

Wadena's Haul Out Homestore has a story to go with every quirky item

Michael Johnson
Wadena Pioneer Journal

WADENA — Charlie Holmes is a purveyor of oddities, a connoisseur of curiosity and a sleuth for stories. He's also the salesman at Haul Out Homestore, Wadena's latest business focused on selling collectibles and cleaning up your estate.



Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal
The Haul Out Homestore in Wadena is currently open three days a week offering vintage and collectible items along with other home goods.

The business is located in the former Dean Uselman potato factory on Hwy 10, next door to Erica's House of Wellness. Business partners Holmes and Wayne Wells started remodeling at the site in the summer of 2019 and opened for business in mid-December.

The store sells vintage items like old action figures and games most of us have long since parted ways with. The walls are adorned with old pictures and posters from decades ago. There's board and video games, an assortment of more modern treasures and other items you're unlikely to stumble upon elsewhere. Oodles of collectible

loves to talk about them with those visiting. From educating people on how to restore an old board game box, to how to spot a fake valuable, he's eager to share.

On one recent visit, Holmes showed off a Babe Ruth baseball card, which, if it were real, would be worth over \$30,000. As is, it's a wonderful education piece on making a fake look real and a conversation starter.

"It's never for sale, it's more of a knowledge thing," Holmes said.

The business is filled with treasures the partners have gathered from their storage unit finds, estate sale clean outs and their searching across the region. Holmes said those venturing into the store will see a constant rotation of goods. If items are not selling off the shelves, they plan to remove those items to make room for new items. Holmes said many of their sales are done online.

Holmes does not want this

place known as a thrift store. He said instead it's a place of recycled goods, goods that still have a lot of use in them.

"I don't deal a lot with antiques," Holmes said. "I would say more vintage collectibles from 1960s to 2000s." Opening a business focused on personal interests to make a buck is one thing, but Holmes said this business is to be beneficial to the community. One way to do that is through giving back funds raised from sports card sales. He plans to use those sales as an effort to raise money to make available sporting equipment for local players.

"This store isn't about making money, it's more or less helping the people around here," Holmes said. He says his other job, painting, allows him to use this business to give back. He plans to have low cost sports equipment on hand so young players can afford to get into sports.

Aside from collectibles, there are hometore items, as

the store name implies. Of that retail, all glassware gets pulled after 30 days. What isn't bought will be recycled. And on that wavelength, Holmes said the business plans to put on quite an event come June that will help to get the business recognized even more. They hope to host a grand opening around June Jubilee.

Holmes makes the trip to Wadena from Moorhead each day he works. His connection to the community includes the Klebbs family and his wife's family, the Geisers. Wells also has connections to the community and operates the business side of things while running to auctions and sales around the region.

The business' winter hours include three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Days may increase as the warmer months come around.

Contact the business at haulouthomestore@gmail.com or visit them at 219 Ash Ave. NE Hwy 10 East.

LEGACY

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community, according to Kevin Cederstrom. Cederstrom worked as a reporter and editor at the New York Mills Herald, which eventually combined with the Perham Enterprise-Bulletin.

"He stressed the newspaper's commitment and obligation, (the) responsibility of being a leader in the community," Cederstrom said.

When the Perham School District faced bond issues in the 1980s, Parta partnered with a group of community members to help pass a referendum to renovate the high school and build Heart of the Lakes Elementary School. His wife also served as a school board member for over 20 years.

"The newspaper took

a real active role in being an advocate (for the schools)," said Johnson. "It probably wasn't neutral journalism, it was advocate journalism."

As a new journalist working with Parta, Cederstrom remembers many lessons on balancing personal conflicts while covering local stories. He also fondly remembers Parta as a source of encouragement and support as he built his career.

"He had a great way of teaching and mentoring without being overly critical as a publisher," Cederstrom said. "He was committed to those principles of community journalism and he had a great newspaper career."

In the "wonderful, rewarding, complex and often frustrating world of journalism," as Cederstrom described, Parta truly cared

for the community.

He was also "always a leader" in the communities he served, Cederstrom said. Parta was a member of the New York Mills City Council for about 30 years, for example, and was a director of the Perham Rotary Foundation, among other involvements.

"The entire New York Mills community will miss the impact that Mike has had on us over the decades," the Civic and Commerce Association shared in a Facebook post. "He leaves behind a lasting legacy that has touched countless lives and helped change the footprint of our town and region. We are sending thoughts and prayers to his family during this difficult time."

Beyond his local community involvements, Parta was a past president of the Minnesota

Newspaper Association, National Newspaper Association, and National Newspaper Association Foundation.

"He was a small town guy, but he took the platform he was given to not only grow his town, but do things for community journalism in his state, even to the national level," said Jennifer Parta, his daughter.

"Mike was one of a disappearing breed of small town newspaper publishers. He was totally vested in the idea that communities needed an involved newspaper, and he and his wife Jan proved that for over 50 years. He not only reported the news of the community, they were often deeply involved in making that news," said Dennis Winskowski, a longtime friend and former lakes area newspaper publisher. "Mike will be missed

by all who knew him."

From stories on basketball games to Cub Scouts, Parta highlighted the community through what he called "refrigerator journalism," said Melissa Swenson, publisher of the Perham Focus, Wadena Pioneer Journal and Detroit Lakes Tribune. She worked with Parta for several years.

"He said that a small-town paper was about giving people things to clip out and hang on their refrigerators," Swenson explained. "I respected Mike and learned a lot from him. He loved being from New York Mills, his family, living on the lake, and newspapers."

After Parta retired from his journalism career, he sailed into another career as the owner of Hoot's Sports (now Ray's Sport & Marine). He was a lover of lake life and was a lake home resident him-

self, on Big Pine Lake. He enjoyed pontooning and being out on the water with good friends, good drinks and good food, Cederstrom said.

Right up until the end of his life, Parta continued to value the importance of newspapers. Johnson said that as Parta went through his final cancer treatments, he was still hoping to share a message at this year's Minnesota Newspaper Convention about the journalistic and financial challenges that newspapers face. He passed away on the Saturday of the convention.

Parta's son, Chris Parta, said his dad told him "on Friday, the last time I spoke with him, the day before he passed away, (that) he was starting to write thoughts down for a project about the history and development of community newspapers."

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