

► Gordon

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Gordon would always water the plants in the library but would never let Rolfzen carry the water pitcher for her stating, "Nope, if I have people help me, I'm done." When finished, she would come into the office and talk to Rolfzen about how things used to be and about Nobel Shaddock. "She was just a wise lady. You could ask her anything and she knew or knew somebody that knew something about it. She was very, very intelligent."

Gary Weir is the treasurer at Pioneer Park. He said she was active on the Pioneer Park board up until a couple years ago. She had always talked about a library and Weir finally got some lumber and built her some shelves. The Gordon Memorial Library was named after her family and was officially opened on October 3, 2015.

Carol Weir, a park volunteer, commented on how Gordon loved to be in the parade and loved to wear hats. "She was never out of costume." Carol remembers being scolded for coming to the park in her regular clothes. Gordon insisted that if they were going to be in the park on weekends or during events, that they wear a costume. She believed, since the parks inception, that was how it was supposed to be. She is known as the keeper of the Nobel Shaddock memorabilia. She was always interested in the history of this area and took part in the process of determining what era donated items were from by being on the accession committee.

Carol described her as "a sweet little lady who was dedicated to the park," commenting on the years and years of work she put into the library. She had been on the board for years, and president of the board several times. Gary Weir said, "She was Roberts Rules to the T," and if you were out of line, she told you so. The meetings were run according to Roberts Rules of Order and Gordon said it so often at the board meetings that Rolfzen thought that was her name for a while, said in jest. The by-laws said business was to be conducted in a certain manner and she was adamant about following them. Gary called her "the enforcer."

Cheri Antl had known Gordon for about twenty years. They first met at a church event. Gordon told her all

about Pioneer Park and encouraged her to join. She is still active there today. She believed Gordon was "a woman before her time." "She had strong opinions, but she also knew how to get stuff done," and she knew people. "The kids used to love Marilyn. She would be in that schoolhouse, and she looked exactly like an old-time schoolteacher." She had a rocking chair in the library, where she would sit. "The library was her first love I guess."

She was also very patriotic, likely because her brother Ralph was killed in Italy in WWII and is buried there. She referred to herself as a Gold Star sister. Friends took a trip to Italy, located his grave, and took photos. Gordon had said she was overwhelmed, as she never expected to get there herself or see pictures of his grave.

Doris Wynia was a dear friend of Marilyn's. She recalls meeting Gordon for the first time when she was only nine or ten years old and went Christmas caroling at her house. When Wynia got into high school she dated some boys from South Haven who always talked about Gordon. The guys, she says, "razed her to pieces." Gradually they would see each other here and there. She convinced Wynia to become a member of Pioneer Park and they had been close friends ever since.

Gordon taught English, Speech, and Speech activities before becoming a full-time librarian. Wynia remembers that everywhere they went, Gordon would come across her past students, many of which kept in contact with her. "To be social was her thing. She loved to be around people." She would take information in, as she was always looking for more, and loved to read. She also loved fish fry's because there were people there that she knew.

Wynia relayed that Gordon was very active in the Red Cross, was an active Republican Party member, was on the board of the Tri-County Humane Society in St. Cloud and had been involved with the Kimball Historical Society. She loved Pioneer Park and in conversations with people she referred to herself as "the local historian of the area" who specialized in pioneer history. She loved her cats and dogs and going to senior dining. For her, it wasn't so much about the food, but about socializing with friends. "She loved it, she just loved it," Wynia remarked. Once Gordon could no



Submitted photos

Above, Marilyn Gordon in her younger years in front of a library display. Below, at right, Marilyn is riding in a wagon during a Pioneer Park Parade.



longer drive, getting places was very frustrating for her. There were a number of people who would pick her up and get her places, especially senior dining. But Wynia stressed it wasn't about those who got here there, but more about the fact that she always got there somehow.

She loved sweets, especially pie. She would buy a pie and then would insist that Wynia cut out one piece of pie for Marilyn, and then take the rest of the pie home to her husband Larry. She loved to shop. Wynia would drop her off at a store where Marilyn would spend an hour or two shopping. She described getting dirty looks from people because she was not holding the door for Marilyn or helping her get into the car. Just as Rolfzen had stated, Marilyn would say, "Doris, when I can't do that anymore then I'm done."

She loved history and loved to go for rides. She would tell Wynia where to go and on what gravel road to turn. They

would drive all over and Gordon would tell her who lived where and stories about them. She was a good listener and provided a lot of expertise to people. Wynia would call her at the same time every night to check up on her. "She lived a good life," even though she knew Gordon was disappointed that she never got married.

Wynia believes that Marilyn wanted to do what she could while she was here on earth by giving donations to many different organizations. She also did a lot of traveling with friends and a niece, but would not go on an airplane, preferring to travel by bus.

