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SAINTS

From Page 1A

the Saints won (over Minnesota). Right after the NFC championship game, he was already hoping the Saints win the Super Bowl.

Tim proudly proclaims himself a lifelong Saints fan. He has endured the lean years when even loyal fans showed up at games wearing paper bags over their heads with "Aints" printed on the front.

"Well, for a decade-plus, you really had no choice but to be a fan of the Aints because that is exactly what they were," he said. "Luckily, being buffered by living in South Dakota, I never had to go to the extent of wearing a paper bag. But I have had friends offer me a new paper bag every year when the season starts. It's become a standing joke."

FROM SAINTS TO 'AINTS

Tim became a Saints fan for an unusual reason.

"Somebody mentioned they disliked the Saints when they became a franchise because they took (Packer) Paul Hornung in the expansion draft," he said. "Hornung retired rather than leave the Packers, and people thought (the expansion choice) ruined his career. The Packer fans were irritated, and I thought it was a good reason to choose the Saints."

Until the recent NFC championship game, the Bormanns had never been to New Orleans or even seen a pro football game. In the early years, Tim saw the Saints in a few Midwest-televised games. He read newspaper accounts of the team, and he ordered the annual media guide while working for a Mitchell radio station before entering law school.

"Before cable, I might have seen the Saints once every other year," he said. "I would get to see the (game) highlights on the 'George Michael Sports Machine'

(television show) late Sunday night."

Tim followed the era of Saints quarterback Archie Manning from 1971-82, followed by the Dome Patrol defense in the 1980s that helped New Orleans defeat the rival San Francisco 49ers.

"Then there was Bobby Hebert, the 'Cajun Cannon,'" Tim said. "He was a bright spot in the 1980s after he came over from the USFL, plus he was a local boy from Baton Rouge making good with the Saints."

Tim was able to follow his beloved Saints more closely with the arrival of cable and satellite television, along with the New Orleans feed on XM radio.

The Saints were about to encounter perhaps their greatest challenge on or off the field.

Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in August 2005, damaging the SuperDome and seeing the structure turned into a shelter for disaster victims. The Saints suffered through a miserable season and played all their home games on the road.

"You were at a loss that year as a fan," Tim said. "What do you do with this?"

Then came the prospect that the franchise would move elsewhere, possibly Los Angeles.

"You thought you would stick with the Saints wherever they went," Tim said. "But if they had gone to Los Angeles, I would have hated it. I don't think I could have pulled for any L.A. team if my life depended on it."

But the Saints stayed in New Orleans and began their ascent. In 2006, they reached the NFC playoffs where they lost to the Chicago Bears at Soldier Field. The Saints bolstered their lineup by picking up quarterback Drew Brees as a free agent and running back Reggie Bush in the draft.

JUST THE TICKET

Then came the improbable, with this year bringing prospects of the first Super Bowl trip.

"After the Saints beat the (New York) Giants and went 5-0, people thought they were for

real," Tim said. "I told Tyler, if the Saints go to the NFC championship game, we're going down to New Orleans. She just said, 'Yeah, right, OK.'"

The Saints made the playoffs, then met the Arizona Cardinals for a berth in the NFC title game. Even before the Arizona game, Tim contacted an acquaintance about ordering NFC championship game tickets.

"He had the right of first refusal for tickets, and he was going out of town and couldn't be at the game," Tim said.

"When he placed the order for me, the game just kicked off between the Saints and Cardinals, and the Cardinals were up 7-0. The tickets weren't refundable, and I was nervous. But at half-time, it definitely looked good. I sent an e-mail, asking my contact if he wanted to renege on this deal. He said no."

The Bormanns received their tickets for \$275 apiece. By the next day, the same tickets were going for \$850 each, and the price soared to \$1,500 a ticket two days before the game.

THE SAINTS COME MARCHING IN

In New Orleans, the Bormanns donned their Saints jerseys and walked to the French Quarter and Bourbon Street, where they were greeted by shouts of "Who Dat?" by energized Saints fans who also welcomed Vikings fans.

"Everyone in New Orleans was nice," Tyler said. "It was the first time they had hosted an NFC championship game, and they were excited about it."

Whether on the streets or at the game, the locals were surprised to learn the Bormanns were South Dakotans cheering for the Saints and not the Vikings.

The Bormanns arrived so early for the game, they saw players warming up in sweat-suits before putting on their pads. An estimated 10,000 fans were on hand when Brees arrived on the field, sending the crowd into a frenzy.

The Superdome eventually

filled up with about 71,000 fans. The noise was so deafening that the Bormanns couldn't hear the half-time band performance or understand the referees' explanations on penalties. The father and daughter quit talking to each other after the first quarter because they were drowned out by the crowd.

"We were on the lower level, only five rows from the end zone. It was crazy," Tyler said.

A woman in her 60s, sitting in the same row as the Bormanns, said she had attended home games since the Saints arrived in New Orleans in the 1960s. She had held season tickets for more than 20 years.

"When the (winning) field goal went through, the entire Dome was silent. Then the noise was like a wave that rolled around the dome and came back to us," Tim said.

"The lady sitting at the end of our row tried standing up. Then she sat down with tears in her eyes. I couldn't hear her, but I read her lips. She looked like she was saying, 'I never thought I would see this.'"

Tyler, who had been a Saints fan for about five years, said she had faith the Saints would prevail when they won the coin toss in overtime. But she wasn't prepared for the explosion after the game.

"Afterwards, everyone was crying. People were freaking out on the field," she said. "People were emotional. Beer was flying around, and we had popcorn and jumbalaya in our hair."

A man in the next row hugged the Bormanns, saying they brought good luck and were welcome back anytime.

