PERRY FINELLI: Good morning from the Minnesota Public Radio newsroom. I'm Perry Finelli. Senate Republican leader Dean Johnson does not think it's possible to raise the tobacco tax this year to pay for a new Minnesota Twins stadium. Johnson said this morning slot machines at Canterbury Park or a new scratch-off lottery game might be more acceptable.

Officials with Minnesota FoodShare say 1 in 16 Minnesotans receive food from food shelves in the state last year, and that number could increase this year. Minnesota FoodShare director Reverend Chris Morton says the implementation of the welfare reform law this month means some people will turn to food shelves more frequently. He says Minnesota FoodShare has increased the goal of its annual March campaign to 3 and 1/2 million pounds of food.

CHRIS MORTON: We believe that the statistics from 1997 will bear out what we expect will be an increased need. But right now, the data doesn't demonstrate that need. It is our projection that need will grow. And quite frankly, I think most people aren't ready to respond based on those kinds of projections.

PERRY FINELLI: The Minnesota Children's Museum in Saint Paul will help Minnesota FoodShare's campaign by collecting 15 tons of food. 251 food shelves around the state are taking part in the March food drive. A snow advisory out for West Central and Northeastern Minnesota today and tonight. Also, a snow and blowing snow advisory for parts of Northwestern Minnesota today and tonight.

Look for highs from near 20 in Northern Minnesota, Middle 30s in the South. Twin Cities today, light snow is likely this afternoon. A high in the upper 20s to lower 30s. Right now in Duluth, it's partly cloudy and 26 degrees. In the Twin Cities, mostly cloudy and the temperature 28. And that's news from Minnesota Public Radio. I'm Perry Fanelli.

PAULA SCHROEDER: It's 10:06 o'clock. I'm Paula Schroeder. This is Midmorning on Minnesota Public Radio. Minnesota Public Radio operates in association with the following institutions-- Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, Concordia College in Moorhead, Luther College in Decorah, the College of Saint Scholastica in Duluth, Michigan Technological University in Houghton, Gustavus Adolphus College Saint Peter, The college of Saint Benedict and Saint Joseph, and Bethany Lutheran College of Mankato.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Doug Wood did what most aspiring performers can only dream of accomplishing. He quit his day job as a music teacher to become a full time author, singer, and songwriter. Today on Our Voices of Minnesota interview, we'll hear Wood talk about his experiences. Doug wood? Lives in the Central Minnesota community of Sartell. He's best known for his book, *Old Turtle.* It's in its 25th printing. The story is about how a turtle helps all the world's inhabitants appreciate each other. Wood talked with Minnesota Public Radio's Gretchen Lehmann about his childhood fascination with the out-of-doors.

DOUG WOOD: My childhood background is mostly in Northwest Iowa. My dad and mother were both college professors, and so, as in often happens in that world, they moved sometimes from college to college. But at the age of seven, we moved to Iowa. And then that's where I grew up in Sioux City, Iowa, which is cow town, stockyards, surrounded by cornfields, the Floyd River, the big Sioux River. It's the gateway to the prairie, really, at the doorstep of South Dakota, Missouri River.

I wasn't real happy there. At the age of seven, I also made my first trip to the North woods of Minnesota and fell in love absolutely with the lakes and the rocks and the forests. I had at the age of seven, I think, what might be described as a peak experience and never forgot it. And it shaped my whole life. So the growing up in Iowa then was kind of difficult. It was 50 weeks of the year waiting for those two weeks of the year when we would go back to Northern Minnesota.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: Talk to me a little bit more about your family. What was it like growing up?

DOUG WOOD: It was full of music. My mother and father are both professional musicians, were college professors, my dad in voice and my mother in piano. And so it was just expected just as part of the family, kind of like breathing to participate in music. So I had violin lessons and piano lessons, which I hated.

I was not a good practicer and not a good studier. I was not good in school. So anything that required that kind of discipline was difficult for me. I'm much preferred to be outdoors either throwing a football around with my friends or just hiking in the park or fishing for bullheads or being outdoors in one way or another.