Chuck Sterling, a former editor of the Annandale Advocate and volunteer at Pioneer Park, remembers Gordon fondly and with great respect. He said she had a big voice for a small woman, a stern manner and spoke her mind. That may have been off-putting to some people he felt, "But beneath that no-nonsense exterior beat

a kind heart as evidenced by her love of animals. Her cats and dogs were her family."

Sterling described her as a force in South Haven, recalling her years of service as a council member and mayor, and crediting her with spearheading the city's drive to build a sanitary sewer system, which was completed in 2003. In addition, he noted her many years of volunteer service at Pioneer Park, referring to her as "the unofficial parliamentarian on the board." Her insistence on following Roberts Rules of Order wasn't always appreciated by the other directors. Her last term as a director ended in 2018, and said she was delighted last year when the board presented her with a plaque in appreciation of her service since 1972.

Mary Ann Edwards from Mom's Place in South Haven said Gordon was "a very knowledgeable, knowledgeable lady and we're going to miss her in town just because of everything she seemed to know about everything in the past." She visited the restaurant quite a bit and said she was so proud of the library at Pioneer Park. "She'd help us last minute for the South Haven stuff even though she wasn't always in the best shape, she was always willing to help if she could." She loved anybody that wanted to do anything with history, and Edward's niece, Erica Borgstrom, benefited from her passion.

Borgstrom lives in England, and in 2006, was studying at Durham University. She came home for the summer to waitress at her aunt's restaurant and work on her undergraduate dissertation in anthropology which required fieldwork. Her topic was the social history of, and social interactions in, the town of South Haven. The locals soon realized she was interested in learning more about them and their town.

She met Gordon and you might say the rest was literally history. "She was very generous with her time and stories, and we spent many hours at her house discussing what South Haven was like over the years and about the longer settler history of the area." "She clearly had a great passion for the area, education and history." Borgstrom stated that she was, and still is, very grateful for the time she spent with her. Gordon would surely be proud of the fact that Borgstrom has herself become an academic, lecturing at Open University. "So my 'training' so to speak with Marilyn, sit-

ting in her house and chatting for hours making notes, is something I continue to do in my research."

Norm Bodeker, the current mayor of South Haven, was just coming onto the council as Gordon was going off. "If she wasn't happy about something, she would speak her peace." He considered her the local historian and had seen first-hand many of the historical items that she had collected over the years.

Gordon loved history, and in her own way was part of making history in 1947 as a participant in what is believed to be the first Miss Annandale contest. In a 2014 Advocate story, Gordon relayed that they were supposed to wear swimsuits on the float, but that her mother forbid her to wear one. "I was the only contestant in shorts and a modest top," she said.

Another Advocate story described Gordon's experience with the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. A high school teacher in Kimball at the time, she was the first person at the school to hear of the shooting that day after her mother telephoned the school. "They closed school early as I recall. You got the news and you couldn't grasp it. It wasn't that it was the first time a president had been assassinated, but it was the fact that you could watch on the TV. The TV and radio had 24-hour coverage, and you absolutely could not-you took time maybe to go to the bathroom and heat up food and bring it back-but you couldn't leave it."

In 2000, the Centra-Sota grain elevator in Annandale, and its mural, were demolished. The words "progress, kindness and peace" were written on the concrete under the artwork. They were taken from a poem published in a 1936 issue of the Advocate and written by Gordon's mother. Gordon was sad to see it come down and said, "The community just did not realize what the community had there." "I would have given anything to have taken those bricks and kept them."

It has been said that big things come in small packages. It was her goal to put South Haven on the map. Gordon, described as no-nonsense, straight forward, stern yet friendly, and one-of-a-kind, may have been less than five feet tall, but she accomplished great things in her life, impacted many, and will be missed.

► School

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Paperwork was submitted for approval to the Minnesota Department of Education Jan. 28. It included a description of the project, the dollar amount, the ballot question and the estimated tax impact. Prom indicated that they got approval for the project in May and does not expect new paperwork will have to be submitted.

Ryan Hoffman from ICS consulting and Sal Bagley from Wold Architects were on hand to answer questions about the facility needs. Jodi Zesbaugh, Senior Municipal Advisor with Ehlers Public Finance Advisors, also attended the virtual meeting.

Zesbaugh indicated that districts that have passed referendums this spring have seen

interest rates as low as 1.99 percent.

Hoffman said that bids on successful school building projects have been coming in at 10 to 15 percent less than projected.

At the meeting, the Board did not give any indication if and when the \$79.95 million question would be put to the votes of School District 876.

Community Ed split

The Annandale School Board approved a resolution for the dissolution of the cooperative agreement between the Annandale and Maple Lake Community Education programs.

