

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*A Doctor Ahead of His Time and the
Trouble that Followed*

The Sexual Life by Charles W. Malchow

RYAN T. HURT AND PAUL NELSON, PAGE 12



Interminable Township Turmoil

White Bear Township and the Power of the Vote

SARA MARKOE HANSON, PAGE 1

By the Numbers . . .

The democratic vote is a powerful tool, a tool Ramsey County residents put to use many times to voice their opinions about remaining in White Bear Township, becoming part of the City of White Bear Lake, or incorporating new villages or cities. Sara Markoe Hanson's article "Interminable Township Turmoil: White Bear Township and the Power of the Vote" on page 1 focuses on this century-long fight. The story debuts in November, just after 2020 elections in the United States. With voting heavy on our minds, we've provided a few county statistics from general elections in 2012 and 2016.

Number of people who voted in Ramsey County:
280,010 and **274,780**

Voter turnout in White Bear Township:
86% and **80%**

Voter turnout in White Bear Lake:
76% and **72%**

Voter turnout in St. Paul:
66% and **61%**

Percentage of people voting by absentee ballot:
8.7% and **23.3%**

NOTE: As we go to press, we know, based on preliminary figures, that Ramsey County residents cast 297,236 ballots in the 2020 general election. That's an increase of more than 17,000 compared to 2012 and nearly 22,500 additional voters compared to 2016.

SOURCES: <https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/elections-voting>.

ON THE COVER

It was 1956—a presidential election year (*Dwight Eisenhower v. Adlai Stevenson*)—but residents in northern Ramsey County also were focused on another political battle—to remain independent as a township or to become part of an incorporated municipality. In the midst of the politics, Dayton's, a department store in downtown Minneapolis, got into the act with one of its creative window displays—encouraging visitors from Ramsey County and elsewhere to learn how to operate a newfangled voting machine prior to elections and then "vote as you please, but VOTE" on November 6. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*



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Message from the Editorial Board

Trivia is a popular game in these days of COVID-19. Our friends at Historic Saint Paul host trivia nights online right now, and Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) is joining in with a special trivia edition to honor our own publishing program this November, but you can learn interesting Ramsey County history trivia just by reading this magazine! For instance, which township is the only remaining one in Ramsey County, and how did it become the state's smallest and most densely populated? Or, which local doctor spent nearly a year in prison in 1906 for publishing a book on sexual response that foreshadowed the Kinsey Reports, which were released years later? Or, how about this? Which renowned Ukrainian-born sculptor lived and worked right here in the City of St. Paul, creating works for cemeteries and churches that are still admired today? Respectively, authors Sara Markoe Hanson, Ryan T. Hurt and Paul Nelson, and Janice Quick, give us answers to these questions. Read on to learn more.

In this issue we also honor Rick Heydinger, a kind man who contributed his time and talent through dedicated service on the RCHS board, along with many social justice causes in St. Paul. We will all miss Rick's thoughtfulness, good counsel, and unwavering commitment.

Anne Cowie
Chair, Editorial Board

The Ramsey County Historical Society thanks Board Member James A. Stolpestad and affiliate AHS Legacy Fund for supporting the updated design of this magazine. Publication of Ramsey County History is also supported in part by a gift from Clara M. Claussen and Frieda H. Claussen in memory of Henry H. Cowie Jr., and by a contribution from the late Reuel D. Harmon.

White Bear Township and the Power of the Vote

SARA MARKOE HANSON

Democracy can be messy and maddening, and we're not talking about the 2020 US elections. Rather, this is the story of a political journey at the most local level in White Bear Township, ten miles outside St. Paul in north-eastern Ramsey County.

The path to the present configuration of the township has been long and complex. One century, portions of six cities,¹ two Minnesota Supreme Court decisions, more than one-hundred separate annexations, and many fractured relationships later, the area today is slightly less than one-quarter of its original size. More than

twenty-five square miles were carved out of the initial six-by-six mile congressional township named in 1858 for its largest lake. What remains today illustrates the power of the vote and the independent nature of a group of very determined citizens.

Mapping It Out

For centuries, Native Americans have recognized the land around White Bear Lake as part of the seasonal migration routes of the Dakota. The first-known recorded reference to the area appears in a map drawn by Joseph Nicollet in

Definitions, Definitions

The century-long story of White Bear Township is a complicated one, but it can be better understood with clear definitions of key terms.

Towns and Townships

Congressional/Survey Township – As it relates to land, this type of township is generally a thirty-six-square-mile area that is aligned with meridians or lines of longitude on a grid that runs north and south across the globe. In the case of the land now known as the State of Minnesota, survey townships were established as part of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

Civil Township – The government unit of township or town is considered a subunit of county government. Actual local governments were organized when Minnesota became a state in 1858. Initially, the boundaries for both the survey and civil township of White Bear were the same, but the area of the civil township would change drastically over time.^a

Town/Downtown – Often the business district of a community.

The terms township and town can be used interchangeably. The Town of White Bear is its formal, legal name, but it is also commonly referred to as White Bear Township.

Villages and Cities

In Minnesota, areas have been incorporated out of townships to form villages and cities.

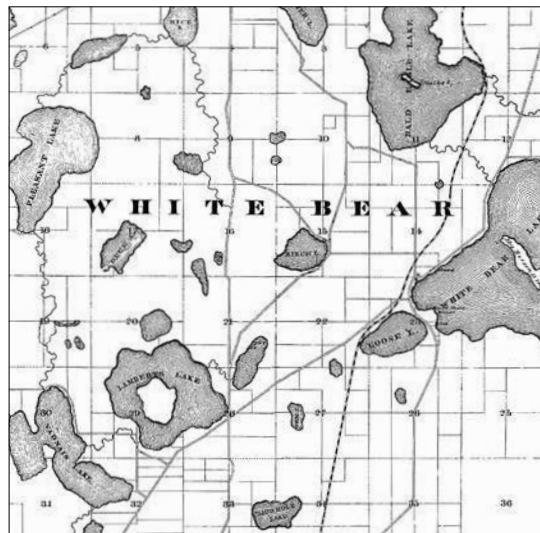
Villages – Villages were incorporated by statute in Minnesota from its beginning in 1858. The Village of White Bear was incorporated in 1881 and became a city in 1921. All villages that existed in Minnesota as of January 1, 1974, became statutory cities, as opposed to charter cities.^b

