



NEW PRAGUE POPS POST

March 2023 -- Volume 1 -- Number 3

"Let's Party! Why? It's Time!"

Editor's Note: "It's Time!" Is a monthly column by Den Gardner, chair of the Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) Committee of the New Prague Area Arts Council. If you can read, we ask you to read it at your leisure! If you missed reading class in elementary school, an audio version may be available in the next three years. OK, just kidding.

Hello, POPS enthusiasts! The great comedian Robin Williams once said: "Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's Party!'"

So, I suggest "Let's Party" because "It's Time!"

As spring approaches in just a few weeks (after a long and nasty winter), I thought it time to bring all of you involved in some way or another in the Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS) project an update. You ALL serve a great role in our historic project to get this outdoor performance facility built in New Prague.

So, a quick and I  **smore**  Share  Translate  he fall.

1. We have received pledges of approximately \$370,000 thus far of our \$1 million goal by the end of 2025. Since our early success was so exciting for us, we've increased our goal for the three-year pledges to \$500,000 by the end of 2023. We are confident we will reach our \$1 million goal by the end of 2025. We have reached our current amount from less than 10 individuals/businesses, etc.
2. We are excited to announce a special event for this fall – a car giveaway raffle to raise money for POPS. Thanks to the great generosity of Palmer Welcome Auto, an automobile will be raffled off. Details will be coming this spring and you can look for raffle tickets by this summer. Thanks so much to Palmer and Sue Welcome for this great contribution to POPS!
3. We have been working closely with the city, as they have agreed to donate the land for our effort. We have shared many times the three locations we are looking at for this building project. See further information in Number 4 below.
4. The POPS Leadership Team of 15 business/school/arts/community folks (after receiving a recommendation from the Site Feasibility and Design Subcommittee) has voted unanimously to select Bolton & Menk as the architectural/engineering firm to analyze the three sites – City Center/old Millpond/Creamery area; Sliding Hill Skate Park and Memorial Park area. This group will develop a recommendation for the POPS Leadership Team over the next few months. This was an exhaustive, yet crucial effort, and thanks to the subcommittee and the POPS Leadership Team for their diligence in completing this important step in our project. Three firms submitted written proposals for this project.
5. Once the recommendations have been made and the priority locations have been created, a presentation will be made to the NP Park Board (Joe Barten is chair of the NP Park Board and also sits on the POPS Leadership Team). As you know, the Park Board has allocated \$5,000 to the POPS Committee to assist in developing the site selection process. Upon their approval, a final step will be a presentation to the NP City Council regarding this site selection process. Only after these steps are taken and approved by all appropriate bodies will the next effort begin to look at design possibilities.
6. The Forward New Prague Foundation (FNPF) has been filed with the state of Minnesota. We have just received approval from the IRS for our 501c3 non-profit status. While we work on transitioning donations, the New Prague Rotary Foundation is continuing to accept donations on our behalf.
7. We hope you've seen the POPS Thermometer sign downtown across the street from the NP Chamber office. A second sign will be going up this spring on the east side of town. We hope you've also seen the monthly ads in the NP Times and the weekly radio spots on KCHK Radio. We've also published two New Prague POPS Post e-newsletters. This one is our third! These, along with our great website and other social media efforts are spreading the word about our project.

Continued fundraising efforts will continue in the spring. "It's Time" everyone! Thanks for keeping the fires burning during this cold winter. It's your "Persistence, Diligence, Dedication, and Passion

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**Den Gardner, Chair****Praha Outdoor Performance Stage (POPS)**

Fundraising Subcommittee Update

By: Shannon Brusseau and Den Gardner

The Fundraising Sub-Committee of the POPS (Praha Outdoor Performance Stage) Committee is gearing up for a great spring as it has determined to raise its goal by the end of 2023 from \$250,000 to \$500,000. This is based on early, positive fundraising efforts and great enthusiasm for the project.

A quick update:

1. Donations are about \$370,000 from about 10 individuals/businesses. Personal visits have been made to a dozen companies thus far and more will begin in April. The goal is to do at least 20 more visits by summertime.
2. Another exciting piece of news is that Palmer Welcome Auto is donating a vehicle for POPS. The vehicle will be raffled off at a special event this fall. Details are just being developed as the POPS team explores the best avenues for garnering the most donations. We are hopeful to make this an annual event over the next three years to raise money for POPS.

If we haven't contacted you yet about your support for this great community project, please contact Den at dengardner@gandgcomm.com. Or Shannon at Shannon@diversifiedwealthmanagement.com.

Thanks in advance for your support of this community-building project for New Prague.

Feasibility & Design Subcommittee

By: Steve Frost

The POPS Site Feasibility and Design Subcommittee continues to provide details to the POPS Leadership Committee, city staff, and Bolton & Menk Engineering Services. With Bolton & Menk on board, the subcommittee will be moving forward with gathering more info on the elements of the design of the POPS facility and further assessment of community needs. Details of the design will become more focused once we know which of the three sites will be the actual location for development. We're excited about getting ideas about how the site will be developed with our POPS facility as a focal point.



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Thank You Palmer Welcome!



Exciting News! Although details are yet to be determined, the POPS Committee is thrilled to announce that Palmer Welcome Auto will donate a late-model used vehicle valued at \$20,000 as part of his company's donation to the POPS project. A raffle will be held to win this vehicle this fall. Look for future news on details of this exciting new fundraising effort for the Praha Outdoor Performance Stage effort. Thanks to the Welcome family for this great donation.

