

Coming January 27-29, 2023

Jim Osbakken Memorial Bonspiel

Submitted by Rick Osbakken

The Jim Osbakken Memorial Open Bonspiel has been going on since Jim's passing in 2008.

For those that did not know Jim Osbakken we will share a few things:

Jim was one of the Original Founders of the THCC. The group decided to form a Curling Club in Two Harbors after curling in Duluth for a few years. They started by flooding an old warehouse down near the ore docks and taking up the game. Only a year or two later, Jim was instrumental in building the old 3 Sheet curling club on Hwy 2 and 20th Avenue in the late 60's. He (and many other founders) put their blood, sweat and tears into that building creating one of the coziest curling clubs in Northern Minnesota.

They hosted several events and had over a dozen teams come down from Canada to join the USA teams for the Two Harbors Men's International Bonspiel. Curling was played around the clock as there were so many teams for every 3 day event with only 3 sheets of ice.

In 1970 Jim was Vice Skip on the Halden Rink, which was first Two Harbors Curling Club team to represent Minnesota at Men's National Curling Championship. They represented Minnesota again at Men's Nationals in 1974.

Almost immediately after he started curling he got his wife, Val, into the sport where they teamed up with Ron and Carol Gervais in league play. Having the competitive side they even represented Minnesota at the Mixed National Championships 3 times thru the 70's.

Aside of competitive curling, he spent many weekends bonspieling at other clubs. During those events he encouraged many teams from other clubs to support our THCC bonspiels. That was huge in keeping our club financially secure as he brought many teams up to Two Harbors which filled ALL our Bonspiels.

Honestly as much as he liked Competitive Curling and Bonspiels, league play was his passion. He brought in many new curlers to

his team over the years and encouraged others to do the same as he felt it was another great way to grow the sport. Back in the day he curled 2-3 nights in Two Harbors the went to Duluth on Wednesday for the Competitive Pepsi Super League.

Unfortunately, during the 1991 Halloween snow storm we lost our little 3 sheet club to a fire. Due to the snow there was no saving it. Fortunately, our club was strong and between insurance and the members volunteering, a new state of the art facility was built at the golf course.

Jim continued to curl however his health started to fail. He went to one night a week and only did Bonspiels in Two Harbors and Grand Marais. When he was losing his eyesight there still was no stopping him. He had bright DeWalt flashlight that replaced his skips broom to aim at. He slid out in the tuck at that light and continued to make great shots.

There is no question he was one of the most passionate players of the sport, he loved to teach the game and left a legacy behind. His children, grandchild and great grandchildren are curling leagues, bonspiels, and even competitive curling at the National Level. None

of that would have been possible without the support of Jim, their Dad, Grandpa and Great Grandpa.

Long time curling friend who has attended the Jim Osbakken Memorial Open Bonspiel every year, Doug Cameron, spoke many good words during past Memorial Bonspiels. He has concluded by stating over all the years he curled, Jim was always a "class act" and naming a Bonspiel after "Jim Osbakken" was not a surprise to him as it is well deserved.

We would like to thank the THCC for all their work to hold this Bonspiel and all the teams that show up every year. A special thanks to those from Duluth, Superior and Grand Marias that have had several teams EVERY year.

Registration is open at twoharborscurling.com for the event to be held January 27-29, 2023.

Bring your league team; your senior team; your competitive team; your family team; or just throw a team together, as that is the way Jim would have wanted it!

Thanks again! Good Curling!

The Long Way Home

By Steve Fernlund

Sitting down to write this column I contemplated several topics.

Some reflections from my days consulting for and coaching small business owners might be helpful to some.

Overpopulation, with a nod to overtourism. When I was in high school overpopulation was a scary topic, an existential threat we were told. The world population in 1969 was 3.6 billion. Last year it was 8 billion. Yet we rarely hear about an overpopulation problem today. A worthy topic, but not for now.

Resource depletion would be fun. Years ago I was told to buy lakeshore property since "They ain't making it anymore."

None of these topics jump-started my willingness to leave smudged fingerprints on my wireless QWERTY keyboard.

Then, like a miracle, a topic presented itself, on Facebook of all things.

Sunday I was presented with a post asking the question, "What's the worst movie you've ever seen?" I never answer these types of "question" posts from anonymous sources, but a FB friend did and it showed up for me to consider. I haven't been to a movie theater in more than a decade and renting movies isn't for me. I not only can't remember the worst movie I've seen, but I also can't remember the best. Maybe it was "The Longest Day" which I saw in the early 60s at The Bloomington Drive-In on 12th Avenue..

After that little brain teaser, I realized that Social Media, which is often accused of making us dumber and misinformed, does a greater service of making me more self-aware. Not less dumb, or misinformed I admit, as many people on the site (and former readers of this column) are not afraid to point out. But more self-aware.

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



For some reason, the movies never really turned me on. Becky and I attended a screening of "Ghost Busters" at the Mann theater at Southtown Center when the movie was a big hit. Less than halfway through, I fell sound asleep. It could have been the comfortable seating, but I choose to remember that the movie just bored me.

Two of my regular golfing buddies in Las Vegas, let's call them Mike and Paul, were avid moviegoers. They misspent much of a round of golf thrashing out the merits of the latest movies and actors they'd seen. They were superfans of film, but Paul went a step further and helped found Cine Vegas, the predecessor to today's Las Vegas Film Festival.

I on the other hand always felt like the character in a bit that comedian Lewis Black did about the failing memory of those of us over 50.

Occasionally I'd gone to see one of the movies I'd heard my two cronies crowing about.

When next I was on a cart with one of them I'd say, "I saw that movie you guys were talking about last week."

"Which movie?" was the reply.

"You know, the movie with that one actor in it," I'd say.

"Which actor?"

"The one that was in the other movie you compared it to."

The interrogation went on like this for a while. Finally, I'd have to describe the plot of the damn thing and he'd figure out which one I was talking about. Then he'd ask stupid questions about the co-stars or sound effects of some other meaningless drivel about the movie that I'd mostly forgotten.

So I still believe that Facebook makes me dumber and misinformed. But it did make me self-aware enough to finally accept that I really don't care much about movies or film festivals or awards shows.

That's not all bad.

Santa visits Birch Grove Community School



Submitted by Diane Blanchette

Lloyd Chase and Deonn Cicak of Schroeder, aka Santa and Mrs. Clause, delighted children with a visit after the Birch Grove Community School musical, A Bear-y, Merry Holiday on the evening of December 20. They gave out bear mementos from the musical and candy canes to those children that waited in line to greet the famous couple. The santa visit, cookies, and the Scholastic Holiday Bookfair was a great way to end this special evening!