Cities – Cities are classified based on population into four different classes:

- First Class: More than 100,000 inhabitants
- Second Class: 20,001-100,000 inhabitants
- Third Class: 10,001-20,000 inhabitants
- Fourth Class: No more than 10,000 inhabitants

Within each class, a city may be a statutory city—organized and operating under state statutes, or a home rule charter city—organized and operating as provided in the charter approved by the voters of the city.^c

Map of White Bear Township showing the boundaries of the original thirty-six square miles (1867). By this time, Bears Lake was called White Bear Lake. *Courtesy of White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.*



1843 on which he labels the 2,400-acre water feature as “Bears Lake.”² The French-born explorer relied upon Indigenous guides to help him identify and describe the territory between the Upper Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. The inclusion of Bears Lake on the map points to the significance of this place to the Indigenous people who called the area home.

On May 11, 1858, the same day Minnesota became a state, the Town of White Bear (also known as White Bear Township) was organized and began functioning as the local government.³ Towns, as established by the state constitution, had limited powers. The early business of the town focused primarily on roads and property disputes. Business was conducted by a three-member board elected from the community at-large. All expenditures and undertakings of the town then and now must be authorized by the electors or voters at the annual meeting held on the second Tuesday of March and at the fall budget meeting.⁴

So Many Tourists! What’s the Plan?

On September 10, 1868, the Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad (LS&M) officially opened its line from St. Paul to White Bear.⁵ Suddenly, a three-hour journey by wagon evolved into a twenty-minute train ride and brought people to the area by the thousands to take a break from the heat, pollution, and noise of the city. In fact, more than twenty-five trains traveled through town daily. Resort hotels and other businesses, such as saloons and general stores, burst upon

the scene along the western shore of the lake. Guests often summered there for weeks and months at a time.⁶

This influx of tourists created new dilemmas for the Town of White Bear. Increased population from a few hundred to a few thousand meant increased need for services and regulations.⁷ Remember, as a township, the powers of local government were limited. In February of 1881, a small portion of the town—the resort area closest to the lake and downtown business district where regulations were most needed—was incorporated as the Village of White Bear. Now outside of the township, the village established an elected council of five members which “shall have full power and authority to make, enact, ordain, establish . . . such ordinances and bylaws for the government and good order of the village and for the suppression of vice as they shall deem expedient. . . .”⁸

This first incorporation out of White Bear Township helped the village council better govern the booming resort area, where regulating the sale and use of intoxicating liquors and forms of gaming, such as billiards, was needed immediately.

Development Fever

The village legally reincorporated as a city—White Bear Lake—in the fall of 1921. From that point, the functions of the city and the township continued unchanged until 1955—when things started to get interesting.

In the early 1950s, the postwar baby boom meant reasonably priced family homes were in high demand. The White Bear Town Board received plat applications almost monthly from eager developers who recognized the opportunity to create new neighborhoods close to the Twin Cities, with plenty of space for growth.

Some platted developments were annexed to the city first, and then homes were constructed. Other areas were rezoned by the township from farm to residential and then platted for sale as individual lots. Once the homes were completed and occupied, many residents in the township desired and expected municipal services, such as water treatment, increased police protection, and parks. These issues were greater than what the town had handled in the past and, often, more than they were authorized to address.⁹

Because the township could not provide these services, some residents petitioned to be annexed to the city. Other residents were not concerned about those services and were comfortable with the status quo.¹⁰

Over the next two decades, more than one hundred petitions for annexation to the City

of White Bear Lake and eventually Gem Lake, Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, and Vadnais Heights would be considered by the councils and voters. While many of the annexation requests and proceedings were routine and completed without fanfare, there were a few notable exceptions.

Seasonal Surge Transforms Sleepy White Bear into Rip-Roaring Resort

The earliest resorts at White Bear opened in the 1860s, but the seasonal surge of visitors grew after the railroad came through town in 1868. Colonel William Leip was ahead of the rush and purchased property in May of 1866 between White Bear and Goose Lakes from Villeroy and Nancy Barnum. He expanded a modest hotel of ten rooms to create a resort that accommodated more than three hundred guests at a time. He was well-known for his hospitality.^a

Guests at Leip's were treated to live concerts by the popular orchestras of the day,^b billiards, bowling, a fleet of boats for personal use, and a pavilion for dancing. Hundreds of visitors stayed and dined each week throughout the season that typically lasted from May 1 to September or October. Colonel Leip hosted a steady stream of company outings and church gatherings at his resort, in addition to the usual family groupings.

A few other popular resorts in White Bear's resort heyday included the Williams House and the Chateaugay along Lake Avenue just around the bay from Leip's. Each of these hotels was set up in a similar fashion with a larger guest building and smaller cottages on the surrounding property. They provided boats and other entertainment opportunities, including lakeshore pavilions where guests could enjoy the breezes off the water and listen to orchestras situated on barges trolling near the shore.

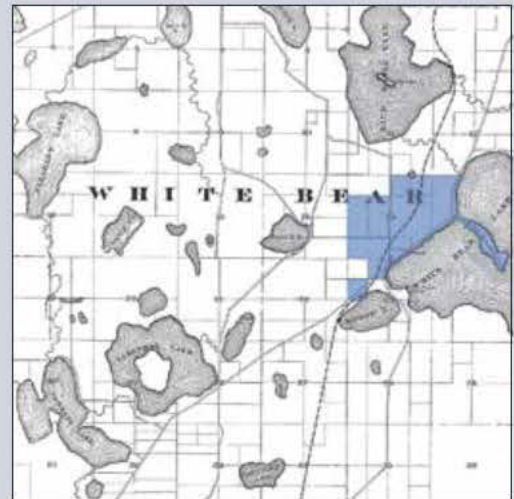
Prominent citizens of St. Paul and beyond traveled to White Bear for their summer escape. Visitors included Governor John L. Merriam, who had a cottage along Lake Avenue; business people, such as druggist Charles Noyes; and celebrated architect Cass Gilbert.



