

The Record

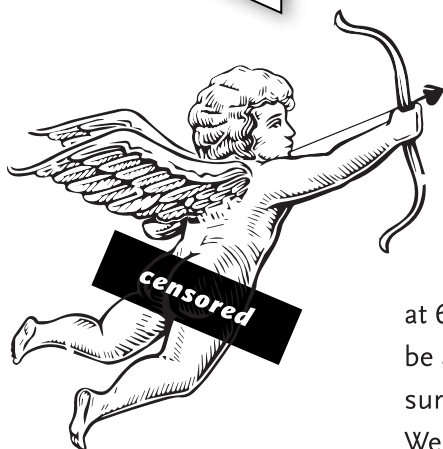
Valentine's BINGO!



Upcoming Events

Valentine's Bingo
Monday, February 12
6 - 8 pm

B I N G O				
5	19	39	58	64
4	25	38	53	65
10	20	Free	60	73
1	28	44	46	70
8	30	37	50	74



Please join us at the History Center on Monday, February 12th at 6:00 pm for our annual Valentine's bingo. Each bingo winner will be able to make a selection from the prize table. This free event is sure to be a fun night! Snacks and beverages will also be served. We look forward to seeing you!

Officers

- President:** Mark Bonesteel 763-331-1885
- Vice President:** Mary Ann Hoffman 763-780-5911
- Past President:** Dorothy Gargaro 712-709-2840
- Secretary:** Open
- Treasurer:** Judy Anderson 763-767-2566

Other Board Members

- Archives Chair:** Rob Zelenak robzelenak1993@gmail.com
- Programs and Events Chair:** Mary Sue Meyers 763-717-7987
- Maintenance Chair:** Al Taylor 763-422-3878
- Membership Chair:** Noreen Rickenbach 763-443-1269
- Newsletter Chair:** Rachel Westhoff rachel.westhoff@gmail.com

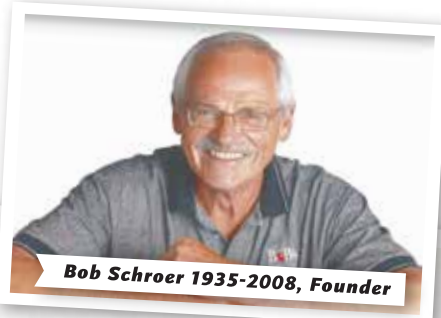
fridleyhistoricalsociety.org

✉ FHS1949@outlook.com

Thank You, Bob's Produce Ranch!

by Mark Bonesteel

The Fridley Historical Society wishes to thank Bob's Produce Ranch for Sponsoring our 2023 Lasagna Dinner and Fundraiser! Because of their donation and Sponsorship, our society was able to raise nearly \$3,000 to be used in future preservation and education efforts.



- > Bob's Produce Ranch started out as a roadside fruit and vegetable stand operated by Bob Schroer.
- > In 1959 Bob's Produce Ranch opened at East River Road and Mississippi Street.
- > In 1969, Bob's Produce Ranch moved to University and Osborne Road. The business was greatly expanded and meat, bakery and a deli were added.



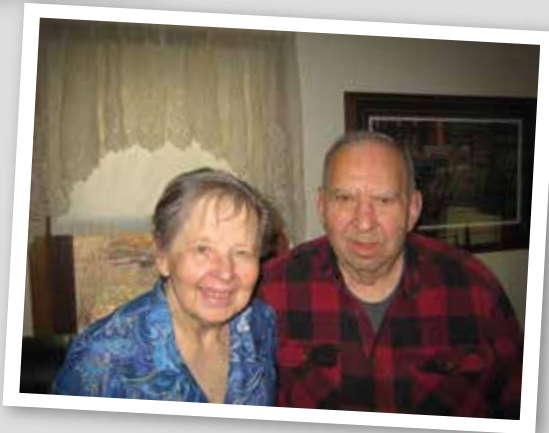
- > In 1993, the business was again expanded and doubled in size. More groceries and perishable products were added.
- > Bob's Produce Ranch is a third generation family owned Fridley business.

