



*As an educational society  
we will provide a  
continuous history of the  
Westonka area for those  
who follow after us...*

Be sure to check out the  
"Hardware Trivia Contest"  
on Page 6  
to win a free book.

## Five Hardware Stores in Mound?

### One Family's Five Generations in the Hardware Business!

Interview with Gerry and Nancy Dodds  
December 2012 by Pam Myers

#### Part One: The early years

Nancy Styner Dodd's father, Roy Styner, and her grandfather, Orlando Styner, were in the hardware store business.

Orlando traveled on the road by horse and buggy, selling farm machinery for J. I. Case. He began to sell machinery from a vacant lot in Maple Plain. He built a hardware store that opened in about 1915. Orlando's son, Roy, went to work there in about 1915. It became "O. Styner and Son."

One story of Orlando, "Lannie," as a businessman goes like this: Lannie put a sign in the store window: "Paint Sale." A customer wanted to buy some paint, but said, "That's the regular price. Where's the sale?" Lannie said, "I just made one to you!"

As a youngster, Nancy spent some of her time in the repair shop of Roy's hardware store, learning to use the equipment, including an acetylene blow torch, and learning how to put machines together.

With Roy running the store, Nancy worked there part-time, doing the books and monthly statements for his customers. Roy retired at age 67, selling out to his partner, Art Swenson.

Meanwhile, in the spring of 1948, Gerry Dodds was getting into the hardware store business. At age 22, he started to work for Ed Behmler and Byron Nygaard at the Coast to Coast hardware store on the main street in Mound. That store was on the site of the new Walgreen's Drug Store. Gerry worked there for a year. Mrs. Behmler and Mrs. Nygaard were Gerry's assistants, one in the mornings, and the other in the afternoons. The wives ran the store on Saturday, Gerry's day off. When the store needed merchandise and supplies, Gerry drove the store's Model A panel truck to Minneapolis, to the Coast to Coast warehouse.

The next year while attending the Minnesota School of Business, Gerry worked part-time at the Mound Hardware store.

Next Gerry worked for Janney Semple Hill, a wholesale

hardware company in Minneapolis. In the Fall of 1951, the company sent him to Fargo ND, to sell merchandise on the road.

Gerry and Nancy married April 5, 1952. They moved to Morehead, and then the company sent Gerry back to Minneapolis. For six weeks, he was sent to Brainerd to cover for a fellow who had had a heart attack. In the Fall of 1952, Gerry got his own territory in Winona.

When he was offered a job back at Mound Hardware in the Fall of 1953, Gerry and Nancy moved back to Mound. This job offer came with the option to buy into the company when one of the owners retired. However, when one partner sold out in 1956, Gerry was given no consideration, so he left the business.

Fall of 1956 found Gerry working for Macklinberg-Duncan, selling on the road again, in ND, SD, and W MN. By April 1957, with building business down, and travel expenses high, Gerry quit that scene.

Gerry took up plumbing. By 1965, Gerry was in the plumbing business with Dick Morrison, called Westonka Plumbing and Heating. In 1977, he left Dick and started his own plumbing business. Nancy did the books for the first few years. In 1980, Gerry and Nancy's son Bruce came into the business as a partner.

In 1987, Gerry and Nancy, with Bruce and his wife Patti as partners, bought the Coast to Coast in Mound from Don English who had owned it for 10 years. This hardware store was then located about where the parking ramp is today.

Gerry, Nancy, Bruce and Patti ran the Coast to Coast together for five years. Nancy did the books, was the "CFO", and Patti did "everything else," the floor and the departments, especially paint. In January 1992, Gerry and Nancy retired, continuing to work part-time.

Part 2 of this Five-Generation Hardware Owners' story continued on Page 2



Changed name from Coast to Coast to True Value in 1998

## One Family's Five Generations in the hardware business! Two generations of Styners, plus three generations of Dodds Continued from Page 1

### The later years

Interview with Bruce and Patti Dodds  
December 2012 by Pam Myers

Bruce Dodds always wanted to be a plumber, just like his dad, Gerry, from as long ago as he can remember. As a youngster of four or five, Gerry took Bruce along to work. Gerry introduced Bruce as "my second son, Chief Underfoot." It was years later before Bruce realized that his dad wasn't just using a name from some Indian from a cowboy story.