Guests enjoying their time at Leip's Saloon around 1880. *Courtesy of the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.*

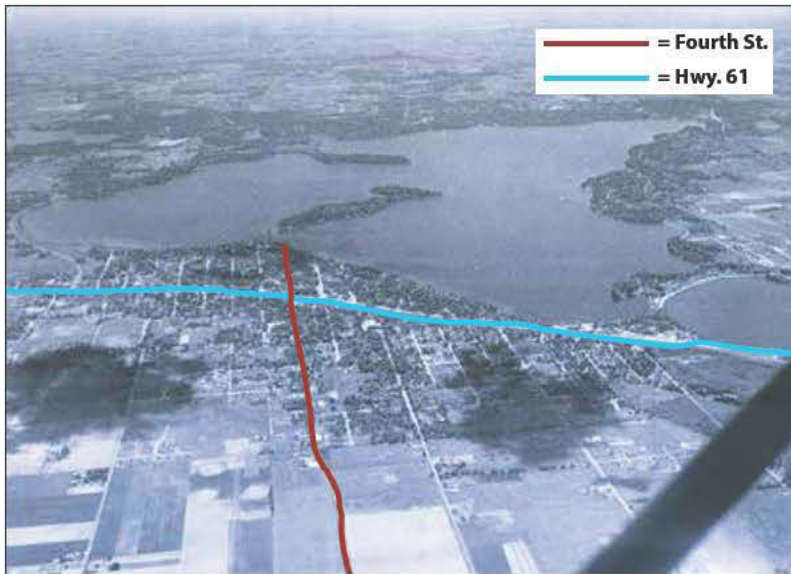


Colonel John Leip. Leip's resort burned in 1897. He rebuilt a smaller hotel that his wife, Agnes, sold after his death. It became the original clubhouse of the St. Paul Auto Club. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*



The original township map with blue-shaded area shows the boundaries of the Village of White Bear that incorporated out in 1881. *Courtesy of White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.*

Today, White Bear is considered by many to be a suburb of St. Paul, but it retains its independent character with a distinct downtown business district. Gone are the grand resorts, and only a few true summer cottages remain.



This aerial view (ca. 1952) looking east toward White Bear Lake shows the downtown and former resort area near the lakeshore in the distance, as well as the farmland that would be the future site of Interlake Park, White Bear's first large housing development from the 1950s. *Courtesy of White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.*



Houses sprang up rapidly on the south end of White Bear Township in neighborhoods with names such as Lakeaires, Sunrise Park, Golfview, and Gardenette Park. *Courtesy of White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.*

Grumblings Get Going

By June 1956, the township community was becoming more divided over the type of local government they wanted. Residents with annexation questions or concerns could request a meeting with representatives from the township or the city. Officially, White Bear Lake Mayor William Fleming remained on record indicating that the city was not soliciting neighborhoods for annexation, nor were they willing to “sell” the merits of the city. They were, however,

willing to meet with those seriously interested in the option.¹¹

On the other hand, White Bear Lake's consulting engineer, Otto Bonestroo, indicated that the city “had planned for the possibility of annexation by enhancing water treatment facilities that were currently more than adequate to serve the city several times over and the cost savings would be beneficial to residents.”¹² The city's goal was to expand the tax base to fund municipal projects and to do so in an orderly and well-planned way.

By the fall of that year, township residents had organized a citizens' committee to address the issue of annexation. At a meeting at Gall School on October 3, Robert Wille, the town attorney, stated that the “only sure way [to protect from annexation to the City of White Bear Lake] is to incorporate the whole township into a village.” Cecile Schonebaum, chair of the citizens' committee, summed up the feelings of many residents in her response, “That would be jumping from the frying pan into the fire.”¹³

Paul Cromer, a longtime town board member, added his thoughts at the end of the meeting, claiming “White Bear Lake has an enterprising mayor who has intentions to run for county commissioner” and inferring that annexation would help Mayor Fleming's cause. In response, the city leader reported he “had no ambitions but to be an active and energetic mayor.”¹⁴

According to state law, annexation could be commenced by a petition of five or more citizens of legal voting age who are property owners within an area adjacent to and within one and one-half mile of the city to which they wished to be annexed.¹⁵ If the White Bear Lake City Council saw value in the petition and favored pursuing annexation of the described area, a census of that area would be taken, and an annexation election would be set. If the proposition passed, the area would be transferred to the city. If the proposition failed, the residents would have to wait two years or change the boundaries of the petition substantially before making another attempt. Alternately, a petition signed by the majority of electors within the designated area would not require an election. In such a case, an ordinance would be drafted transferring the affected area to the city if the council accepted the annexation.¹⁶

Township or Village: To Be or Not to Be?

Complications continued when the northwest quadrant of the original Town of White Bear was incorporated on July 17, 1956, as the Village of North Oaks. The majority of the land that made up this new village was previously the farm of the James J. Hill family, which had been inherited by the grandchildren at that time. A carefully planned residential community was developed from the site.

