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Middleton Hills residents and Northsiders work together to name prairie

by MATT GEIGER
Times-Tribune

"Living Hills," "Wide Open Wilderness," "Monarch Meadow," "Wild Beauty," "Prairie Dawn" and "New Beginnings." They are beautiful names designed to capture the splendor of a piece of land being restored to its native state in the Middleton Hills Neighborhood.

Students at Northside Elementary School created the proposed monikers. The Middleton Hills Neighborhood Association is currently reviewing them and plans to choose one later this summer.

That selection will become the prairie's official name.

Erin Zetes, a fourth grade teacher at Northside, said the collaboration began when the school's Community Outreach Action Team was approached by the neighborhood association earlier this year.

Residents of Middleton Hills had been hard at work restoring a prairie, but the default name – "Lot No. 419" – didn't exactly capture the land's aesthetic magnificence. So they turned to the Community Outreach Action Team and the young minds at Northside for help.

As a staff, educators at the school divide into "action teams" to work on various types of school improvement.

"We have an action team that focuses on technology opportunities, one that works on a program to teach consistent student expectations, ... one that works on globalization initiatives in our school, etc.," Zetes explained. "The Community Outreach Action team focuses on connecting Northside to our community."

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Times-Tribune photo by Matt Geiger

A 'Better' garden

The July issue of *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine features the garden of Karen Watson-Newlin, a Town of Middleton resident. She is an art teacher and a member of the Wisconsin Daylily Society. In the article, the two interests come together with photos and text illustrating her design principles. When she and her husband first moved to Middleton, Watson-Newlin began cultivating a staggering array of living art on what had been a featureless parcel of land. "It was essentially a blank canvass," she recalled.

Her garden is located at 7699 Almor Drive in the Town of Middleton and will be open for public viewing Sunday, July 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Russian Folk at the PAC

July 13 concert spans tortures of love to joyful dance

by MATT GEIGER
Times-Tribune

People in Middleton already have a pretty good idea what a Russian winter feels like. On July 13 they will have the opportunity to experience another, far warmer aspect of Russia – it's eclectic, convivial musical heritage.

Olga and Vladimir Trubetskey, both originally from Moscow, moved to Middleton to work as scientists. Once they arrived, however, they discovered an unexpected link to their past: the UW Russian Folk Orchestra.

"We always loved music," Olga explained, "but it was almost like we redeveloped our Russian roots here."

Political turmoil and changes in power have led to mass emigrations out of Russia. Those departing groups established new enclaves all over the world, from Argentina to Australia. Pockets of Russian culture spread traditional folk music, picking up other influences as they travelled across the globe.

"I would say it's classical – things



Times-Tribune photo by Matt Geiger

Vladimir and Olga Trubetskey at the site of their upcoming concert. To order tickets call 608-265-2787.

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IN BRIEF

Local wakeboarder will be on CBS Sports

Middletonians who tune into CBS Sports Network's Wednesday, July 11 broadcast of the Collegiate National Championships from Oklahoma City just might spot a familiar face.

John Zdeblick, age 22, is a semi-professional wakeboarder and a full time electrical engineering student at the University of Wisconsin. For years he has been a visible rider all over the state, and now the country.

With his finishes last year of third and second at Nationals and Worlds respectively, rolling into this year winning collegiate national titles for wakeboarding and wakeskating, he's shown he's always in contention for the title.

Good Neighbor nominees sought

Good Neighbor Festival Trustees are now accepting applications for 2012 Good Neighbor Awards.

The Good Neighbor Award recognizes an individual who has made a difference in the Middleton community and embodies what it means to be a "Good Neighbor."

Those who wish to nominate a citizen should fill out the nomination form, which can be found at goodneighborfestival.com, and email it to middletongoodneighborfestival@gmail.com.

Nominations can also be mailed to Middleton Good Neighbor Festival, PO Box 620211, Middleton, WI 53562.

The deadline is noon on Monday July 23. Good neighbors must reside in the City of Middleton.

Good Neighbor Fest this year is scheduled for August 24-26.

Community endowment to host fundraiser

A late summer picnic in the Capital Brewery Beer Garden will benefit the Middleton Community Endowment. The event will take place August 4, 5 – 9 p.m. at 7734 Terrace Ave.