But all those years of honing musical skills on the violin and the piano came in handy later when I ended up taking up the guitar and the banjo and teaching myself those instruments and finding my own path for my music. So it was a good way to grow up, although at the time, I would have just rather been out playing football.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: You mentioned that you weren't real fond of school, so were not much of a reader or a writer when you were young?

DOUG WOOD: Reading was hard for me. And as I said, in my real early childhood, we moved around a lot. And I started school in Louisville, Kentucky. And the schools there weren't as good as they are up in Iowa and Minnesota. But anyway, when I moved to Iowa, I was just behind and I was the slowest reader in the class. And luckily, I had a really mean teacher.

Her name was Ms. Little. And Ms. Little made me stay after school literally almost every afternoon in second grade to practice reading. And I had to read aloud for her and spell and read and write things on the blackboard. And again, not really something I enjoyed, but she did me a great favor because the magical thing wasn't just that I ended up learning how to read because if somebody works you that hard, you might very well learn how to read, but that I ended up loving to read and loving books.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: Was the inspiration to write there early?

DOUG WOOD: No, I loved books. And I loved to read even though I didn't like school. I mean, if I was in school, I'd just as soon be sitting quietly at my desk reading a book. That was OK. But other things were difficult. And I liked writing, but I didn't know that I did. I figured that since I was in school, I probably hated writing like I hated everything else.

But in retrospect, those were my fun assignments to do writing assignments. I liked making things up. I liked making up a story. I liked putting words together. But it never occurred to me-- it didn't occur to me to be a writer or to be an author. At the age of 25, I became acquainted with the works of Sigurd F. Olson, one of Minnesota's best and best known writers, especially about the wilderness and the out-of-doors.

And it was an open window, a window being opened in my life. It opened up a whole new world to me to find someone else who felt the same way as I did about nature and wrote about it in that beautiful kind of way. But still, I didn't imagine myself doing that. What I tried to do was to capture the kind of writing that Sigurd Olson did in my songs and my music. And it wasn't until about the age of 31, 32 that I seriously began thinking about writing.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: How did your first book, *Old Turtle* evolve from all this?

DOUG WOOD: *Old Turtle* evolved from several sources, kind of like if you use the metaphor of a river, it's hard to say exactly where a river begins because it begins with all kinds of little trickles and little streams and little flowing from different directions. One of the background influences of *Old Turtle* would be my this lifelong love with nature in the outdoors.

When I was a little boy, I caught a turtle in a landing net on Lake Kabetogama on the Canadian border. And my grandmother and I took some of her red fingernail polish and painted his name. He didn't know it was his name, but we named him Elmer and put that on his shell, let him go back into the lake. And I'm fairly sure Elmer is still swimming around those waters today, although the fingernail polish is probably worn off. But there was that lifelong interest in nature and things natural and wild.

There was an interest that evolved as I grew a little older with spiritual questing and wondering about the religious and spiritual ideas of people all around the world and why were they different. And why were people fighting about the things that were different? And if people were aspiring to a higher power, an overarching spirit that encompasses all of us and all the world, how could that possibly be something that you would fight about since it's encompassing and enveloping and within all of us?

And those kind of questions led me to read about the Daoist traditions in China and the traditions of Judaism and Christianity and what we call primal religions from the Gaagudju of Australia or here among the Native Americans, all kinds of traditions and comparing them and contrasting them and trying to figure out what were common elements. The work of Joseph Campbell became very important to me along the way.

And then there was my work with children. After I finally got out of school and graduated from college, I began working as a professional musician. Eventually, I taught school for four years, but I didn't see my future in that. And I really needed to get out of school after all those years. And so it took me a while to figure out what to do. And I decided, as I said, to try and do with my music what Sigurd Olson did with books.

And so along the way, I began doing lots and lots of school programs. And I would travel to schools, as I still do today, and do programs of Earth songs and Earth stories. And one day, I was spending a week in a school as an artist in residence. And one day, it was a Wednesday. After spending that day with the kids and talking about rainforests and whales and taking care of the Earth, the story idea for *Old Turtle* began to run through my head.