Bruce can remember going with his dad in those early years to the local hardware store. Eugsters owned Mound Hardware, right in downtown Mound. Bruce's dad, Gerry, worked for the Eugsters and would bring Bruce to work with him sometimes. Gerry would settle Bruce, age about four, in the backroom, with the task of matching nuts and bolts, so they could be put out for sale in the store. Bruce even got a little pay, maybe a quarter, to buy some store candy.

Bruce's dad started plumbing when Bruce was five years old. By the time Bruce was 17, Gerry's business was called Westonka Plumbing. At 17, Bruce spent many hours working with Gerry, doing everything from cutting and threading pipe to digging ditches.

As a high school senior, Bruce took pre-apprentice courses to get that done before he graduated. Those courses were sponsored by Plumbers Local #15, and held at Dunwoody in Minneapolis. His first instructor was a terrific teacher, Bud Lichliter. Bud had many stories to tell, including a time in 1948 when he spent two years remodeling the plumbing at the White House.

After high school, Bruce worked for his dad for a while. At age 20, he married Patti Salden from Mound - her dad, Ray Salden grew up in St. Bonifacius. Ray was in the construction business. He built houses and his wife Marlys drew the blue prints. Bruce's dad Gerry did the plumbing. Once a house was finished, the family would move into the new house, and Marlys would decorate it. Meanwhile, Ray would be busy building the next house. As soon as Ray sold the house they were



Gerry and Nancy, Patti and Bruce Dodds at a "Coast to Coast" Convention in Disneyland in 1989

living in, the family would move into the one he'd just finished building. Patti lived in 18 houses from age 12 to 18. Bruce and Patti moved into a house that Ray had built. Sadly, this was last house that her dad built. He passed away that year at age 46.

In 1976, Bruce got a job at Fort Huachuca in Sierra Vista, Arizona. He and Patti moved there, thinking they would stay. They found that this army town was filled with transients, Army personnel coming and going. It was hard to get to know their neighbors, not at all like their hometown in Minnesota, where they knew everyone.

Bruce's next job offer was in California, at Edwards Air Force Base where they were planning to remodel the base for the upcoming shuttle program. That job offer depended on Bruce being a journeyman plumber, and he was still two years away from that. That looked like a match, since the Edwards job wasn't ready yet.

Then Bruce got a call from his dad in Minnesota. Gerry had learned that if Bruce returned to Minnesota, he could complete his journeyman license in just one year. So, Bruce and Patti decided to return, at least temporarily, to Minnesota. It happened to be Labor Day weekend. When Bruce and Patti showed up in town, everyone they saw seemed excited to see them, and so many friends welcomed them back to town. They realized that these



Inside the Old Coast to Coast store in 1989

## Five - Generations in the Hardware - Continued from Page 2

friendships meant the world to them, so they decided to stay in Minnesota instead of moving to California.

At it happened, it took more than a year to get that journeyman license. At the time of spring testing, Bruce was 60 hours short, so he had to wait six months for the next testing date, to get his license. For a while he worked for a plumbing company in Minneapolis. In 1979, Bruce went into the plumbing business with his dad, Gerry's Plumbing.

In January 1987, Gerry and Bruce were in Mound at the Coast to Coast store, getting supplies for a plumbing job. Bruce asked the owner, Don English, out of curiosity, how much it would cost to open a store like his. Don was really quiet. He whispered to Bruce, "Why? You want to buy it?" Bruce asked, "Is it for sale?" Don checked to see whether there were any customers near by, then he answered Bruce, "Yeah." After getting one of the employees to cover the cash register, Don took Bruce to the office and told him about the store.

As it happened, at this time, Gerry was turning 60 and was ready to get out of the plumbing business. Gerry and Bruce had speculated about opening a mini-Knox store, since building materials were not available in Maple Plain. Gerry's wife Nancy was refinishing antique furniture in their basement, and they were ready to find another location for her.