Virginia and Tony Peterson, December 2023

by Mary Ann Hoffman

The following is a summary of another of the interviews collected in 2012 as part of our grant project regarding the midcentury suburban development of Fridley

Both Virginia and Tony were transplants to Fridley while they were children. Her family moved from living in a trailer court in Northeast Minneapolis to Fridley in 1945 when she was three years old. Tony was four when his family moved to Fridley in 1947, also from Northeast Minneapolis.



Virginia's parents bought a house at 60th and University Avenue which she described as "just a little dump, actually", adding that "my dad would, we had many build-ons. I mean, you built a room here and a room there....It was probably just a two-room house." Tony's family moved into a house on 57th Place and 5th Street, which he described as "just half-built. It had cardboard on the walls instead of sheetrock." Their stories are common to those who moved to Fridley in the 1940s in that many new residents came from Minneapolis, particularly from Northeast, and moved into small houses in what was then rural Fridley. The community was dotted with substandard housing at that time and one reason for the effort to incorporate Fridley Township into a village in 1949 was to be better able to regulate the housing stock.

Virginia's father, Ranko (Shorty) Schuur founded Shorty's Towing in 1947, which included a DX filling station and repair shop at 57th and University. She related that her mother worked right along with her dad, saying, "She worked just like a man." This was possible because Virginia's grandmother lived with them and was able to watch the children. Just before the 1965 tornado, her parents sold the business and then Shorty and his son started a new towing business, also in Fridley.

Virginia and Tony met as children while attending the two-room Fridley School. They began dating when they were 16 and 17. Tony recalled that a typical date consisted of him buying 25 cents' worth of gas at her parent's filling station and then cruising the loop up and down Central Avenue, south to the Sun Drive-In in Northeast Minneapolis and north to Mississippi Street in Fridley. Tony's first car was a '37 Ford Coupe that he fixed up, and he and his brother raced at Twin City Speedway.

Virginia reminisced about becoming engaged to Tony. "We had been dating maybe four years and it was my birthday. And I really expected a ring. I really did, and he gave me a lousy box of candy. And my mom and dad knew what was going on and there was this piece of candy in the middle of the box. It was gold-wrapped, and mom said, 'Oh, you should try that one.' Well, I opened it and my ring was in there."

Virginia and Tony were married at the Fridley Methodist Church on June 22, 1962. They moved to Mounds View, just a block from the Fridley boundary, and raised three boys in a cute Cape Cod house in which they still reside.

Kindergarten Art Fair ~ Recap by Rachel Westhoff and Dorothy Gargaro

On Saturday December 9th, Kindergarten students from Hayes and Stevens Elementary came to the History Center to show off and admire their winter-themed artwork that was on display. After showing off their artwork to their parents and fellow visitors, they made crafts and enjoyed Christmas treats in the basement. Santa Clause greeted them with a “HO HO HO!”, and asked what they wanted for Christmas.

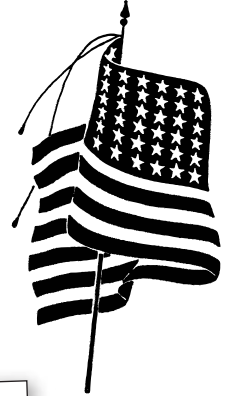
Shown below are photos of the little artists standing in front of their works of art. Posing with students is Hayes Elementary Art Specialist Laura Charles. Dorothy Gargaro, shown in bottom left corner, greets students and parents.



Former President George W. Bush invited to our museum!

by Rob Zelenak

On March 20th, 2023, Fridley Historical Society Board member Rob Zelenak wrote to the office of former President George W. Bush inviting him and his wife Laura to the society's June 1st board meeting. Shown below is Rob's letter to President Bush's office and their response note, which was received on April 3rd, 2023, declining the June 1st invitation. Bush served as the 43rd President of The United States from 2001 to 2009. On June 19th, 2003, he visited Fridley and spoke at Micro Control Company.