And as I was driving back to my room, it was starting to come. And I walked in the door-- I happened to be in Owatonna, which was where my parents were living at the time. And I said hi to my mother, kind of waved to her and went right upstairs to my room and sat down in her rocking chair. And in a half an hour, I had written out most of what came to be *Old Turtle.*

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: From what you're saying, it sounds like the children certainly inspired your writing. And yet I'm struck by the fact that the subject matter of *Old Turtle* is very adult. I mean, you're asking about where does God reside? Would you call *Old Turtle* a children's book?

DOUG WOOD: When I wrote the book, I simply sat down as though I were writing a song, sat down in that rocking chair and wrote what was coming into my head from somewhere. And I didn't think, I am now writing a children's book at all. I just wrote down this myth. That was a time at which I was reading a lot of Joe Campbell's work on mythology as well. And so it came out as a very mythological story.

Myths are by nature for many people. They are like onions, they have layers. The outside of an onion is an onion, but the inside is also an onion. It's onion all the way through, but it's in layers. I think of *Old Turtle* like that. Three and four and five-year-Olds read *Old Turtle* or have *Old Turtle* read to them and grasp and understand it and smile at it and like it and want to hear it again. But 83-year-olds read it for the first time and are captured by the ideas too.

Now, I don't think they're getting exactly the same thing, but on the other hand, it's still *Old Turtle.* And so when we first decided to publish it, my publisher asked me, is this a children's book? Where are we going to market this in the bookstore? And we decided it was a book for all ages, but we would present it as a children's book because it's grown ups that buy children's books.

And so we would put it in the children's section. I definitely wanted it to have illustrations and to be presented as a picture book. But because it has that adult theme and because it speaks to big ideas and because of the artwork of Mr. Chi, Chinki Chi, which is not really child-oriented, it's very much presented as fine art, it can be an art book, it can be a children's book, it can be an adult myth. And it is all of those things.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: Have you been surprised at all that it continues to be such a popular and successful book?

DOUG WOOD: In some ways, I've been surprised. The surprise that I have felt comes mostly from it being my first book and not knowing how the book world would work. But I have not ever been surprised that people have been moved by the story and have loved the story. That's not the right thing to say. I should be modest and say it was all a great surprise, but that wouldn't be true. After I wrote the book, I had a feeling it was something special.

And I showed it to Kathy, my wife. And the first time through the manuscript, she cried. And the first time I showed it to the publishers, they had tears in their eyes. And I felt that if people knew about the book or saw the book, that they would be touched and moved by the story. I didn't know if the artwork would measure up to the words. I didn't know who we might have as an artist. I didn't know how one gets a book out to the big wide world or any of those things. So that's all been a learning experience, and much of that is surprising.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Doug wood, talking with Minnesota Public Radio's Gretchen Lehmann. You're listening to our Voices of Minnesota interview on Minnesota Public Radio. I'm Paula Schroeder. This is Midmorning. Today's programming is supported by 3M, who generously matches more than 900 employee contributions to Minnesota Public Radio.

We'll continue with our interview with Doug Wood in just a moment. But coming up in a few minutes after that, Arne Fogel is here to tell us about Louis Armstrong and a new CD set that's out with some of his best music. So stay tuned for that. In the weather today, there's a snow advisory in West Central to Northeastern Minnesota.

A chance of snow or a mixture of snow in the Central, Northern and Southern parts of the state. I guess that pretty much covers everything, doesn't it? Highs today from 20 degrees in the North to the mid 30s in the South. Our snow will decrease overnight tonight. Overnight lows from near 0 in the North to the mid 20s in the Southeast. And tomorrow, look for highs in the low teens to the upper 20s.

In the Twin Cities, one to three inches of snow expected by tomorrow morning. The high today around 30 degrees, the overnight low near 20. And tomorrow, we should have a high in the mid to upper 20s. Northwesterly winds at 15 to hour. We continue now with our interview with Doug Wood. Gretchen Lehmann's interview, rather, with Doug Wood. It's 10:19 o'clock.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: Well, since *Old Turtle,* I know you've published two other children's books. There's*Northwoods Cradle Song,* and this last year, *Windigo's Has Returned.* Now that you're kind of situated in the children's literature area, what do you think of children's books nowadays? Do you think that-- I guess I'll just leave it at that. What do you think of the books that are being published now?