The influx of annexation petitions and the need for public improvements in the community prompted the city of White Bear Lake to form its own large fifteen-member citizens' committee to provide recommendations. Their initial report recommended the city announce the maximum limits that would be considered for annexation. They continued by suggesting that "any addition to present physical facilities, particularly water and sewerage should be done with future expansion in mind." They emphasized the need for an orderly enlargement of the city and careful planning as opposed to random small annexations from every direction.¹⁷

At the same time, the *White Bear Press* reported residents from the Sunrise Park neighborhood, near County Road E and White Bear Avenue, were discussing plans for a municipal water system in the township and possibly connecting to the metropolitan sanitary sewer system. The residents indicated they wished to remain in the township if a solution to the potentially contaminated water supply was found. Another major concern—who would implement the system, and who would pay for it?¹⁸

The White Bear Lake City Council scheduled a special meeting for Saturday, September 15, 1956, in anticipation of a petition that "would seek an election to vote on the matter of adding substantial areas to the south, west and north of the present city boundaries, possibly doubling the present population of 5,000."¹⁹

The expected petition for the annexation of 1,850 acres to the City of White Bear Lake arrived, and an election to vote on the question was set for October 6. Things were heating up quickly. This petition included the area from County Road E in the south to Bald Eagle in the north, with portions of White Bear Beach and Bellaire on the east—all of which represented 4,723 people, 1,231 residential buildings,



and 1,850 acres within one and one-half miles of the existing city.²⁰ The area encompassed Sunrise Park, Normandy Park, Cottage Park, part of Hoffman's Corners, part of Bald Eagle, and also would include the White Bear Town Hall and the school at Hoffman's Corners, which was being used as an office for White Bear Township staff.

This created a problem: two of the three board members would no longer be considered residents of the township. Town Board Chair Ed Welsch of Sunrise Park and Paul Cromer, a board supervisor from Bald Eagle, would be living in the City of White Bear Lake if the annexation moved forward.²¹

Prior to this annexation attempt, residents had been fairly quiet unless the question affected their own neighborhoods. This new request, however, was so widespread that it affected many and would change both the township and the city dramatically. Campaigns for and against the annexation of this large area sprang up from kitchen tables and back porches across the community. Citizens distributed circulars itemizing the pros and cons, ads appeared in the *White Bear Press*, and overflowing crowds packed community meetings. As then township resident Tom Jefferson stated, "Sewer and water were coming in and I was in favor of it. That created a lot of enemies. It screwed up the lines between the township and the city."²²

An aerial view looking northwest from County Road E. Bald Eagle Lake can be seen in the upper right. The majority of this area was included in the large annexation petition in 1956 and again when the entirety of the township was ordered annexed in 1963. The lack of mature trees in this recently developed area is notable around 1960. *Courtesy of the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.*

BULK RATE
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 221
St. Paul, Minn.

THE BEAR FACTS

PREPARED IN SUPPORT OF ANNEXATION BY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF WHITE BEAR LAKE

**Area Homeowners
Want Lower Taxes**

**If We Had Industry
Our Taxes WOULD
Be Lower**

**But Industry Won't
Come To Our Area
Until We Are Under
A Single
Government**

We're All Disappointed . . .



Let's Pull Ourselves Together

VOTE YES ON ANNEXATION

Just as advertisements for or against issues or candidates are used today in elections, so too, were they used over fifty years ago to sway voter opinion. "The Bear Facts," a mailer produced by the White Bear Lake Chamber of Commerce, supported annexation to the City of White Bear Lake. "Why We Fight Annexation" was created and distributed by the Committee for Better Government and called for a vote to remain independent. *Courtesy of White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.*

Supporters of annexation cited the ability to carefully plan for the future of city services and the changing nature of the community from rural areas to city or suburban areas. The need for a larger tax base for the expansion of the schools to better serve the growing population was also key. Industry needed to be a part of that tax base to lessen the burden on residents. That industry required sewer and water connections, which the city could provide.²³

Opponents argued that the township could offer the same services as the city at half the cost. They also felt that the annexation process had been too secretive and too rapid to allow voters to truly understand the facts of the situation and vote accordingly, which violated their sense of democracy.²⁴

At public meetings, Town Board Chair Welsch and City Mayor Fleming responded to these concerns directly. Welsch said the township was working to add staff and establish a regular office location to better serve residents. Some of the township initiatives were restricted

Why We Fight Annexation

- FACT** 1—The City can offer us practically nothing but HIGH TAXES: The special interests — tools of special interests and fast buck operators are trying to Land Grab again!
- FACT** 2—COMPARE
18.1 Township mill rates.
16.6 City of White Bear Lake mill rate —
This has totaled to about 10% lower taxes in the Township on taxes payable in 1960 — Estimated Township mill rate on taxes payable in 1961 will be 2.05 mills. Due to Treasury surplus—still going down . . . While the City of White Bear Lake taxes keep going UP!
- FACT** 3—Our area is generally sparsely populated and there is no real need for City Facilities (sewer and water). It would be economically impractical for the City to try to furnish these facilities to most of our area at this time. Especially since they are having so much trouble in furnishing these facilities to the areas they leave where there is a real need. The high prices the City is charging for these facilities, most of us could never afford it.
- FACT** 4—The Township has a very great potential. We can be a vigorous, prosperous and economical Community that we all can be proud of. Why should we carry the City of White Bear Lakes YEARS of MIS-MANAGEMENT LOAD?
- FACT** 5—We who have had a sample of White Bear Lakes City Government were not pleased with the sample — and it hasn't improved! It is still slipping backward! Why ATTACH OURSELVES to a SINKING SHIP? They are worried — The Chamber of Commerce, says the city must lighten its tax base.
DON'T LET THEM USE US AND OUR TOWNSHIP TO DO IT!

**Vote No
Against Annexation**

Voting Place - Bald Eagle Bldg. (Corner Hugo Rd. and
Park Ave., Old Soo Line R. R. Depot)
Tuesday, April 26 - Polls Open 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.

Printed Adv. by Committee for Better Government — Of the people, by the people, for the people. —
Edward W. Kozlowski, Sec.

because major changes had to be authorized by the electors at the Annual Town Meeting, but things were progressing as they could. Fleming responded to questions regarding the current tax rates for sewer and water services as well as other amenities but acknowledged that these rates would likely fluctuate as the population and area of the city did.