In a May 12, 2020, letter from Maple Lake Superintendent Mark Redemski, Prom was informed that the Maple Lake School Board approved the termination at their Monday, May 11, 2020, meeting.

Prom indicated that there will be a six month transition period ending Wednesday, Nov. 11.

During this time Annandale Community Education Director Tiffany Grube will assist Maple Lake with the transition.

Candidate filing dates

District 876 residents that are interested in becoming a candidate for the 876 School Board can file between Tuesday, July 28th and 5 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020.

The filing fee for this office is \$2. Candidates must be an eligible voter, 21 years of age or more on assuming office, must have been a resident of School District 876 for 30 days prior to the general election and must have no other affidavit on file for any other office at the same general election.

The general election will be held Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020. Three members will be elected, each for four year terms.

The three seats up for election are held by incumbents Katie Jones, Paul Zabinski and Jon

Scheer.

No increase in fees

The Board approved the 2020-21 fee schedule with no increases, for lunch prices, athletic fees, admission fees for events and drivers education for behind the wheel. Also pay for substitute teachers.

Other items

■ Dave Greve resigned as the Annandale High School girls golf coach. He started as the boys golf coach in 1977 and started the girls program in 1986. He coached both programs until 1988. In 2013 he resumed coaching the girls team until the 2019 season.

■ The Board accepted the resignation of School Resource Officer Peter Standafer, who assumed the duties of the Annandale Chief of Police June 1. He held the SRO position for six years.

Up next

■ The next monthly Annandale District 876 School Board meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Monday, July 27. The meeting is scheduled to be held at the Annandale Elementary School Community Room.

"We now have approval to have those types of events approved by the City at the committee level," Hinnenkamp said.

Laura Hood Beckman, a member of the ACT Arts Committee indicated the committee is still in a wait-and-see mode as to whether the concerts come back later this summer.

"In Governor Walz's last orders, he indicated that outdoor events, with social distancing, would be allowed in groups not to exceed 250 people," Beckman said. "In past years we have exceeded 250 at the concerts."

Beckman indicated the committee has been assured that talent would be available should the Governor's orders change and they planned concerts later in the summer.

Grant approved

Hinnenkamp announced that Annandale has been awarded a Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) state grant for infrastructure and rehabilitation projects.

Annandale was among 32 Minnesota cities to receive the award. The City is expected to re-

ceive a \$485,000 grant for rental housing and commercial development through the Small Cities Development Program.

"We are just waiting for final confirmation on when funds will be available, Hinnenkamp said. "I am working with our consultant to gather the information we need to move the project forward and we will communicate more information in the next couple weeks."

Bonding bill stalled

The City of Annandale has a request to the Minnesota Legislature that the City be included in the 2020 bonding bill to assist paying for the Hwy 24 road project.

Annandale requested \$4.18 million which is 49 percent of the Hwy 24 project.

Hinnenkamp reported that Annandale's request was included in both the House and Senate bonding bills. So far an agreement between the House and Senate has not been reached during the regular session or a mid-June special session.

Up next

■ The next Annandale City Council meeting is 7 p.m. Monday, July 6, at the Annandale City Hall.

► City Council

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"Staff does not feel any changes are necessary in order to meet the Governor's order."

No action was required by the Council.

Road construction update

According to Hinnenkamp, asphalt will be removed on Oak Ave. from Park St. to Highway 55 starting Monday, July 6. In addition, sidewalks will be removed on Oak Ave. from Cedar St. to Park St. starting Monday, July 6.

"I don't know when the sidewalk will be removed from Cedar St. to 55," Hinnenkamp said. "They will be removed when the contractor is ready to remove and replace the sidewalks."

According to Hinnenkamp, there will be no parking on Oak Ave. from Park St. to Highway 55 starting Monday, July 6, but the contractor will be maintaining pedestrian access to businesses.

Concerts in the Park

Hinnenkamp indicated that the Friday Night Concerts in the Park would be allowed if ACT decided they wanted to have them.

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Sugar Lake 10900 Imhoff Ave., NW (MLS# 5326551) Highly sought after Sugar Lake is over 1,000 acres and boasts of over 12-foot water clarity. From the lake views, to the amazing half acre lot and immaculate home, will impress. 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, maintenance free decks, paver patio, three natural gas fireplaces, much more. **\$500,000**

207 Cardinal Ln, Clearwater- (MLS# 5608543) This home will impress inside and out. From the open floor plan, 10ft ceilings, the amazing kitchen and high-end finishes featuring granite countertops. Recently added sun room featuring a stone fireplace, vaulted ceiling and bar. 3 BRs with private master bath, oversized insulated and heated garage. **\$299,900**

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