DOUG WOOD: Well, in general, I love children's books. I still remember so fondly my own young years, as I was talking earlier, of learning to read and learning to love books. And to read a good children's book is to step back into that time again. And a good children's book is never just for children. It always has an idea of a certain amount of power insight. And then the way you clothe that idea determines what kind of book it is.

But books like *The Little Prince* or *The Velveteen Rabbit* or even *Winnie the Pooh,* they're great books. I love to read them today as much as when I was a child. So I like children's literature. To generalize about how children's literature is now compared to how it was 10 years ago or 20 years ago is hard to do. There's a lot more of it now. Some of it's good, some of it isn't good.

But I found a wonderful children's book just the other day in the library. I was doing research for a new book of mine, and I found a book on the baobab tree. I never heard of it before. It's not a famous book, but I really enjoyed it. I sat down. And because of the simple presentation, I learned a lot more about baobab trees than I would have by going through some of the big adult texts in the library.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: I'm curious, I was asking you about what you think of children's literature. And certainly, of late, there's been some discussion about it. I'm thinking in particular the series of books, *Goosebumps,* R.L. Stine, which is a little bit different than what you're writing for older students. But with this series, there's been talk about it's too scary. It frightens kids. Let's take it out of the library. I mean, I know there's a mother in the Blaine area that would like to do that. What is your thought about that, about limiting what's available to young readers?

DOUG WOOD: I think in general, it's a really bad idea. My new book, The Windigos Return, is a scary book. In this book, people are snatched and disappeared and eaten by this giant monster called the Windigo. Not a happy story. On the other hand, it's handled in a way that is humorous and the people capture the Windigo and do away with the Windigo by fire, by the use of fire.

And at the end of the story, the Windigo as he is being burned up, lets loose with a terrible curse. He will come back and eat all the people forever and ever and ever. Well, that's kind of scary. But what happens in the end is the Windigo does come back and is eating all of us to this very day in the form of the little ashes floating through the forest, in other words, mosquitoes.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: I thought that was the scariest part of the book actually.

DOUG WOOD: The mosquito is very scary. Well, I don't want somebody saying, oh, my goodness, that's too scary. Children won't be able to handle that. I've been telling the story for 18 years before I put it into a book form. I tell it in such a way that I bring that scary part to just a certain level. And I can watch the kids' eyes and their faces and I know just how far we're going.

And with different ages, I tell it slightly differently. And I can do a lot of things with body language and voice and my eyes to highlight certain scary parts or to tone down scary parts. But that's my job as an artist, as an author to work with that. And I haven't personally read the *Goosebumps* books, but they're extremely popular. And they're getting lots of kids who are like I was in the second grade and don't like books and don't like to read, they're getting interested in books.

When I was little, I loved to read *The Hardy Boys.* That's not great literature. But I have very fond memories of sitting there reading *The Hardy Boys,* Joe and Frank and getting completely into those stories. And so I would say if a mother or a father doesn't think their child should be reading a particular book *Goosebumps* or something else, well then don't buy it for them and don't have them read it or tell them you don't want them reading it.

But I think it's a long, long step from that to banning or censoring a book for other kids in a school district or whatever. And I would just say pretty much anything halfway wholesome, that gets kids to read books and to appreciate what a magical thing a book is, you can close it up and stick it in your backpack. You can take it with you, you can open it up, and you can reread the same sentence five times if you want to.

You can smell a book. You can feel a book. You can tape it back together when it starts to fall apart. A book is different than a computer or a computer screen. It's more real. It has a smell to it and a feel to it and a weight to it. And there's just nothing like a book to me. So the kid that's reading *Goosebumps* this year might well be reading Ralph Waldo Emerson five years from now if it gets him interested in reading. And I think that's terrific.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: The things that you're saying certainly appeal to me as a reader in terms of that tangible experience with a book. What do you say to kids when you go out to schools to get them excited about reading?