So, Bruce went back to Gerry and told him about his conversation with Don. Gerry asked Bruce, "What did you tell him?" Gerry didn't seem particularly interested. The next day, Bruce decided to go back to Don's, to ask more questions. He learned that Gerry had already been to Don's when it opened that morning! So, the father and son, at age 34, bought the hardware store.

Bruce and Gerry were particularly lucky in hiring help for their store. As it happened, others besides Gerry were ready to retire, and were looking for jobs, including John Eccles, whose specialty was

sheetrock and taping, Vern Nordstrom, whose specialty was heating, and Buzz Kraft, retired Mound policeman who had worked a second job as a paint clerk at the Wayzata Hardware. They each brought their expertise to Bruce and Gerry's store. Even though Patti had never worked with machinery, she had a really good eye for color. With her expertise, the paint sales sky-rocketed. With this variety of experts, very few customers could stump the Dodds staff with their questions.

For a while, Bruce continued to work in plumbing part-time, and Patti continued her work as a legal secretary at Tonka Toys, at one point working for Jim Scruton in the Credit Department.

Bruce and Patti, and Gerry and Nancy, focused on the complaints they had heard over the years about the hardware store. "The prices are too high;" they dropped the prices. "There's never any inventory;" they provided more product. "They're never open;" they worked longer hours. Also, they were careful about shoplifting, but they didn't harass their customers. Plus, the motto of every Coast to Coast hardware store was: "service, service, service."

Patti also had worked at Advanced Machine, so she brought her expertise to the Coast to Coast store. In the second year of opening the store, Patti computerized the inventory, giving each item a number, and she checked in the freight. She had worked in shipping at Advanced Machine, so it was natural that shipping would be brought into their hardware store. She and her mother-in-law Nancy attended "new owner school." Patti got certified in wallpaper and faux finishing, and brought those departments into the store. She also worked the floor, "making it all work."

In 1994, Bruce and Patti were members of the Mound Professional Business Council of the local Chamber of Commerce. This group had an idea for a mural to be painted on the blank north wall of the strip of stores on the north side of Commerce, facing Lynwood Boulevard. (on the north side of Westonka Sports). Bruce and Patti donated all the paint. Anne Wallach of Excelsior was chosen to paint the mural. The mural depicted owners of local businesses.

In 1998, the store name changed from Coast to Coast to True Value Hardware (merger).

In 2000, Mound Visions was encouraging businesses to re-locate onto the main street. Bruce and Patti did a land swap with the city, and relocated their True Value Hardware Store so that their storefront was on Commerce Boulevard, with parking behind the store. The Mound Transit Center was built on the site of their previous store.

Bruce and Patti decided that they didn't want the store to be closed, just to move across the parking lot. They moved some items during Thanksgiving week 2000, and told some friends that they planned to close the old store at 4:00 p.m. that holiday weekend, and open the new



The entire mini shopping area is torn down -  
"Old" Coast to Coast, Scotty B's, and other businesses - January 2001

# Mound Golf Course

By Joe Bissen

Hole No. 1, right down there near Mount Olive Lutheran Church. Never hurts to have a little divine guidance on those all-important first few shots of the round.

Hole No. 4, just about smack-dab in the middle of Shirley Hills Primary School. Never hurts to have a good education when you're trying to read the greens.

Hole No. 7, probably right through the pick-up counter at Domino's Pizza. Never hurts to have a mid-round snack. Order up some cheesy bread before playing that half-wedge toward the flagstick.

Consider the preceding passage an exercise in mixing modern-day Mound with the old-time version. Imagine dropping the 2012 edition of Mound on top of, say, the 1937 version, and that's what you get.

Rewind to the 1930s. Before Mount Olive, the Shirley Hills school and the businesses around Domino's took shape, the area was home to Mound Golf Course. This is not common knowledge, just as the history of more than 50 other "lost" golf courses in Minnesota is not common knowledge. But the author of this piece, with the considerable assistance of Pam Myers of the Westonka Historical Society, is attempting to do a reconstruction of Mound Golf Course for inclusion in a book being written about Minnesota courses that disappeared between the years 1897 (the date of the state's first lost course) and 1999.

