. Instead of stealing catalytic converters, tires were going missing due to the wartime shortage of rubber. Ten years later, Red Owl was a post-war fixture at Miracle Mile, and was advertising up a storm.

### NOTICE

In view of the circumstances confronting all of us, and to assure our continued policy of good service we shall be forced to confine our deliveries to two (2) daily, beginning Monday, Jan. 19, 1942.

All orders received before 9:30 A. M. will be delivered before noon.

Orders received between 9:30 A. M. and 2:30 P. M. will be delivered in the afternoon.

Orders received after 2:30 P. M. will not be delivered until the next day.

Your cooperation on this schedule will be greatly appreciated, and we will continue our policy of prompt delivery.

Thank You,

## Swenson & Redeen

St. Louis Park  
6512 Walker St. Call Whittier 1863

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### Don't Let Thieves Steal Your Precious Tires

Protect your tires from being stolen by using this simple and effective method. It is the only way to keep your tires safe from being stolen. This is the only way to keep your tires safe from being stolen. This is the only way to keep your tires safe from being stolen.

**THIS CARD**  
Offers You Convenient Method of Replacing Your Tires  
*Get It Free!*  
FROM YOUR DEALER  
Who Will File It With the Village Police

**TIRE RECORD**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Make, size and number and model year of machine to be used (check each tire)

**ST. LOUIS PARK Police Department is Co-operating in This Tire Record Film**

Tire Record Cards Are Available At These Firms:

- SHREVE & SONS, 1001 W. WALKER
- PHILLIPS & SONS, 1001 W. WALKER
- MIRK'S PARK CITY SERVICE STATION, 1001 W. WALKER
- BROOKS SERVICE STATION, 1001 W. WALKER
- SUNSET GARAGE TEXACO STATION, 1001 W. WALKER
- CAMPBELL'S STANDARD SERVICE, 1001 W. WALKER
- WIS W. LARK, 1001 W. WALKER
- LILAC LAND SERVICE, 1001 W. WALKER
- BROOKS SERVICE STATION, 1001 W. WALKER
- VINCE HERNSTADT'S STATION, 1001 W. WALKER
- ST. LOUIS PARK GARAGE, 1001 W. WALKER
- EMIL LIND TEXACO SERVICE, 1001 W. WALKER

**Thumbs Down On Tire Thieves**

RED OWL IS OPEN 24 HOURS

### HERE IT IS! RED OWL'S BIG MEAT ROUNDUP

A Rootin' Tootin' Sale!

Quantity Beef Sale

**HAMS**  
SMALL SIZE—WHOLE 47. HALF 49

Little Pig Whole or Half PORK LOINS . . . . . lb. 45c  
FRESH DRESSED FRESH CHICKENS Separated lb. 55c  
ARMED STEAK BY THE POUND SLAB BACON . . . . . 39c

Shop for Meats THE MODERN WAY IN RED OWL'S SELF-SERVICE MEAT DEPARTMENT

Quaker or Regular QUAKER OATS . . . . . 45c-27c  
White Beans COFFEE . . . . . 1-lb. Bag 81c  
White Beans COFFEE . . . . . 1-lb. Bag 77c  
Harvest Queen BREAD . . . . . 2 1/2-lb. Loaves 37c

Shop for Meats THE MODERN WAY IN RED OWL'S SELF-SERVICE MEAT DEPARTMENT

Vegetable Shortening MIXO Red Owl 5-lb. Pkg. 86c  
Tenderloin CATSUP 14-Oz. Can 19c  
Tenderloin CHARMIN 4 Bull Pkg. 35c  
CORN MEAL FLOUR 5-lb. Bag 56c

Del Monte 'Sunshine Cruise' Features

PINEAPPLE JUICE 14-Oz. Can 29c  
PINEAPPLE 14-Oz. Can 28c  
PINEAPPLE 14-Oz. Can 32c

Just Jammed PANCAKE FLOUR 17-lb. Pkg. 44c  
SYRUP Vermont Blend 12-Oz. Btl. 27c

QUOTIDIAN PERSONNEL  
LOTS OF FREE PARKING  
RED OWL MIRACLE MILE

Fresh Frozen ORANGE JUICE ONE CAN MAKES 1 1/2 PINTS Wholesale Brand 6 6-Oz. Cans 89c  
BRUSSELS SPROUTS Full 29c Quart  
Florida's Best Peaches TANGERINES . . . . . Doz. 39c  
Sweet Apples PEARS . . . . . 2 lbs. 29c

WHITE RAIN 60c