DOUG WOOD: I tell them that I have George Washington living in my front porch. And I can go out and talk to him whenever I want to. I talk to him. Well, he talks to me more than I talk to him. I pull his book down and he talks to me, A book called *The Indispensable Man,* George Washington. I've got I've got Thoreau and Emerson living out there. I've got Joseph Campbell and René Dubos and my old friend Sigurd Olson out in my front porch.

And I can go and have conversations with them and listen to them and listen to their deepest, best, longest lasting thoughts whenever I want to. That's the real magic of a book. I read once that when an author dies, he becomes his books, which is a pretty nice form of immortality. I tell them that's one of the neat things about books. We can keep the best thoughts and ideas of people from thousands of years ago alive through their words and sentences and books.

And that's part of that permanence of a book. And I've still got the *Winnie the Pooh* books that I had when I was 5 and 6 years old, the very same ones. And they have a certain feel and a certain smell. And the place where my little brother's scrawled on it with a pencil is still there. And that's-- I don't know. That's important to me in the same way that trees and rocks are important to me because they last and they give us a certain perspective. And they have a tangible, sensual quality about them.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: You're talking about longevity and keeping things alive in different forms, particularly your last two children's books, both are based on Native American tales. What headed you in that direction in terms of stories?

DOUG WOOD: For a long time, American Indian mythology and stories have been important to me. I guess it was a natural direction from my love of nature to find stories that inculcate that love and that feeling for nature. I've got zillions of Native American titles in my library, and they have been a profound influence on my own personal philosophy towards life and towards the world around me.

If we find a good story, whether it's a Native American story or a South American story or an African story or a Grimm's fairy tale story, if it's a good story, I like to tell kids that there's nothing more important in the world than finding and telling good stories, because that's all we have in the final analysis is stories. You and I, when we meet to tell stories to one another about what we did last night or what we had for supper or what's going on in our world, we tell stories about our family.

Even mathematics is the telling of a story. You just use a different kind of symbol to tell the story of how the world works, how the universe works. Nothing's more important than telling really good stories. So if I find a good story, whether it's a Native American story or some other story, and if I have the opportunity to tell it or retell it and keep it alive and pass the idea on, I think that's a pretty neat thing to do.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: You've been talking about continuing stories. If we could continue a story, could I ask you to read a passage from one of your children's books?

DOUG WOOD: Sure. Which one shall we read from?

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: I leave that selection up to you.

DOUG WOOD: Let's do the beginning of *The Windigo's Return.*

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: OK.

DOUG WOOD: Now, remember, as I said earlier, the story gets a little scary in the middle. I don't know how far I'm going to go here, but we'll begin with the beginning. By the way, this is a retelling of an Ojibwe story. Once long ago in the days of the grandfathers, something strange happened in the north woods in the land of the Ojibwe.

It was a time when everything was good and the people had all that they needed to live. Summer brought mini-giizis, the Blueberry Moon. There was gold and sunshine and just enough rain, so the berries grew plump and juicy. The fishing too was good, and no one went hungry. Later, as the nights turned cool came manominike-giizis, the Rice-Making Moon. This was the time of the wild rice harvest, the gathering of manomin.

Along the shallow shorelines, the stalks were heavy with grain, and the people gathered it gently into their birch bark canoes. They offered prayers of thanks to Gitche-Manito, the Great Spirit. No one could remember a better time until one day when something strange happened.

GRETCHEN LEHMANN: Well, on that suspenseful note, Douglas Wood, thanks for coming in and speaking with me today. It's been a pleasure. Thank you for having me, Gretchen. I've enjoyed it.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Author, singer and songwriter Doug wood talking with Minnesota Public Radio's Gretchen Lehmann. Our voices of Minnesota interview series is produced by Dan Olson with help from intern Laura Zelen.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

CHRIS FARRELL: Know someone who can't throw anything away? Think your attic may hold rare treasures? Hi, I'm Chris Farrell, and I'll be hosting a special Midday about collecting. We'll hear from the Smithsonian on how they choose what is historic and from local experts who can help you determine if you have a museum piece in your basement. I hope you'll join me Wednesday, March 5 at noon for a special Midday on Minnesota Public Radio. KNOW FM 91.1 in the Twin Cities.