Pictured here are Den Gardner, chair of the POPS Committee (left); and Palmer Welcome.

Marketing Communications SubCommittee

The Marketing Communications SubCommittee is composed of Julie Schmitz, chair; plus Larry Pint, Jenny Schmitz, Karen Steinhoff and Den Gardner. Its goal is to educate and inform the New

Prague area pub
billboard, etc.), s



outdoor

- Two editions (this current one our third) of our POPS Newsletter were distributed via both email and post in mid-December and mid-January.
- As our committees work through their to-do lists, watch for updates on our website: www.nppops.org. It's loaded with news and pictures to keep you up-to-date.
- You can also read about us and talk about us on Facebook (Praha Outdoor Performance Stage), Instagram (NewPraguePOPS), Twitter (@NewPraguePOPS), etc.
- One of our two outdoor signs is completed and on display. Look on the east wall of the Pioneer Saloon for a large thermometer showing the progress of our efforts to raise \$1 million by the end of 2025. As the money comes in through donations and grants, the "temperature" will rise until we meet our goal. Thanks to POPS Committee members Karen Steinhoff, Julie Schmitz and Eddie Shimota for their help with this project.
- Each month the NP Times features our POPS ad. Suel Printing is a Bronze Supporter of POPS.
- KCHK Radio is running radio spots about POPS each week. Go to www.nppops.org to listen. KCHK is also a major supporter of the POPS project.

All marketing communications efforts are designed to promote fundraising and provide people with more information about the POPS. Thanks to both media outlets for stepping up and providing this space and time for us to continually inform the public about this effort. Keep your eyes and ears peeled for more ads and spots in the future!





Julie Schmitz, left, and Eddie Shimota, right, display the POPS sign on the east wall of the Pioneer Saloon in downtown New Prague. Thanks to Julie Schmitz for the banner design and Eddie for managing the attachment of the sign to the wall and the owner, Mark Michel, for allowing us to display it!

City/School/Community Organization Collaborations SubCommittee

The City, School, Community Organization Collaborations SubCommittee is composed of Tony Buthe, Chair, plus Gary Pikal, Dan Bishop and Ben Hilding. We are more than happy to accept any other person who may be interested in supporting this group.

The City/School/Community Organization Collaborations SubCommittee has gathered its volunteers to begin contacting New Prague area organizations to garner support for our POPS project. We value the input of any/all organizations that would like to offer suggestions or resources that might be relevant to our project. If you know of a group or organization that you believe we should contact, please reach out to us! For example, a meeting has been set in March with the American Legion Post to discuss its potential interest in the project.

Grant/Public Private Funding SubCommittee

By: Sandi Loxton

Sandi Loxton and Kyra Chapman continue to search and review grant opportunities on both the state and local levels. In their search, they have discovered that some grants are tied to specific counties. Two of the proposed locations (City Center and Sliding Hill) are in Scott County and one (Memorial Park) is in LeSueur County, so the exact location after the completion of the feasibility study will need to be determined before any grant applications can be written.

They continue their quest to provide both public and private grant funds to offset the fundraising of private donations.



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Do You Want To Get Involved?



As we visit with potential donors, we constantly get asked: “When will construction begin?” Our optimistic answer is as soon as we have pledges for \$1 million. And the vast majority will be raised with private funds as noted. We believe that’s three years of work ahead of us – with a goal to begin construction in early 2025. Sooner if we raise the money earlier than planned.

We’re seeking three-year pledges, with donation levels starting at \$1,000 and reaching \$100,000. We have a proposal we’d be glad to share with you. And your donation can be made to a 501c3 non-profit organization – in this case the New Prague Rotary Foundation – which is holding donations for POPS for up to two years while we apply for our own foundation – The Forward New Prague Foundation.

The application to the IRS for the designation of the Forward New Prague Foundation to be registered as a 501c3 non-profit organization was submitted in mid-January. We expect approval by the end of 2023.

Yes folks, "It's Time!"

Time for this vibrant community of 8,100 residents to create a facility that can celebrate the arts in New Prague for residents of all ages. Our mission statement is succinct and clear:

“To build a multi-purpose outdoor performance facility to celebrate the arts and other community gatherings from music to theatre to dance to visual arts and much more.”

It’s time for you to get involved. Our POPS officer team of myself, Karen Steinhoff, Bruce Wolf and Sandi Loxton are using our POPS formula – Diligence, Persistence, Passion and Dedication (DPPD) – as our guiding light to steer us to completion of this project.

Get Connected!



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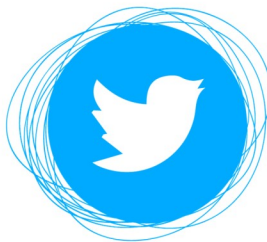
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Feel free to check out our website and or email us at newpraguepops@gmail.com

If you are interested in being involved in the POPS Committee, contact Den Gardner at

dengardner@gandgcomm.com, cell phone 612-325-3981; or Karen Steinhoff at

hellokstein@gmail.com, cell phone 952-457-0634.

POPS Leadership Committee

Den Gardner, Chair
 Karen (Stein) Steinhoff, Vice-Chair
 Sandi Loxton, Secretary
 Bruce Wolf, Treasurer
 Andy Beckius
 Jon Colling
 Steve Frost
 Joe Barten

Lisa Brusseau
 Shannon Brusseau
 Brooke Sticha
 Tony Buthe
 Julie Schmitz
 Larry Pint
 Ben Hilding



Praha Outdoor Performance Stage

<https://www.nppops.org/home>

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