Details can be sketchy, as many of them are with Mound Golf Course. Most of Minnesota's lost courses, including Mound's, were public ones, with scant recorded history. And, considering the vast majority disappeared in the 1930s and 1940s, there are precious few remaining souls who remember the courses with much certainty.

But there are exceptions.

"I could almost walk you to the holes. It's a resident who grew up in Mound and is the son of the late Ed Blatzheim, who managed the Mound Golf Course.

By piecing together Blatzheim's sharp recall of the routing of the course with the documents, newspaper clippings and links provided by Myers, and by getting lucky on one or two needle-in-a-haystack Internet searches, I have so far been able to come up with, I believe, a reasonably good look at the former Mound Golf Course.

The course's modern-day boundaries are roughly Shoreline Drive on the north, Hidden Vale Lane and the eastern edge of the Shirley Hills school property on the east, Bartlett Boulevard on the south, and Wilshire Boulevard on the west

(Wilshire was built after the course closed and, according to one Blatzheim, traverses a hole or two that were on the west edge of the golf course). Perhaps up to half of the former golf course grounds are now occupied by the Shirley Hills school and grounds. A nine-hole course for most of its existence, the course was believed to have opened in the early 1930s and closed in the 1940s.

"It started out as a six-hole golf course," said Bob Blatzheim, Daryl's brother, who worked for his father on the Mound Golf Course, along with five of the eight other Blatzheim boys. (Daryl did not; he was younger when the course was operating and caddied there and hunted for golf balls on and around the grounds.)

Shortly after the course opened, three holes were added on the south edge of the grounds. In the early years of the course, the greens had sand surfaces, as they did on close to half of Minnesota's lost courses, but Mound's greens later were converted to grass.

"Last Sunday quite a crowd turned out to play at Mound's nine-hole golf course," read a story in the 1932 April/May issue of the Laker and forwarded by Myers. "... A charge of 25 cents is asked on week-days and 35 cents on Sundays."

The course was originally owned by Frank Yost, a Mound pharmacist, and E.C. "Doc" Mitchell, a town doctor. The clubhouse's exact location was near the southwestern corner of the course, near the home of a fellow named Bronson or something similar, according to Daryl Blatzheim. The course was sold in its later years, two sources said, though they didn't recall the exact name of the new owner. They suggested he might have been associated with Mound High School.

The June 1942 issue of the Laker proclaimed that "The Mound golf course will prove a financial success and is here to stay." That proclamation proved entirely inaccurate, no doubt to the chagrin of Mound's early public golfers and to the modern-day delight of the regulars at Domino's. There appears to be no record of exactly when or why Mound Golf Course expired, though it was common for many Minnesota golf courses that were built in the 1920s or '30s to have survived even the rough years of the Great Depression only to succumb during the World War II years, when so many men, who made up the bulk of the golfing public in those days, went overseas to defend their country.

There are other details, including Daryl Blatzheim's exact routing of Mound Golf Course, that will be included in the book about Minnesota's lost golf courses, but I would love to hear from anyone else who knows anything about the course. Please contact me on Facebook, by email (bissenjoe@gmail.com) or by phone (651-303-0095). Thank you in advance.



## History Detective by Pamela Myers



### Mural Painter Found

As soon as the Mound City Council decided that Walgreens was coming to town, citizens were asking for ways to preserve the mural representing the town's businesses, which was painted on the north wall of the strip of stores located between the Dakota trail (formerly the railroad tracks) and Lynwood Boulevard. Most recently stores here included John's Variety, Westonka Sports, Momma's Happy and a physical fitness business (formerly a coffee shop, and long ago a gas station). This wall faced Lynwood Boulevard at its intersection with Commerce Boulevard.

We tried to determine who sponsored the mural and the name of the artist, to no avail. Perhaps sponsored by the former local Chamber of Commerce? Had the artist volunteered/painted for "Operation Smile"? No one had any details. We were not asking the right people!

The school superintendent, that would be me, is seated in the mural with a young boy at my side, symbol perhaps of the hundreds of school children shepherded from kindergarten to diploma each year.