[LOUIS ARMSTRONG, "LAUGHIN' LOUIE"]

Yeah. Here a laughin' Louie.

Well, what do you know about that? Now, good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I want to tell you all that I'm going to do a little practicing this evening on this little Selmer trumpet. Blessed little heart. Now, wait a minute. Before I swing out, I want to take this little number about laughin' Louie, laughin' Louie.

[SCATTING]

(SINGING) Laughin' Louie, laughin' Louie

Yeah, man. Now, laughin' Louie

Yes, sir. Ain't no phooey. Laughin' Louie, boy

Look, y'all, I wake up every morning

And I have to laugh because I look on the wall and I see my photograph

Yeah, man

PAULA SCHROEDER: Hey, if you're not laughing now, I don't know. There's not much that's going to make you smile. That, of course, is Louis Armstrong, one of America's most enduring and best loved musicians. The jazz trumpeter with the gravelly voice who was called America's ambassador of music bringing both the music and spirit of America all over the world during his heyday. Now, a new CD collection brings together some of his best recordings. And joining us to tell us more about it is Arne Fogel, Minnesota Public Radio's popular music historian. Arne, it's great to have you here with Louis today.

ARNE FOGEL: Thank you. I love him. I love him.

PAULA SCHROEDER: I mean, what a great song to start off with, too, because "Laughin' Louis," it's-- was the guy ever down?

ARNE FOGEL: In his personal life perhaps. He had his ups and downs like everybody else. But he was one of those people not so much like the Jazz musicians that you consider him a part of the forefront of. But like entertainers, various entertainers who felt it's the job of the entertainer, of the performer to bring joy and entertainment and pleasure to the people listening or watching.

And it's interesting to hear you talk about this collection putting together some of his best records. It's very difficult to think of any Louis Armstrong records that weren't his best records. He made very, very few poor records. Some of the things towards the very end of his life when he wasn't in very good voice or perhaps a-- but even those things, there's so much joy that he emanates, that emanates from him that makes everything he did a delight.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Well, now, these are the recordings that he made for RCA Victor. This is a two-CD set--

ARNE FOGEL: Four-CD.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Four-CD. I'm sorry. Gosh. Yeah. And this was the period during the '30s and '40s when he was really at the height of his fame.

ARNE FOGEL: Well, yes. There's two specific periods. And it's one of the things I love about this whole CD era is that there's so many collections come out that are the complete this or the complete that. And after years of putting together a collections of various artists recordings, something comes out like this that collects everything he did on the label. The two distinct periods, one in the 1930s from 1932 to '33 covers this very heroic, what I like to call the heroic Armstrong period When. He first came out in the '20s with the classic hot five recordings that are on a different label, he was blazing trail.

By the time he was working for RCA Victor here in 1932, he had established himself as not only the king of jazz, the leading jazz performer in the world, but a very, very quite a contender as a popular music figure too. And he was doing pop songs in a jazz context, making them swing and his delightful vocal chorus, plus this heroic jazz trumpet out chorus on record after record. And each time out, it was a thrill. And this early RCA Victor period is an example of that.

[LOUIS ARMSTRONG, "I GOT THE WORLD ON A STRING"] 1, 2.

(SINGING) I got the world on a string sitting on a rainbow

Got a string on my finger

What a world, what a life. I'm in love

I got a song that I sing.

I can't make the rainbow anytime I move my finger

Lucky me. Can't you see I'm in love?

Life is a beautiful thing as long as I hold a string

I'd be a silly so-and-so if I should ever let her go

I've got the world on a string sitting on a rainbow

Got the string on my finger

Oh, what a world little darling

Oh, mama, little darling

DOUG WOOD: Well, there in that piece, we got to hear Louie both playing the trumpet and singing.

ARNE FOGEL: Well, and I've always found it to be sort of an interesting fallacy when people talk about Armstrong and casually being such a wonderful trumpet player, and of course, that's true, who happened to sing. When in actuality he was as a singer, one of the major vocalists of the century, certainly the most influential popular singer.