In a statement in the *White Bear Press* on October 4, 1956, Mayor Fleming reiterated that the city had not pursued any area for annexation, and the "determination of the question rests solely with the voters from within the area affected." He continued, "Recognizing the rights of the residents of the proposed area to determine the local government they desire, we have not seen fit to enter into debate or argument on this question."²⁵

It's Not Over Until It's Over

Ultimately, the petition was defeated by a vote of 1,088 to 649, with about 70 percent turnout. It seems the effected residents most definitely did

not wish to be annexed to the city. As a response, at the direction of Mr. Welsch, the township appointed a fact-finding committee whose “stated purpose was to investigate and accumulate facts and information which might prove helpful to residents of the Town in reaching decisions on problems involving, among other things, sewer and water, as well as the more fundamental question of the form of government desired for the area.”²⁶

Normandy Park residents decided to forego the voting process and brought their own petition for annexation to the city with 70 percent of the vote, meaning they could be annexed by simple ordinance, which happened before the end of the month. With all the various changes and the uncertainty for each neighborhood, the city and township leaders began to explore broader reorganization.²⁷

By late January of 1957, the fact-finding committee released its twenty-page report recommending that full annexation to the City of White Bear Lake would be in the best interests of the township residents. Welsch concurred and initiated a meeting with Mayor Fleming to sort out the details. But hold on, now! Not all township residents were as quick to agree.

In April, another annexation election brought a large portion of Bald Eagle and Sunrise Park into the city, increasing the latter’s population by 4,000 to 10,000 residents. Despite the recommendations of the fact-finding committee a few months before, representatives from the township took legal action, claiming the vote was invalid because of voter registration irregularities. The township followed Ramsey County’s voter registration rules, and during the annexation election, residents who were not appropriately registered had been allowed to vote on this issue.²⁸

And so, the battle continued all the way to the Minnesota Supreme Court. After nearly two years of legal haggling, the court decided in the township’s favor, upholding the decision of Ramsey County District Court Judge Robert Rensch that the annexation was invalid. The areas annexed to the city were subsequently reinstated as part of the township.²⁹

At the same time in the summer of 1957, residents of the southwest quadrant of the original Town of White Bear voted to incorporate as the

Village of Vadnais Heights. Al Jansen, a recently elected town board member who had supported annexation to the City of White Bear Lake, was forced to resign from the board when he found himself now a resident of Vadnais Heights. He later served as the first mayor there. Theodore Blair filled the vacancy left by Jansen. The town board saw more changes throughout that year when Chair Earle Benner suffered a fatal heart attack in July. Edward Vollhaber filled Benner’s seat.³⁰

In early 1958, Mayor Fleming announced he would not seek reelection. Councilman Homer Thomas stepped up to run for mayor and won. He was subsequently appointed White Bear Lake’s first municipal judge by Governor Orville Freeman and remained active in community affairs behind the scenes.³¹

A Piecemeal Quilt of Municipal Confusion

The rapid post-World War II growth experienced by White Bear Township was not unique. It happened across the five-county metropolitan region where formerly rural areas rapidly grew and needs changed. From 1950 to 1959, the number of villages and cities in the metro increased from sixty-eight to 104, causing great concern among leaders across the state.³²

This disorganized development created a piecemeal quilt of municipal confusion. By 1959, White Bear Township consisted of nine separate and detached parts. To address just such situations, the state legislature formed the Metropolitan Municipal Commission (MMC) and gave it broad powers to incorporate or annex township jurisdictions to better serve the public. The new law required the commission to review each “urban township” with a population of 2,000 or more to determine if all or part of the town were best served by incorporation, annexation, or remaining a township.³³

In spring 1959, petitions for essentially the same areas of Bald Eagle and Sunrise Park that had been overturned before were once again brought to the city council, which set an election date. This time, residents voted “Yes” in Sunrise Park, but Bald Eagle voted 296 to 190 against being annexed to the City of White Bear Lake. That summer, the Village of Gem Lake, bound by County Road E on the south, the Northern

Pacific Railway tracks on the east and north, and Centerville Road on the west, incorporated, removing another 333 residents and 712 acres from the township.³⁴

By the end of the year, the Town of White Bear sat in the bullseye of the MMC with its twelve separate parcels. The commission was determined to address their “grave concerns” regarding the gerrymandering and irregular boundaries of the area and the problems this created in governance. The township residents were equally determined to remain independent.³⁵

Not in Our Neighborhood

The new year brought multiple MMC hearings and an order for an annexation election to consolidate the entire northeast corner of the township, despite a restraining order filed by the township. On April 26, 1960, residents voted against annexation 679 to 239, thanks to a large voter turnout.³⁶

And yet, the fight continued! A change in state law in 1961 gave the MMC the power to order annexation *without* the vote of the affected residents.³⁷ By then, the township represented eighteen separate areas with eight parcels surrounded entirely by the City of White Bear Lake.³⁸ Residents who may have otherwise allowed things to develop on their own were spurred into action by their lack of voice in determining their own form of government.

Governor Elmer Anderson recognized the unique challenges facing municipalities and residents and called for a conference on suburban problems to address sewer and water, transportation, refuse disposal, utility regulations, parks and recreation, combined public services, governmental forms and functions, problems with annexation and consolidation, local finance and revenue, race relations, and air pollution.³⁹ There was a lot to address! From there, he formed a metropolitan area coordinating committee of seventeen members to review problems facing the suburbs. Former Mayor Fleming represented the City of White Bear Lake.⁴⁰

The sewer and water systems continued to plague both the city and the township as the committees explored the possibilities of hooking into the St. Paul sanitary sewer system and the associated costs. The formerly robust sewer

system in White Bear Lake was literally bursting at its seams and could no longer serve the nearly 13,000 city residents.⁴¹

With the burgeoning population, local government officials faced additional issues, including rapid growth of the schools, which outpaced the current facilities; a need for public transportation and park and green space; lake water pollution; an expanded and more sophisticated police department; an absence of multiunit housing; and the desire to attract industry to alleviate some of the burden of the tax base. Regardless of where one lived—township or city—these issues were present and pressing. And yet, the annexation question had become more about the democratic principle of having a voice in determining local government than it did the reality that the area was quickly becoming less rural and more urban.

