

## COMMUNITY

## Northside Timebank challenges you

By Terrie Anderson  
The Northside News

The Northside Timebank challenges all northsiders to have fun this summer with the following activities and offers a **Summer Challenge** to community-minded Northside timebankers.

**June 15** — Pet Parade. Come to the Northside Farmers Market, then parade your controlled and non-aggressive pet around the plaza and past the judges. Be in front of the old Kohl's store by 10 am to register.

**July 17** — Mallards/Timebank Game. Buy a ticket for this 7 pm game at a special website: [www.mallards-groups.com](http://www.mallards-groups.com), using the password "timebank" to log in. Two dollars will

be donated to the Timebank for every ticket purchased when the password is used. Tickets are available anytime at the box office, but use "timebank" to prompt the \$2 donation.

**July 20** — Water Wonderland. Learn about local water issues at the Northside Farmer's Market and enjoy a cooling splash in our water activities. 10 am to noon. Kids welcome with an adult!

**August 2** — Savor the Summer Festival at Troy Gardens. Everyone can join the festivities. Timebank members who are wellness providers and artists can earn timedollars for their ways and wares. See the ad next to Troy Gardens article on page 17 and check out [www.community.timebanks.org](http://www.community.timebanks.org) for details.



## Lost history of the Northside

By Tom Doherty

A visitor to the northeast side might conclude that nothing much happened around here until the post-war housing boom. But our corner of town was a happening place a hundred years before houses and playgrounds spread over hill and dale. Arguably, the most historically significant development was the establishment of the state hospital on the shore of Lake Mendota during the mid-1800s.

Four massive stories tall and nearly two football fields long, the institution that opened its doors in 1860 was as oversized as the expectations the public had for it. Advocates of the so-called "Hospital Movement" had claimed that in the right setting mental illness was finally curable. Mendota, as our state hospital came to be known, was built to their elaborate specifications, as were dozens of identical hospitals across the country.

But the heart and soul of the hospital remained its staff — a handful of young, untrained attendants who lived with their patients, and an all-powerful superintendent who was expected to pay daily attention to each patient in addition to hiring and firing workers, managing finances, and overseeing the farm, among many other responsibilities.

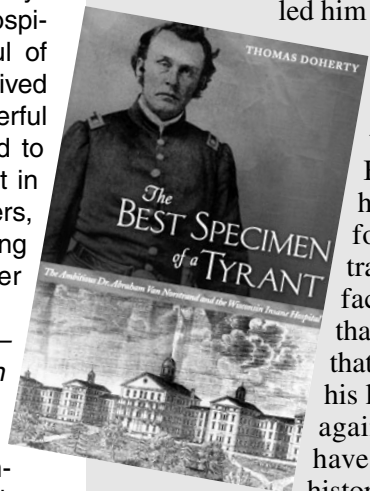
*The Best Specimen of a Tyrant — The Ambitious Dr. Abraham Van Norstrand and the Wisconsin Insane Hospital* is the story of the extraordinary man who took command of our state hospital and harnessed the runaway expectations of the public to the hard realities of hospital life until he was tripped up by scandal. Part murder mystery, part courtroom drama, the book is the portrait of a strong-willed man who came to the young state of Wisconsin in search of his fortune only to be caught up in some of the great events of his time — from the economic collapse of the late 1850s, when he took great risks and lost everything, through the Civil War, when he organized and ran one of the army's biggest hospitals. Back home he put his reputation on the line by taking command of the troubled young hospital on the shore of Lake Mendota.

By Lee Hayden

"The Northside of Madison has a longer history than most people think" said Tom Doherty, author of the recent book of local interest entitled *The Best Specimen of a Tyrant*. He believes that few people know that even before the Mendota Mental Health Institute took shape, an enormous Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane stood for almost a century dating from the Civil War era.

Doherty, a long-time Northside resident, heard about the vanished hospital when he worked as a social worker at Mendota. This ghost building immediately awakened his interest but he didn't have time to investigate it until his retirement 10 years ago.

When he finally began to dig into the archives at the Wisconsin Historical Society, Doherty discovered a fascinating lost history of nineteenth century Wisconsin which led him to eight years



of dogged research resulting in this book. But, in fact, he enjoyed following the trail of buried facts so much that he admitted that "if he had his life to do over again he might have become an historian".

For Doherty, one of the most remarkable aspects of the history is the foresight of the State of Wisconsin, which dedicated an extremely beautiful and very valuable lakeshore site to the idealistic cause of curing mental illness.

Readers with interest in memorable characters and little known Civil War history including the story of occupation of the Gulf Coast by Wisconsin troops will enjoy the book. It is available for purchase at the Frugal Muse, Borders, University Bookstore and the Wisconsin Historical Society Bookstore.

## UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

## NORTHSIDE ACTION ALERT

If you...

✦ **are not a member**— join by calling 663-0400 or going to [www.danecountytimebank.org](http://www.danecountytimebank.org). It's free, it's fun, and it saves you money.

✦ **are a member**— arrange an exchange for something you've never tried before or with someone you haven't met yet. Check the site to see interesting new offers and requests to expand your horizons.

✦ **belong to an organization that isn't a member**— tell them about the Timebank and encourage them to join. They can get more volunteer help.

✦ **belong to or support an organization that IS a member**— donate some timedollars, giving it more access to community support. \*\*Take advantage of the **Summer Challenge!** For every five timedollars you donate to an organizational member, the Northside Timebank will donate a bonus timedollar.\*\*

Don't miss this chance to support Northside organizations like: Northside Planning Council; Friends of Troy Gardens; NECSO; Lindbergh, Mendota or Lake View Elementary parent groups; Shabazz or Omega Schools; Northport, Vera Ct. or Kennedy Heights Community Centers. For a complete list of organizational members, visit [www.danecountytimebank.org](http://www.danecountytimebank.org).

## Open House

Tuesday  
June 17  
6 - 7:30 pm

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