"People were just nuts. We went back to the motel a quarter-mile away, and it took us a little over an hour just to get from the SuperDome to the motel," Tim said.

"We turned on the TV, and every local station was covering the game and the celebration afterward. Bourbon Street was packed shoulder to shoulder. You couldn't move. We checked out of the hotel at 3:30 the next morning to make our flight, and

people were just starting to come in from their celebrations."

While they didn't have time to tour New Orleans, the Bormanns learned the city was still struggling to recover from Hurricane Katrina. Because of the hurricane aftermath, the Saints' surge to greatness has meant even more to the city.

"It's amazing to see how far New Orleans has come, what they have done and yet they have a lot to do. It's amazing how positive people are for that city, what they have and where they are going," Tim said.

"I don't think there is another NFL team with the same connection within their community like these (Saints) do. They live there during the season, and many live there year-round. The Saints coaches and players say this is their team, and they settle down and work within the town."

WAITING FOR SUPER SUNDAY

As for the upcoming Super Bowl game, Tim plans to spend Sunday cooking up ribs and jumbalaya so they are ready for the pre-game ceremonies. He actually expects watching the game to be less stressful than watching in person.

Regardless of the game's outcome, Tyler said the ride has been an incredible experience. She definitely wants to return to New Orleans or wherever the Saints are playing.

"When the Saints were 9-0, I was pretty sure they would make it (in the playoffs), but I had no clue it would be like this," she said. "I am so happy they made it this far."

Tim agrees, saying he will remain a Who Dat Nation resident.

"I'm not a Saints expert, just a ridiculous fan," he said. "Even if they lose (on Sunday), this is the best season ever, and how can you be sad about it? We are going to the Super Bowl."

"My personal opinion is that New Orleans will welcome them home, win or lose, with a huge parade. Nobody can throw a party like that city."

RANGER

From Page 1A

along state standards. I believe in involving teachers in every step of the curriculum development. I will be asking teachers, not just telling them, 'What do you want and need?' That works for the community programs, as well. I just really want to invite that input."

To that end, Doherty-Stephan has already joined several committees in the community, including the Yankton Education Committee, and wants to serve teachers in both South Dakota and Nebraska.

Doherty-Stephan is not unfamiliar with creating and establishing a working curriculum

through the National Parks Service. This is the third such position she has held in the parks system.

"I came from Mt. Rainier National Park, in western Washington," Doherty-Stephan said. "I spent 10 years (there) as their first full-time education program manager."

Prior to Mt. Rainier, she was at White Sands National Monument in south-central New Mexico as its first educational specialist, where she helped develop a similar program. She has also been stationed at the Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona and Carlsbad Caverns National Park in south-eastern New Mexico.

"Starting and building an education program from the ground up takes time," she said.

"However, because I have done this before, I have a good handle

on it and can provide strong direction for the education specialist once they are on board."

The educational specialist position is just one of several that she hopes to get funding to hire in the near future.

"I will be hiring a full-time educational specialist," she said. "We are also going to be hiring Teacher-Ranger-Teacher positions and student positions. I just want people to know that there are opportunities with the Park Service here in Yankton. While I am working to get all the funding in place, I want to get the word out to get a great base of applicants."

Another goal Doherty-Stephan has set for herself is to share the knowledge of just what the Missouri National Recreational River offers.

"One of the big things that I want people to realize is that

Missouri National Recreational River — the river in these 59- and 39-mile stretches — is a part of the National Parks Service," she said. "There is a huge identity crisis. A lot of that is because until last summer, the headquarters was located in O'Neill, Neb., and our staff was scattered hither and yon hosted by many gracious partners. ... The National Park Service is here and the river is a unit of the National Park Service, just as much as the faces are out in the Black Hills, same as Mt. Rainier and the Statue of Liberty."

She pointed out that, while not unique, a large part of the identity crisis is the fact that there are so many partner organizations along the same stretch of river.

"We work with the state parks in Nebraska and South Dakota, and the Army Corps of Engineers

out at Gavin's Point," Doherty-Stephan said. "Because we don't have our own visitors center or land, our primary resource is the river, it is different. We want to get the staff out and along the river where the visitors are, as well. It is a matter of getting balance for our interpretive program for our visitors and guests, and getting the education program going."

Doherty-Stephan said the welcome she has received in Yankton has been wonderful and allows her to focus on cultivating the relationships she will need to succeed here.

"I love it," she said of Yankton. "I had been at Mt. Rainier for 10 years and it was time for a change. This was just a great opportunity, and I look forward to working with everyone in the community."

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ABS

From Page 1A

to be a nice option," Pearson said.

ABS is a community agency that provides residential services, pre-vocational and vocational training, alternative services, nursing services, service coordination, supported employment, community inclusions and many other services needed by individuals with developmental disabilities.

The grant for the facility covers everything but the purchase of the property and the furnishings. Construction will begin as soon as the weather allows and is expected to be wrapped up by July 13.

Pearson said the location is ideal for the clients ABS serves. "I think it's nice because it is close to the city's trail system, and it will be a nice area to walk," she said. "It's also close to the downtown area, so they will be able to go to the businesses down there."

It's been quite awhile since

ABS has built a new residential facility, according to Pearson. This will be a state-of-the-art building for people with handicap accessibility concerns and will address a housing need the organization has seen.

"We haven't built anything with this level of support for a long time," Pearson said. "We have been supporting people in apartment buildings, which is great for people who can live in an apartment. But there are lots

of folks who need more support than that. We've kind of had a backlog, and this will help us to down-size some of our other residences where people have roommates. We hope to have no one with a roommate in our residences once this is built."

The facility may also lead to the creation of a couple of jobs, she added.

"I think it will be an attractive residence that will provide good housing," Pearson said.

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