MMC tried again on February 21, 1963, ordering most of the township to be annexed to the City of White Bear Lake, with approximately twenty acres to be annexed to Vadnais Heights. Residents were not allowed to vote, but they could appeal the decision. Of course, in a special town meeting, an overflow crowd voted 400 to 196 to do just that.⁴²

In addition to directly fighting their own case, representatives of the Town of White Bear lobbied the state legislature to reverse the law to allow for a vote of the people affected in annexation and consolidation cases. Aaron Litman, publisher of the *White Bear Press*, chastised the Minnesota Senate for stalling the “Right to Vote” bill in committee and urged voters to contact their senators and pressure them to move the bill’s passage. Copies of Litman’s editorial were distributed to each senator’s desk before the vote was called. The campaign worked. Ultimately, the act authorizing the MMC was amended to provide for referendums within the territory before MMC orders could become final. The voters once again had a voice in the matter of their local governance.⁴³

That fall, the Town of White Bear polled its residents on annexation to be sure they were taking the right course—with 40 percent voter turnout, 366 voted for annexation, and 680 said, “No.” Town Board Chair Ken Kumm summed up the poll, “It is quite evident that the temper and feeling of township residents has not changed



Town Board Chair Ken Kumm (*left*) and Town Attorney Robert Wille served as the voices of the Town of White Bear when the annexation battles continued into the 1960s. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*



"Township Hoists the Battle Flag." Hundreds of residents of the Town of White Bear gathered at a meeting on annexation at Gall School on March 1, 1963, where they voted to continue the fight to remain independent. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

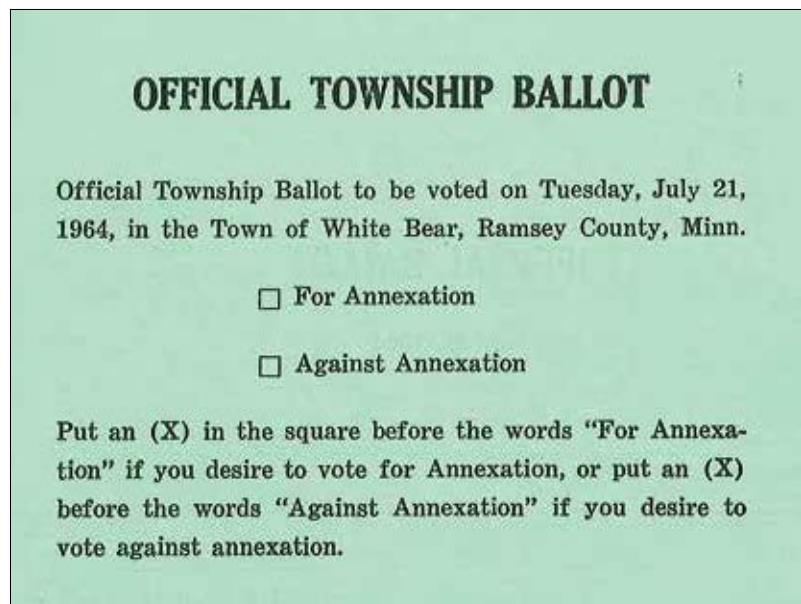
materially since the vote taken last spring."⁴⁴ The fight continued.

The Ramsey County District Court agreed with the township's right to vote, but the MMC appealed the decision and took the matter to the Minnesota Supreme Court *again*. More than six months later, the Court upheld the citizens' right to vote and ordered an election.⁴⁵ Annexation to White Bear Lake and Vadnais Heights was decisively defeated by a vote of 915 to 278.⁴⁶

Democracy: It Was Messy, But It Worked.

After nearly a decade of volleys, White Bear Township and its residents had made their voices heard. In all, over one hundred annexations and incorporations carved away portions of the original thirty-six square mile township, leaving 6,250 acres divided into five major noncontiguous parcels with a population of 7,000.⁴⁷ In the decades since, only a few small annexations have occurred.

Today, White Bear Township, with an estimated population of 11,789, is the smallest but most densely populated township of Minnesota's nearly 1,800 towns and the only remaining township in Ramsey County. Townships within twenty miles of the city halls in Minneapolis or St. Paul are now granted urban powers, allowing them to act much like cities by regulating local utilities, engaging in economic development activities, and creating departments of town government. The Town of White Bear is still governed by a



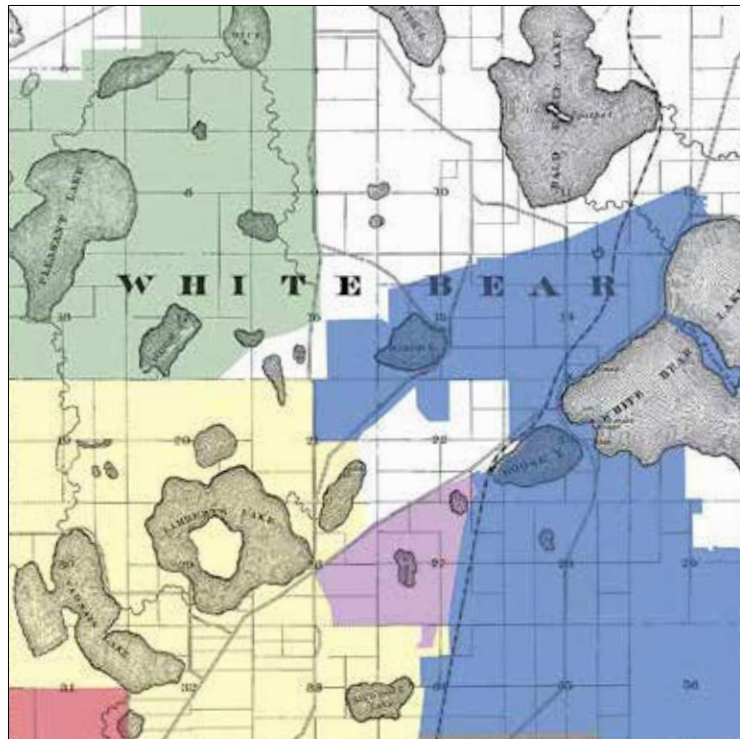
three-member town board and holds an annual March meeting, where electors continue to have a voice in the direction of their government.⁴⁸

Sara Markoe Hanson has been the executive director of the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society since 2001. Hanson's passion for historical research and a better understanding of the area her family has called home since 1857 inspires her work. The White Bear Lake Area Historical Society strives to connect its community to its past through its programs and offerings, focusing on the municipalities that touch the shore of White Bear Lake.