And notice I said popular singer, not just jazz singer, because what he did in a jazz context became very pervasive in popular music as well. And it filtered through singers like Crosby principally. But he was a major influence on just about every type of popular singer. Billie Holiday, too, learn from Armstrong. And that I got-- he sings higher than I do. But that

(SINGING) I got the world on a string sitting on a rainbow.

If you smooth out the vocal quality and take the rasp away, you find the language that every popular singer or jazz-based popular singer used for the next 35 years or 40 years and still are using. People like Tony Bennett will tell you that-- Tony Bennett will tell you that Louis Armstrong is a major influence and Frank Sinatra and all of those people. So this early period that's reflected in everything that he did for RCA Victor during this 1932-33 period is on this set, which is--

PAULA SCHROEDER: I know you were saying a little bit earlier, too, that he sang the way he played the trumpet. The voices were almost interchangeable.

ARNE FOGEL: And people will tell you there's a lot of-- once again, this is a little bone of contention with the critics and musicians and singers, whatever that will say. Well, you define a jazz singer as one who sings like a horn. I rise in emphatic denial. A jazz musician, a good jazz musician plays as if he were singing or she were singing.

And Louis Armstrong specifically played at trumpet as if he were singing through it. And it's his singing that I believe is the major influence. And the trumpet playing comes after. Of course, he invented a language for the trumpet and the jazz instrumental soloist as well. I'm not downplaying that at all. But I think that as a singer, his singing certainly was as important.

PAULA SCHROEDER: You mentioned that he had so much influence on many people. And I know you've talked before about the influence that he had specifically on Bing Crosby, the styling that he used in his songs.

ARNE FOGEL: Absolutely. And Crosby as the principal pop singer of the 1930s and the most influential pop singer for probably the next 20 or 30 years, in mainstream pop music, it's of no little significance that Armstrong was Crosby's principal influence. And after a couple of years, as we get into this 1930s period, you find that the influence bounced back. You find Armstrong starting to do some things that he got.

(SINGING) I got the world on a string

That's very Crosby-esque. And so there was a nice little interplay back and forth. And of course, they became very, very good friends.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Did he have the same access to audiences and record sales that had Bing Crosby would? And I'm talking about race here.

ARNE FOGEL: Of course not. The biggest example of a media that was present for Crosby and denied to Armstrong was motion pictures. Although Armstrong was one of the first Black performers to have a presence in motion pictures, musicians anyway. But he certainly sold a lot of records. He probably sold as many records as Crosby in the early '30s. I don't have any exact figures on that.

But once again, radio was denied Armstrong, and he couldn't have a regular series in the way that Crosby did, although he did have certain periods during the 1930s when he was on very frequently, on as much as a weekly basis. And once again, you can talk about the doors that were not open to Black performers that were open to white performers. But then again, in another way, in a different context, you can talk about the doors that were open for Armstrong, that were not open for other Black performers.

It was because so astounding and so incredible was his talent that he broke a lot of those doors through and blazed a lot of trail in that way. In a way, you could say that the people who were closed minded about such things were forced to open their mind as they came in contact with this most complete human being named Louis Armstrong. And they have to rethink their little prejudices and their little philosophies about life when they come in contact with such an incredible human.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Well, let's hear some more of his songs.

ARNE FOGEL: This is from the 1940s now, from this later period when he was in the midst of switching from big band to small group, which he would lead for the rest of his career. But this is still during the big band era, a Louis Armstrong big band recording "The Blues are Brewing."

PAULA SCHROEDER: We're going to have that up in just a moment or so here. We've got to take a second here, Arne.

ARNE FOGEL: It's a big set. It's a four-disk set.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Yes, it is.

ARNE FOGEL: And it becomes confusing when you're trying to get a see, disk one, disk two, disk three. But one of the things about this set is it has alternate takes, which is really a wonderful thing for collectors because you get an opportunity to hear as a performing artist, how the performance varied from one performance to the next within the same day, sometimes within a half hour period, they get done once. Let's try it again for insurance. All of these things have been located, found, restored and put on this really incredible set.

PAULA SCHROEDER: All right. This is from the 1940s, "The Blues are Brewin'," Louis Armstrong.