This boy's dad, Craig Goodrich, was determined to get a photo in front of the mural of the young boy, his son Jonathan, now a MWHS graduate, with me. We started to look for a date that the three of us could meet at the mural. Craig travels as a salesman. Jonathan was working a summer job. I am happily retired and spent this year taking roadtrips from

California to Maine and Nova Scotia. In all the weeks from the City Council action to the demolition of the wall, we found not one date to meet. Craig finally took his own photo of the mural with his phone through the construction fence.

So, how would the wall be preserved? One way would be a really good photograph. Kandis Hanson, Mound City Manager, asked Julie Benz, local photographer, who covers many community events including Spirit of the Lakes. She was willing. So, we now have photos of the mural, as well as the strip of stores, preserved for future generations, in the museum archives.

Then came Thanksgiving 2012. It was time again for the Gillespie Center's Holiday Boutique, where crafters come to show and sell their creations. Julie Benz decided to add her prints of the mural and its adjacent stores to books and puzzles for sale at the historical society's booth. One day a patron stopped to check out the print, and to talk to Mary Opheim who was volunteering at the time. The patron said, "I know the artist!" So, we've reconnected with Ann Walleck who is living in Excelsior. Imogene Coca was right. It is a small world.

A conversation with Bruce and Patti Dodds filled in details about the creation of the mural. It was the idea of the Mound Professional Business Council of the local Chamber of Commerce. They did the fund raising to make the idea a reality. Adie Meuwissen and Stan Drahos donated the time and money to rebuild the stucco wall. The stucco was in such bad shape that they actually stuccoed the whole thing. Bruce and Patti Dodds, owners of the True Value Hardware Store, donated all the paint. They found an artist in Excelsior, and the mural became a reality!

Are you interested in a copy of either of the unframed prints? The mural of the merchants (10 x 20 ) is \$18. A collage of photos of stores in this strip as of 2012 before demolition (11 x 14 ) is \$15. Contact [www.photographybyjuliann.com](http://www.photographybyjuliann.com).

Need a closer look at this photo? Stop by the museum any Saturday from 10-2. And then you can please help us name the individuals in this mural photo! Call 952-472-9800 or send a note to WHS at P.O. Box 84, Mound MN 55364, or to me at [pmyers@TIES2.net](mailto:pmyers@TIES2.net).



## Five - Generations in the Hardware

Continued from Page 3

store at the regular time on Sunday. Towns people began to show up at the store about 4:00 p.m. to help with the move. That was a complete surprise for Bruce and Patti! They remember the local doctors, Ken Romness and Chuck Carlson, and the school superintendent, Pam Myers, putting inventory items in plumbing displays. Pat Meisel, Mayor at the time, brought pizza and sodas for dinner for the volunteers, because she couldn't stay to help. They also remember Stan Drahos, Duane Leisenger & Fran Clark, among many others. The last people left at 10:00 p.m., and the new store opened the next morning at 10:00 a.m. To Bruce and Patti, it felt as though, the whole town had showed up to help. "It was unbelievable. □

Bruce and Patti have worked together in the hardware store for 25 years, that's 25 years of being together 24/7 for this couple! Bruce and Patti say that Bruce is the "people person," and that Patti is the "detail person." She's calm when Bruce is excited. She is the "glue that holds it all together." Bruce loves that he gets to go to work every day, to wait on people he has known all of his life. When their son Brian had a head injury in 1991, customers that Bruce did not even know were asking about Brian's health, reaching out to Bruce and Patti. It was a wonderful feeling.

Now the two Dodds boys, Brett and Brian, are working at the store. Since Bruce's dad, and Nancy's dad and granddad, were all in the hardware business, these boys would be the 5th generation to continue this tradition in small town Minnesota.

### Hardware Trivia Contest

Now that you know several details about some of the hardware stores in the Mound area,

maybe you can name the rest.

Once there were five hardware stores in Mound, plus another in Spring Park and still another in Navarre.

How many can you name?

Can you name their original owners?

If you know some or all of the answers, let us know. If you have at least 5 right answers, we will put your name

into a drawing and you will

win a copy of the book

*Historical Tour of the Westonka Area - Year 2012* by Jeff Magnuson.