After more than sixteen months of uncertainty regarding the future of the township, the town board feared there was some confusion among voters on whether they were voting against annexation or for self-determination. To clarify the question, the ballot created for the vote on July 21, 1964, was clear and concise. *Courtesy of White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.*

The original base map showing the present boundaries of the Town of White Bear (in white) and the cities that were born from it over the decades. The township is unusual, as it is made of five noncontiguous parts. Courtesy of White Bear Area Historical Society.

Note: This map is our best attempt at reconciling the original map of the township with the changes over the decades. Not all lines match precisely because of the evolution of surveying methods and the realignment of roads.



NOTES

1. Gem Lake, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, and small portions of Little Canada and Maplewood were all developed from within White Bear Township.

2. J. N. Nicollet, J. C. Fremont, and W. J. Stone, *Hydrographical basin of the upper Mississippi River from astronomical and barometrical observations, surveys, and information* (Washington, DC: Published by order of the US Senate, 1843), accessed from Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/78692260>.

3. There is no official record of the name change. Nicollet recorded the name as Bears Lake on his map in 1843. In 1858, the body of water and the subsequent township is recorded as White Bear.

4. "Township Government 101: A Township Government Primer," Minnesota Association of Townships, accessed January 8, 2020, <https://mmtownships.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/township101.pdf>.

5. "The Superior Road is completed to White Bear Lake, and an opening excursion and picnic is to be given by the officials of the road to-day," *Star Tribune*, September 10, 1868, 4.

6. See "White Bear News," *Saint Paul Globe*, 1870-90.

7. New services with the increased population included bringing in food, ice, and entertainment. Transportation services, such as coaches and drays, were needed to move guests, their luggage, and furniture. Improved roadways made the list, as well. In terms of regulations, laws were written to control alcohol sales and consumption and gambling.

8. "An act to incorporate Village of White Bear, County of Ramsey, State of Minnesota," Minnesota Of-

fice of the Revisor of Statutes 1881 General Laws, chapter 49, section 1, 296, accessed June 1, 2020, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/1881/o/Special+Laws/Chapter/49/pdf/>.

9. Towns or townships do not have the same authority as a village or city to make laws or provide certain services. For example, even today, a township cannot issue a liquor license; the county in which it sits must do that. A city, however, can issue a liquor license.

10. "Views On Annexation," *White Bear Press*, September 27, 1956, 1.

11. Mayor Fleming is quoted repeatedly in stories in the *White Bear Press* articulating the city's position and refuting accusations to the contrary.

12. Carl Peters, "Parking Lots, Annexation Before Council Today," *White Bear Press*, June 7, 1956, 1.

13. "Citizens Committee Holds Meeting at Gall School," *White Bear Press*, October 4, 1956, 1.

14. "Citizens Committee," 1. Fleming served as a municipal court judge and a Minnesota district court judge but never a county commissioner.

15. "An act relating to village government; codifying and revising the village laws; providing for optional plans of village government; amending and repealing certain laws," Minnesota Office of the Revisor of Statutes 1949 General Laws, chapter 119, subd. 5, 151, accessed June 1, 2020, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/1949/o/Session+Law/Chapter/119/pdf/>.

16. *Report of Fact Finding Committee of White Bear Township* (White Bear, MN: Town of White Bear, January 24, 1957) in Minnesota Municipal Board Annexation Files, Series 1, 1957-1989, Minnesota Historical Society.

17. "Petition Underway to Add Vast Area To City As Council Annexes Bacchus Developments, Receives Report From Citizens Committee," *White Bear Press*, September 6, 1956, 1.
18. "Water And Sewer Problems Aired At Town Board Meeting, Annexation Petitions Discussed," *White Bear Press*, September 6, 1956, 2.
19. "Council to Meet Saturday Morning on Annexation Petition Expected Today," *White Bear Press*, September 13, 1956, 1.
20. Carl Peters, "Annexation Election Will be Saturday, October 6 at St. Pius X School," *White Bear Press*, September 27, 1956, 1.
21. Carl Peters, "City Council to Set New Date for 1850-Acre Annexation Vote," *White Bear Press*, September 20, 1956, 1.
22. W. Thomas Jefferson, oral history interview, White Bear Lake Area Historical Society, March 21, 2017.
23. Jefferson, oral history interview.
24. "Views On Annexation," *White Bear Press*, September 27, 1956, 1.
25. William Fleming, "Mayor Fleming on Annexation," *White Bear Press*, October 4, 1956, 1.
26. *Report of Fact Finding Committee of White Bear Township*.
27. Carl Peters, "Bellaire Votes Down Incorporation; Normandy Park Petitions Annexation: Another Petition Reported in Process," *White Bear Press*, October 18, 1956, 1.
28. Carl Peters, "Both Annexation Petitions Carry Affirmatively; Certification of Results Await Court Action," *White Bear Press*, April 18, 1956, 12.
29. "High Court Upholds Judge in Upsetting Annexation," *The Minneapolis Star*, March 6, 1959, 13.
30. "Town Chairman Earle Benner Dies Suddenly," *White Bear Press*, July 4, 1957, 1.
31. "Gov. Freeman Appoints Fleming City's First Municipal Judge," *White Bear Press*, March 27, 1958, 1.
32. William Stark, *White Bear Town Hall National Register Evaluation* (White Bear Township, MN: White Bear Township, October 8, 2013), 19 at White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.
33. "An act creating a municipal commission to hear petitions for the incorporation of villages . . ." Minnesota Office of the Revisor of Statutes 1959 General Laws, chapter 686, section 1, 1306, accessed September 14, 2020, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/1959/o/Session+Law/Chapter/686/pdf/>.
34. "Gem Lake Votes Village Status," *White Bear Press*, July 2, 1959, 1.
35. "State Commission To Hear Annex Problem, Dec. 4," *White Bear Press*, December 3, 1959, 1.
36. "Thumping Majority Rejects Annexation of NE Corner," *White Bear Press*, April 28, 1960, 1.
37. "An act relating to the municipal commission to hear petitions for the incorporation of villages . . ." Minnesota Office of the Revisor of Statutes 1961 General Laws, chapter 645, section 3, 1207, accessed September 14, 2020, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/1961/o/Session+Law/Chapter/645/pdf/>.
38. "White Bear's Political Development Traced," *White Bear Press*, February 11, 1960, 1.
39. "Governor To Call Conference On Suburban Problems," *White Bear Press*, July 20, 1961, 1.
40. "Andersen Names Fleming to Metro Commission," *White Bear Press*, December 21, 1961, 4.
41. "City Sign-up For Sewage Disposal Plant Underway," *White Bear Press*, November 8, 1962, 1.
42. "Township Hoists Battle Flag," *White Bear Press*, March 7, 1963, 1.
43. Aaron Litman, "Township Residents: Don't Be Misled by False Promises," *White Bear Press*, April 4, 1963.
44. Aaron Litman, "W.B. Township Voters Turn Down Annexation Referendum, 683-366," *White Bear Press*, September 19, 1963, 1.
45. "Yo-Yo Battle At End? High Court Ruling Gives Township Voters Right To Decide WBL Annexation; To Vote July 21," *White Bear Press*, June 25, 1964, 1.
46. "Over 3-1 Margin . . . Township Defeats Annexation Proposal," *White Bear Press*, July 23, 1964, 1.
47. "Over 3-1 Margin," 1.
48. "Quick Facts: White Bear Township, Minnesota," United States Census Bureau, accessed May 17, 2020, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/whitebeartownshipramseycountyminnesota#>; According to the Minnesota Association of Townships, today, Minnesota has 1,781 towns. According to an 1874 map, Ramsey County originally was divided into six townships, including Mound View, White Bear, Rose, New Canada, Reserve, and McLean.

