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SUN

SAILOR

EXCELSIOR / SHOREWOOD

Amorosi

The BCA has turned the Archer Amorosi investigation over to the Carver County Attorney.

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Homecoming

Minnetonka High's football homecoming game against Lakeville South is Sept. 28.

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Thursday, Sept. 27, 2018

Apple Day sweetens up Excelsior



(SUN SAILOR STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE KIEFFER)

Hannah Berg, Mia Bisso, Naomi Berg and Chloe Ronning eat as many apple pastries as they can Sept. 22 at the Apple Day pie eating contest in Excelsior. **More images on pages 22-23 and at sailor.mnsun.com.**



(SUN SAILOR STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE KIEFFER)

Claire Henke enjoys a bungee jump.



(SUN SAILOR STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE KIEFFER)

Park Nicollet Apple of the Lake 5K runners race Sept. 22 through downtown Excelsior.



(SUN SAILOR STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE KIEFFER)

Tommy Drummond, William Pigeon, Roberta Herron and Judge Bruce D. Manning celebrate the adoption Sept. 20 at the Hennepin County Juvenile Justice Center in Minneapolis.

Tommy's Tonka Trolley owner adopts first customer

By **PAIGE KIEFFER**
paige.kieffer@ecm-inc.com

On Sept. 20, Tommy's Tonka Trolley owner Tommy Drummond officially adopted his first and favorite customer, 25-year-old William Pigeon, who he met 18 years ago and has been mentoring ever since.

Drummond officially became a co-parent with Roberta Herron, Pigeon's mother and a friend of

Drummond's, on Sept. 20 when the adoption was approved by Judge Bruce D. Manning at the Hennepin County Juvenile Justice Center in Minneapolis.

"I've never had kids and I've always wanted kids," Drummond said. "It's incredible that I met my son at the Trolley! If you'd ever ask for a perfect son he pretty much fits the role."

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Adoption

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The two were first introduced in 2000 when Pigeon, 7, was first in line for the opening of Adele's Too that was located next to Excelsior Beach in the Commons Park. A year later, it was renamed Tommy's Tonka Trolley.

The previous year, Pigeon moved with his mom and sister Kate to a home on Lake Street. They were moving from Toronto after his mother got a new job as a product manager for TRW Family of Companies. His father Steve Pigeon, who was retired, was going to be moving to Excelsior shortly.

During Memorial Day weekend in 1999, Steve Pigeon was visiting family in Toronto when he suddenly became ill with toxic shock syndrome. He later died, devastating the family.

Pigeon, who lived on Lake Street near the ice cream shop, was excited for the grand opening after he read about it in the Sun Sailor. For weeks, he'd stop by every day and get a chocolate ice cream. Herron began to see how close Drummond and Pigeon had become and became concerned.

"Roberta came to me one day and told me about Will's dad and said that he's a little kid and I should be careful," Drummond said. "It's a roller-coaster losing your dad and I wanted to help."

Drummond became concerned that Herron was spending too much on ice cream. He said he wanted to mentor and help William and proposed that Pigeon should work at the Trolley. Herron said she loved the idea.

"Losing my father at the age of 6, my friendship with Tommy really helped me and it was great having a mentor



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

William Pigeon at the original Tommy's Tonka Trolley in the Commons Park in Excelsior.

like that growing up," Pigeon said. "He really shaped me into who I am today."

Herron said that Pigeon was always interest-

ed in running a business. When he was 7 years old, he asked his mother for a cash register to start a stand in front of their house. During town fes-

tivals in the Commons, Pigeon would sell pop and chips under a tent his mother set up for him.

"Tommy really taught William about his busi-

ness and how to run one," Herron said. "What I saw when William was working at the Trolley was a healthy environment that was helping mold him into a responsible adult and he really enjoyed it."

Drummond would often have Pigeon work the cash register or take out the trash.

"He got the most tips out of anyone when he was working the register," Drummond said. "I mean who wouldn't want to tip a little kid. He loved it!"

Drummond even made Pigeon business cards that said "assistant manager," and the boy carried them around everywhere.

"Growing up with Tommy and learning so much about each other we really developed a relationship that was like a father and a son," Pigeon said. "Tommy made it so easy for my to accept him, trust him and rely

on him. He has done so much for me and I can't thank him enough."

Drummond would often pick Pigeon up from Minnetonka Explorers at Excelsior Elementary, take him out for dinner and take care of him when his mother was traveling for work.

They bonded over their love of sports and would continuously catch Twins, Timberwolves, Vikings or Lynx games. Drummond also sponsored Pigeon's Little League team and would often take him to the local baseball trading card shop, which is now the Excelsior Brewing Co. After working at the Trolley, Drummond and Pigeon would end the day by playing catch on the lawn of the Commons Park.

When Drummond moved the Trolley to its

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*Scarborough Survey 2014 MN Newspaper Association



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(SUN SAILOR STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE KIEFFER)

Claire Wilkey races toward the finish line Sept. 22 at the Park Nicollet Apple of the Lake 1-mile race in Excelsior.



(SUN SAILOR STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE KIEFFER)

A mother and son race during the Park Nicollet Apple of the Lake 1-mile race Sept. 22 in Excelsior.



(SUN SAILOR STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE KIEFFER)

More than 50 vendors lined Water Street in Excelsior to celebrate Apple Day.



(SUN SAILOR STAFF PHOTO BY PAIGE KIEFFER)

Contestants dive into their pies Sept. 22 at the annual Apple Day pie eating contest in Excelsior.

Adoption

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current location at 379 Lake St., Excelsior, Pigeon helped him paint and design the new stand. Pigeon continued to work at the Trolley off and on until he graduated from Minnetonka High School and left for college.

In 2016, Pigeon graduated from Iowa State University with a bachelor's degree in architecture. He is now an architectural designer for DJR Architecture in Minneapolis. Pigeon currently lives with his girlfriend and dog in Uptown Minneapolis.

Pigeon and Drummond are still very close and meet up to grab dinner during the week or Pigeon visits him at the Trolley. Every year, Herron, Pigeon and Drummond also celebrate Christmas and birthdays together. Pigeon has also gone down to Florida numerous times during the winter to visit Drummond at his second home.

Drummond said that this past summer, he and Pigeon began discussing Drummond adopting the young man. After getting Herron's blessing, they began the process.

"We thought it was time to make our mentoring relationship officially a father-and-son relationship," Drummond said.

"With this adoption, I don't feel very different because we've always been close so it's so great we're really making official. Even without the adoption, I always knew this kid would be in my life."

"What this taught me is there's no age limit to friendships," Herron said. "People bond together because they're drawn to each other. Their friendship really helped out William tremendously."

Pigeon said, "After getting so many ice cream cones from him, I never could've imagined this day happening!"

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