

Produce Stand in Silver Bay on Saturdays

By: Katee Rose

There's nothing quite like biting into a fresh homegrown organic tomato off the vine on a hot summer day. This is the time of year where we are able to provide fresh local nutritious produce for our families and communities. That's exactly what the Finland Foodchain and Finland Farmers Market is aiming to make more accessible in the Silver Bay community this season.

The Finland Farmers Market is every Thursday until Oct 6th at the Clair Nelson Community Center on Cramer Rd. from 5-6:30. Credit and EBT are accepted. This year there is extra state funding to triple the amount of money spent on EBT. This means, spend \$10 in EBT and receive an extra \$20 in market bucks! The Finland Farmers Market has lots of goodies to choose from. Homemade jams, pickles, local syrup, fresh baked breads of several varieties, plants, flowers, fresh produce, and more! There are also weekly educational food demonstrations with samples to try and a variety of live music to enjoy.

How does the produce stand work? After the Farmers Market on Thursday, vendors pool the produce and coordinator Elizabeth Storm packs it all up and brings it to Silver Bay the following evening to give those folks access to the delicious local foods! The produce stand is once a week located outside of North Shore Area Partners at 36 Shopping Center Rd. You can expect there to be local produce available every Saturday all summer long starting July 15th until September 30th. The produce stand will be open from 5:30-7pm. EBT and credit cards will also be accepted.

This is the second season of trying to make this vision a reality, and with what the Foodchain has learned from last year's trial run, they expect this year's new location, evening time, and more advertising of the event to make it an even bigger success.

"Last year we had a lot of challenges from the drought and had tried a few different locations. We tried the ropes course on Hwy 61, and then again at the City Hall parking lot. Both areas were quite windy and not as visible to the public. We are hoping this year with the produce stand being right in the middle of Silver Bay's shopping center combined with it being held on a different day, in the evenings, more people will be able to come out and buy produce," says Lucy Carlson of the Finland Foodchain. "We are also doing a lot more advertising this year to try and spread the word," she comments.

One of the ideas behind starting to bring local produce to the Silver Bay community is to not only have delicious and nutritious food available to the public, but to drive up the demand, hopefully being able to one day sell a bigger selection of local produce and food in our grocery stores and support our local farm-



Produce stand at North Shore Adventure Park last summer. (submitted photo)

ers, which in turn supports our local economy! "On average, 48 percent of each purchase at local independent businesses was recirculated locally, compared to less than 14 percent of purchases at chain stores," according to the American Independent Business Alliance. This is called the "local multiplier effect". "We understand that there is an opportunity to increase local independent businesses by increasing local food production, and through that effort, we can increase our communities long term economic sustainability. In short, the more local food production there is, the more jobs and economic opportunity there will be. This will increase local wealth and that will in turn help our other local businesses thrive. Increasing local food production has the potential to help everyone in our community," as stated on the Foodchain's website.

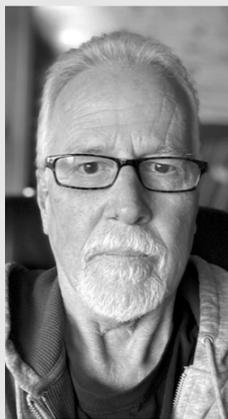
There are plenty of other exciting projects

to check into that the Finland Foodchain is coordinating, such as the Community Wild Rice Processing center (located on the Heffelfinger Rd.), Sisu Community Cafe serving local foods at pop up dinners throughout the season at the Trestle Inn on Cramer Rd., as well as working on obtaining funding to support a farm apprenticeship program in the area.

You can find more information on the Produce Stand on Facebook under Finland Produce Stand, or visit the Finland Food Chain's Website to learn more about the many projects they are working on at <http://finlandfoodchain.org>. As the wild rice season approaches, keep an eye out for information on the history of Manoomin in the area, how to responsibly harvest, make your own tools to do so, as well as mentor/mentee education programs that are open to the public. There is so much more to learn and grow together!

The Long Way Home

By Steve Fernlund



Sex Cake.

My mail ballot for the August 9th Partisan Primary election arrived and I'd like to explore it here.

There are four parties to choose from. The two usual suspects are Republican and DFL, the so-called Major Parties. The other two, the Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis Party and Legal Marijuana Now Party seem to exist for one and the same purpose only and are irrelevant to my thoughts and most voters today.

The major parties have paid staff, physical offices, and collect significant money during the year to fund election/campaigning operations. They each organize precinct caucuses in January to engage real people in the process of writing a platform and endorsing candidates for public office.

At the caucuses, where a dozen or so from each precinct might show up, delegates are selected to represent their neighbors at the next organizing level which might be a Senate District or county convention. There they select even fewer people to represent them at the State endorsing Convention.

People who attend endorsing conventions are well-versed in raising a point of order or calling for the vote and generally have a strong political philosophy. But they are a small minority of the small minority of voters who caucus in the winter.

The two-party system in our country has become a major and monopolistic industry. It feeds

money to businesses large and small, from lodging and convention providers to printers and political consultants; and makes sure that government policy protects the party's economic interests.

What they don't do well is represent the interests of voters. You know, people like us.

Our primary elections are supposed to give voters the choice of who represents the party in a general election.

In 1950, 31% of eligible voters turned out for the primaries in Minnesota. Seventy years later, turnout was down to 22%. About one in five voters choose the general election nominee of the major party they identify with.

After years of campaigning in the trenches of party politics, knocking on strangers' doors, and calling their phones during prime-time viewing, I'm convinced that our two-party system is a colossal failure. Most people just aren't that interested in politics.

You don't need to look too hard to see that many voters claim one party affiliation or the other because of something other than devotion to the party platform. And a plurality claims no party affiliation, although they tend to vote most with one party or the other.

People choose a political party like they choose a sports team to support. The rhetoric of diehard Minnesota Viking fans versus similar diehards for the Green Bay Packers echoes the rhetoric of Democrats versus Republicans.

While door-knocking for a candidate in Nevada one time I heard a woman say, "I'd vote for so and so, but I don't think they can win." Voting is not a parimutuel contest where you get something if you choose a winner.

What I'd like to see are non-partisan primaries, pitting the best of Rs and Ds against each other. California has had these for over a decade, where the top two vote-getters in a broad field of primary candidates run in the general election and may be from the same party. But you may end up with one truly independent candidate running against a partisan.

It's gotta be better than what we do now.

Steve Fernlund is a retired business owner, living in Cook County. He was publisher and editor of the Cook County News Herald in the 90's. Got a good Cook County story for him? Let us know. Call 218-226-3335 or Email: steve.fernlund@gmail.com

Local Farmers Markets

Brimson Market
TASTE THE NORTHERN SUMMER

Saturdays 9:00 - noon
July 2 - September 3
Outdoors at Hugo's Bar
1898 Hwy. 44, Brimson

FINLAND FARMERS MARKET

Every Thursday Evening,
5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
Under the pavilion at the
Clair Nelson Center
6866 Cramer Road, Finland

SATURDAYS
THRU OCT. 15
10AM - 1PM
320 7TH AVE
BURTLINGTON
STATION
PARKING LOT
TWOHARBORSFARMERSMARKET.COM