A portion of all proceeds will benefit the Middleton Community Endowment (MCE). "Hiatus" will perform live music, and there will be a silent auction.

To propose a worthy project to receive money from the MCE, or to donate, visit www.madison-communityfoundation.org/MCE or contact Andy Lewis, Middleton Advisory Committee chairman, at 608-890-4254 or ablewis7@gmail.com.

MIDDLETON TIMES-TRIBUNE
P.O. Box 620006, Middleton, WI 53562

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Community integrates those with special needs. **Page 3**

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FOLK

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like Tchaikovsky, Christmas music, things people would recognize – but also the majority of Russian folk music was influenced by gypsies," she continued.

According to Trubetsky, Russian Folk falls into two categories: "Dark songs about tortures of love and other things, and gypsy music, which is playful, joyful dance music."

Leading the UW Russian Folk Orchestra is Victor Gorodinsky.

"Sometimes Victor, when he's conducting, is dancing too," Trubetsky stated.

She said Gorodinsky is the reason she and her husband were initially drawn to the group.

"We thought about it early on, but we were both working full time, with young kids," she said. "Later we gave it a try, and Victor was such an energizing person. He's fantastic and very much alive. We love him and we love living in Middleton."

Those two loves will converge Friday, July 13 at 7:30 p.m. in the Middleton-Cross Plains Performing Arts Center, 2100 Bristol Street in Middleton. There, the Russian Folk Orchestra will perform in a concert that will be the culmination of the Balalaika and Domra Association of America's 34th annual convention and Festival Concert, running July 7-14 in the Madison area.

Musicians will travel to the concert armed with unique instruments like the balalaika (a three-stringed, triangular relative of the guitar), the domra (which some compare to a mandolin), wooden spoons and much more.

Olga and Vladimir, who play the balalaika and domra, respectively, live

so close they could actually walk to the concert hall.

When they take their seats onstage, they hope their group's performance will illustrate the diverse nature of folk music.

"No folk music, certainly not Russian folk music, stands alone," she said. "It has so many influences. I think this really helps you feel how the world is connected. It's a modern silk road."

Gorodinsky, speaking in an amiable ursine rumble, said the concert in Middleton will be the culmination of a week of cultural events.

The Balalaika and Domra Association of America is a multi-ethnic, non-profit, non-political association dedicated to perpetuating music written for the balalaika, domra, and related instruments. It also disseminates information pertaining to the heritage of Eastern European traditions and provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and developments.

Gorodinsky, who grew up in Moscow and immigrated to the United States in 1982, works at the University of Wisconsin Library. Like the Trubetskeys, he began his musical training in his homeland.

Also like them, he didn't originally plan to focus on traditional folk music.

"It was when I got to college – that is when I really got fanatical about it," Gorodinsky recalled.

When he arrived in Wisconsin, he "certainly didn't expect a lot of Russian folk music."

"It was a pleasant surprise," he said. "Here it's different; it's exotic."

It was Gorodinsky who founded the UW Russian Folk Orchestra, creating

a home for other musical "fanatics."

The Balalaika and Domra Association of America last held its annual convention in Madison in 2005. Gorodinsky suggested bringing the event back to the area, thus landing the concert to Middleton's largest music venue.

Gorodinsky said those who attend the July 13 concert at the Middleton-Cross Plains Performing Arts Center might find themselves converted.

"Of course I take it for granted, but it's a very unique music," he observed. "People hear it in their souls and it mesmerizes them. They become fanatics like us."

As for the Middleton-Cross Plains Performing Arts Center, Gorodinsky said the site is "beautiful [and] nearly perfect acoustically."

"I just love it," he added.

Throughout the week, musicians from all over the world will convene to participate in workshops of instruction in playing, performance, folk dancing, chorus, lectures, activities, and rehearsals.

The final concert will feature performances by balalaika and domra ensembles, soloists and the 100-member festival orchestra.

For more information send an email to inquiries@russianconcert.info, call 608-259-9440, or see the concert website at www.russianconcert.info.



Photo contributed

UW Russian Folk Orchestra Victor Gorodinsky.

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