Office of George W. Bush

March 20th, 2023

Dear office of George W. Bush,

President and Mrs. George W. Bush are cordially invited to our society's June 1st, meeting at our museum. We will discuss events going on with our museum, updates on exhibits and membership numbers. The meeting is expected to last about 90 minutes and would include a personal tour of the museum for President and Mrs. Bush. Our museum is in the old Fridley school house and features several historical artifacts from our city's history. We expect about 8 to 10 people at our meeting. Just us board members, I am one of the board members who plan to be in attendance. President and Mrs. Bush are welcome to attend. We would love their company. The President is not requested to make remarks, but he's welcome to if he would like. More information can be requested.

Thank You,
Robert Zelenak

Fridley Historical Society
611 Mississippi St.
Fridley MN, 55432



Oddities of the 1965 Fridley Tornadoes! *by Allen Taylor*

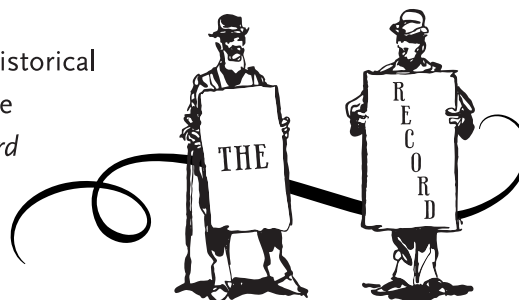
- ~ A Caterpillar bulldozer picked up and moved 30' while fresh brick-facing on the house didn't lose one brick!
- ~ A house demolished but the refrigerator, full of food, placed upright in backyard had only 2 eggs broke inside!
- ~ A family had just brought McDonald's home, tornado destroyed home but left the meal on the kitchen table!
- ~ A family of Killdeer birds along with nest unharmed but Fridley Lumber next door flattened!
- ~ After the F5 tornado severely damaged the Fridley High School, all the cars in the parking lot had all the air sucked out of the tires!
- ~ As the tornado passed by St. Philip's Church in Fridley, the swinging doors in the sanctuary of the church swung back and forth from the drop in barometric pressure without any hint of breeze!
- ~ A woman miraculously survived being blown out of her home while the tornado sucked the glasses off her face and embedded them in a wall of sheetrock without damaging or scratching the lens!
- ~ The Minnesota Twins played a complete game without a drop of rain while tornadoes tracked only a few miles to the north!



These and more exciting true stories are found in "The Night the Sirens Blew" and "The Hidden Revealed" which can be purchased at the Fridley History Museum. The books make wonderful gifts and you can help support the museum at the same time!

Did you know....?

Many newspapers used the name *Record* as their title. Our historical society adopted the newsletter title *The Record* beginning with the December 2002 issue. Locally, the *Fridley Record* and *Blaine Record* were community newspapers in the late 1950s to mid 1960s, which were both eventually replaced by *Sun* newspapers.



In Memoriam *by Mark Bonesteel*

Earl Hatten passed away November 13, 2023. Earl was a long time Fridley resident and Hall of Fame Member of the Fridley Historical Society. Earl was a Korean War Veteran and served in the National Guard after his discharge from the Army. Earl was the 8th employee hired at Medtronic where he worked for 35 years. After his retirement, Earl delivered Meals on Wheels for many years as well as Stepping Stone. He was a WCCO Good Neighbor and volunteered many hours with Fridley Public Schools. Earl was also a very active member of St. Phillips Lutheran Church.

Bill Burns passed away December 21, 2023. Bill served as the City of Fridley City Manager for 24 years. During his tenure, Fridley City Hall was greatly expanded in the late 1980s. A large Council Chambers was added along with two satellite fire stations. Bill was inducted into the Fridley Hall of Fame in 2022.