You can call your responses with your name, address and phone number to

952-474-1601 or mail them to

Westonka Historical Society,

PO Box 84, Mound, MN 55364.

Drawing is Feb.7, 2013. Good Luck!



Marie Frady, T.J. Skinner, Dallas Gresham, Suz Dunn, Megan Rodewald, Jeff Ensign (Manager), Gerry Dodds, Sam Hatman, Nancy Dodds, John Hart, Patti Dodds, Bruce Dodds, Vern Deutsch, Brett Dodds, Brian Dodds, Kevin Olson and Brad Rosengren.

**Under construction:  
A GUIDE TO HISTORY AND  
COMMUNITY OF NAVARRE**

Many individuals, businesses and groups who have Navarre connections are contributing maps, pictures, stories and support to the Navarre History Story.

The project began with Jeanne Englund and her ambitious efforts to provide personal support for Navarre and to develop a system for community support. Jeanne's efforts resulted in the introduction of the Navarre initiative with priorities including safety (pedestrian, bike & motor), landscape and history.

Jeanne made arrangements for the designated funding for the Navarre History to be contributed to the Westonka Historical Society, P.O. Box 84, Mound, MN 55364 with the notation that the contribution is for the Navarre History project. She also had begun gathering information and interviewing for the history project when her husband became ill, was hospitalized for an extended stay and died. Exhausted, Jeanne could no longer continue her personal efforts for this project. She passed it on to Joan Wolfe, Gallery Navarre, who continues to welcome the history information at the gallery (or 3420B Shoreline Drive, PO Box 10, Navarre, MN 55392 or 952.471.8745 or gallerynavarre@gmail.com).

The historical/heritage information may include (but not limited to): Business/family background information, photos, significant business of Navarre area development stories, interesting Navarre highlight information, generational business highlights, interesting/notable individuals/character memories of the area, interesting lake area stories with Navarre connections.



Klaypotz Service Station, which was located next to Klaypotz Greenhouse along Highway 7 (now Shoreline Blvd or Highway 15)  
Now owned and operated by David Umbehoeker

**Westonka Historical Society**

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This newsletter is published 4 times a year and mailed to all members in good standing. To receive a newsletter, contact Jeanne Brustad, Editor - 952.471.7019 jnbrus@mchsi.com

**Interested in membership in  
the Westonka Historical  
Society?**

**Provide your name, address,  
phone number and  
email address to:**

**WHS - PO Box 84,  
Mound, MN 55364**

**and choose a type of membership  
you are interested in. We are a  
501(c)(3) organization.**

**Membership is a great gift to give.  
And be sure to come and visit us  
at our museum at 2339 Commerce  
Blvd., Mound, MN - open every  
Saturday from 10:00 - 2:00**

**!**

- Senior/Student.. \$15.
- Individual..... \$20.
- Family.....\$25.
- Contributing..... \$50.
- Business..... \$100.
- Patron.....\$125.



**PO Box 84  
Mound, MN 55364**

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**<http://www.westonkahistoricalsociety.org>  
Westonka History Museum 952-472-9800  
2339 Commerce Blvd., Mound, MN 55364  
Open Saturday 10:00 - 2:00 and by Appointment**

*Reminder: The date on your address label is the "expiration" date of your membership in the WHS.  
If you believe this date is incorrect, please contact Jeanne Brustad - 952-471-7019*



**Groundbreaking for the new True Value building in July 2000**

L to R: Bill Anderson (Laker), Tom Feaski (Builder), Bill Gillespie, Patsy Kiesow (Chamber), Gerry Dodds, Dave Paulsen (True Value Rep), Nancy Dodds, Cal Drews (Cals Barber Shop), Bruce Dodds, Len Harrell (Police Chief), Patti Dodds, John Waldron (Attorney), Mark Winter (Crow River Bank), Lee Greenslit, Leah Weycher, Stan Drahos, Kandis Hanson (Mound City Manager), Lonnie Weber, Bruce Chamberlain (City Architect), Bob Brown, Pat Meisel, Paul Meisel, Sharon Cook