Notes to Sidebar on p. 1

- a. "Township," Ballotpedia, accessed January 13, 2020, [Ballotpedia.org/township](https://ballotpedia.org/township).
- b. Deborah A. Dyson, "Statutory Basis for Classification of Cities by Population," MN House Research, accessed October 13, 2020, <https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hrd/pubs/cityclass.pdf>.
- c. Alexis Stangl, "Structures of Counties, Cities, and Towns," State of Minnesota Senate Counsel, Research, and Fiscal Analysis, January 2017, accessed October 13, 2020, https://www.senate.mn/storage/scrfa/Structures_of_Counties_Cities_Towns.pdf.

Notes to Sidebar on p. 3

- a. "Death of Col. Leip," *White Bear Life*, October 2, 1908, 1. William Leip emigrated from Germany in 1849 and settled first in St. Louis, Missouri, and then St. Paul, Minnesota, before coming to White Bear at the end of the Civil War. From 1866 until his death in 1908, he operated a resort on the western shore of White Bear Lake. "White Bear: What is Being Done to Improve the Popular Resort," *Saint Paul Globe*, March 25, 1879, 4.
- b. "Grand Musical Reunion," *Star Tribune*, September 5, 1878, 4. Some headliners included Bach's celebrated [sic] Band of Milwaukee, Lindell Park Reed Band of St. Louis, and the Great Western Band of St. Paul.

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RAMSEY COUNTY History

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future.

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The Society began in 1949 when a group of citizens preserved the Jane and Heman Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights, which the family acquired in 1849. The original programs at Gibbs Farm (listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974) focused on telling the story of the Gibbs family. In 2000, with the assistance of a Dakota Advisory Council, the site also began interpreting Dakota culture and lifeways. RCHS built additional structures and dedicated outdoor spaces to tell the stories of the remarkable relationship between Jane Gibbs and the Dakota people of Heyate Otunwe (Cloud Man's Village).

In 1964, the Society began publishing its award-winning magazine, *Ramsey County History*. In 1978, the organization moved its library, archives, and administrative offices to St. Paul's Landmark Center, a restored Federal Courts building on the National Register of Historic Places. An expansion of the Research Center was completed in 2010 to allow greater access to the Society's collection of historical archives and artifacts. In 2016, the Research Center was rededicated as the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center.

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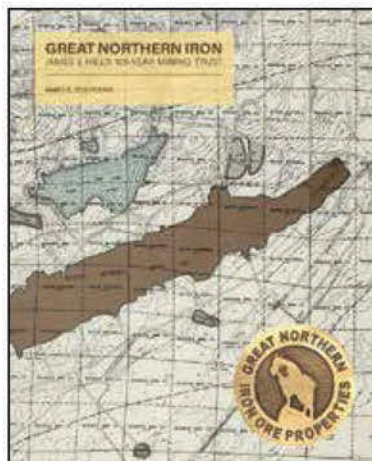


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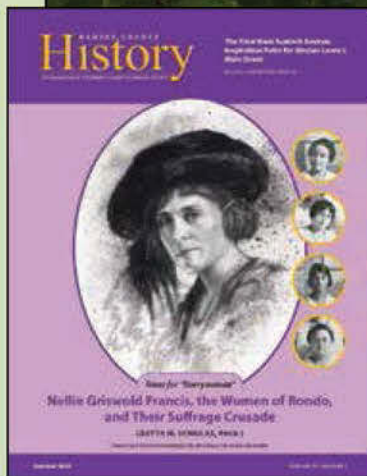
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Born in Ukraine

Sculptor Antin Pavlos

JANICE QUICK, PAGE 26



Antin Pavlos was a Ukrainian-born sculptor who spent the last few years of his life living and working in St. Paul. His work "Harvest" (1953) depicts a barefoot peasant harvesting a crop by hand. The 11" x 15" x 7" painted-plaster sculpture was donated to the Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art by Stefania Pavlos in memory of her sculptor husband. *Collection of the Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art. Gift of Stefania Pavlos.*