

LUCKY GARY 10,000 BUCKS & a MOUNTAIN BIKE

By David Keiski

When you meet Gary Hodge you meet a man who understands the meaning of simplicity. After he had his bicycle "trashed" by someone behind his apartment, he won an 18 speed mountain bike at The Pump in a drawing. It was a simple twist of fate. (Or maybe Gary entered enough times to increase his odds...) Never the less, the simplicity of success was an obvious result of Gary's continuing luck when he won \$10,000 at Food-N-Fuel the following day in a lottery scratch off game. When I asked Gary if he was always lucky, he said, "Well, in South Minneapolis I'd had sawed off shot guns pointed at my head and I lived, I guess that was better than this."

Gary went home and showed his girlfriend Linda O'Hagan the winning card and she misread it. "You won \$5000?" She asked Gary excitedly. He informed her that it was twice as much. "I was in shock and I was scared. I was on my new bike thinking that

I'd have to find someone to drive us to the lottery office because I don't drive. Linda's mother drove us down to Eagan," says Gary. "It was the most nerve racking day of my life. I kept thinking, what if I'd won 8 million? They were super nice down at the lottery office."

As I talked with Gary more about his win, I couldn't help but think it must be easy to be nice when you sit around and give thousands of dollars away all day. Gary said that they took \$3600 for taxes. I asked what he did with the winnings, and he said, "I bought a couple of shirts, some new shoes, and that's all I care about. Things don't mean that much to me, they just disappear." I asked of he was finished, meaning winning, because in the last three days up until we spoke he had won another \$280 on pull tabs. He said, "I don't plan on stopping."

"Down at Food-N-Fuel they call me Scary Gary."

The question I guess would be how much does it take spending to gather the chance to win that much. I didn't want to make Gary think about that. I'm guessing it's like when you go to Vegas. You just want to remember what comes out of the slot machine, not what you put in.

Gary dabbles in antiques as has his family for years. He is a 26 year resident of Excelsior and when I asked if I could take his picture he said, "Everybody knows me anyhow."

Gary had an old girlfriend tell him once, "Don't ever do anything but expect to win." Simple words.

ANTIQUUE & CLASSIC BOAT SHOW

By David Keiski

The Antique and Classic Boat Society format was used on August 9th & 10th at the Excelsior Park Restaurant to judge boats in varieties of classes. Numerous awards decided by a panel of judges were in the process of being considered when I visited Todd Warner in the press boat docked in Excelsior Bay.

The 22nd Annual Antique and Classic Boat Show Rendezvous took place in good weather with a good showing from boat enthusiasts and other antique lovers. There were antique canoes, bicycles, an old fire engine from the Wayzata Fire Department, antique model boats that ran by remote control, and Woody Station Wagons.

Mr. Warner had the idea of expanding the boat show to include additional antiques for this year, and with additional time to plan and contact more participants could possibly bring the show also to Excelsior's streets in the shopping district near Water Street and surrounding streets.

"We've really got a big variety, the high wheel bicycles, part of Jim Ogland's involvement with Transportation Museum. The Woody Club, a 1923 fire truck from Wayzata, the Edina model Yacht Club, the Ferris Wheel is working over here...It's really my hope with the support of the City Council and the Chamber of Commerce to have a transportation festival," said Todd from his boat full of memorabilia from bygone days. "We've got an old Vagabond cooler here, Argis camera equipment, if you go down in the cabin you'll find stuff that you would've only found in this boat back in the thirties. Old cool stuff." As Todd talked affectionately about the collection of antiques and their owners that had gathered to proudly display them, folks were passing by viewing the uniqueness of Todd's own special display.

An Excelsior resident who shall remain nameless, (because she's so shy), stopped by to visit us and asked where a certain type of boat was? Todd told her that there was no representation of that craft in the show. He went on to say that her dad had the hottest boat on the lake. They spoke of the speedy craft and I couldn't help but think that there must be many stories being told in the various

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boats tied up on the docks. There were around 85 boats on display, plus all of the special exhibits, and the hope was for a turn out of 5000 people to enjoy the event on the weekend. The steady crowd seemed to make that prediction a possibility.

The Bob Speltz Land O Lakes Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society is the local chapter that put on the show. Todd says that the society is an international organization that is soon to have 41 chapters internationally representing over 7000 members, and over 12,000 boats. "Our chapter is one of the oldest chapters, the third chapter, with over 500 members. We started here in '77 and we're growing." I asked Todd if I could join with just a twelve foot alumicraft fishing boat, and he said, "You don't even have to own a boat to join. If you love old boats get involved. We offer many benefits. Discounts on parts, advice on restoration, we have a great publication that's now gone 4 color, printed 6 times a year now, called The Boathouse. Also The National issue called The Rudder comes out 4 times a year." Todd told me that meets are held all over the country and that over 100 classic boat shows were held this year and that it's growing all the time. Todd is president of Bristol Classics LTD and in the last ninety days he says that he's had people from Britain, France,

Italy and Australia all looking to take home boats from the US. "They're looking to steal our treasures. I'm concerned that people protect these boats from leaving the country."

As Todd Warner and several other boat enthusiasts shared their passion for the nostalgia of the watercraft in the show, people took pictures and ran their fingers across the smooth fine finishes of the collection of heritage that filled the lawn and docks of the Excelsior Park Restaurant. After the first two years at Lord Fletchers the show out grew the location, so they moved it to Excelsior where there were more docks and room for displays. "This is one of the top 5 boat shows in the country, right up there with Tahoe and Clayton, New York. That one is the oldest boat show in the country, their 33rd annual." Todd was a judge in New York the weekend previous to his chapter's show. "Twenty years ago I was selling to my dad's friends and now I'm selling to my friends," Todd said of the clientele that he's grown to know and serve in the Lake Minnetonka area. Call him if you have interest in old boats, join the Bob Speltz Land O Lakes Chapter or stop by Bristol Classics LTD and chat with Todd about antique and classic boats. Maybe you'll hear a great old boat story!