[LOUIS ARMSTRONG, "THE BLUES ARE BREWIN'"]

(SINGING) When the moon's kind of dreamy, starry eyed and dreamy

And nights are luscious and long

If you kind of lonely and all by your only

Is nothing but the blues are brewin'

The blues are brewin'

PAULA SCHROEDER: That's much slower Languid, almost.

ARNE FOGEL: It's very '40s. It's very '40s. And music-- so people don't realize unless they study this sort of thing how much music changed between that previous cut, which is just pre-swing era and then this one, which is almost towards the end of the swing era. But there's Armstrong in what I think for many people today would be an unfamiliar setting with a large arrangement, a big band, very swing era type thing. And that vocal, once again, before the rasp totally took over the gravel, almost a kind of a crooner's approach to a ballad there.

PAULA SCHROEDER: When he played with big bands, was he a featured performer or was he a bandleader or--

ARNE FOGEL: Both. Well, most of the big band leaders, with a few exceptions, none of which I can think of right now, were all performers on an instrument, or at least in the case of Bob Crosby, for instance, a vocalist. Cab Calloway, a vocalist. But most of them, Benny Goodman, Tommy, Jimmy Dorsey, they were all instrumentalists. Artie Shaw and Count Basie, Duke / and Armstrong, of course, a great vocalist and instrumentalist.

But it was also-- if you've seen some of the films of him leading a big band, he is also directing the band, or at least making a motion of taking that role, waving his hand in front of the orchestra. He's very much the leader as in the mold of the big band leader. And this was something that he had to do. It was not his favorite thing to do.

But towards the end of the '40s, it was decided that he should go back into a small group situation. The big band era had effectively ended. And after the war, there were various economic reasons why it was no longer viable for most of the big band leaders to continue being big band leaders. Some of them really struggled and kind of floundered for what their next move would be. But not Louis.

One of these early small group concerts was the Town Hall concert. And it was the first version of Louis Armstrong's All-Stars. And it was really an all-star group. People like Bobby Hackett and Jack Teagarden, who you hear with Louis here performing "Rockin' Chair," which was a classic duet for them.

[LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS ALL-STARS, "ROCKIN' CHAIR"] You can't get from this cabin

Man, I don't want to go nowhere

Oh, no, father

But you ain't going nowhere

Uh-uh

You sit in your grabbin'

You grabbin'

Grabbin

You grabbin'

Grabbin'

At the flies round the ol' rocking chair, rocking chair

My dear ole aunt Harriet

Yes, son, how long in heaven she be

Lay up in heaven she be?

Good ole Harriet

[SCATTING]

Oh, chariot, chariot, chariot

[INAUDIBLE] got to have a chariot

For the end of the time and trouble I've seen

Yeah, nobody knows the trouble I've seen

PAULA SCHROEDER: Louis Armstrong with Jack Teagarden.

ARNE FOGEL: Who was also no mean vocalist and instrumentalist, the greatest jazz trombonist of the first half of the century, I think. And one of the great things about Louis singing there, you have to mention it, there is every move, every note selection is so right, it's so correct. And it just such a pleasing effect. The great beauty with which he finds these-- the choices that he makes musically as a singer or as a player. And it's one of the great things about his absolute total command and his total genius, which is revealed on this set, I think.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Well, you can certainly appreciate the music of Louis Armstrong. Again, the four-CD set is called, appropriately enough, *Louis Armstrong, The Complete RCA Victor Recordings.* Arne Fogel, thank you so much for coming in again and giving us this treat.

ARNE FOGEL: Happy to be here and play this music of at American institution.

PAULA SCHROEDER: By the way, Arne Fogel himself can be heard Friday night at the Excelsior Park Tavern. He'll be playing and singing with Kathy Peterson--

ARNE FOGEL: Excelsior [INAUDIBLE].

PAULA SCHROEDER: --and Saturday night at the Bloomington Park Tavern. So get out and see them in some of these great old songs.

ARNE FOGEL: Thank you.

[LOUIS ARMSTRONG, "LISTEN TO THE MOCKINGBIRD"] Where mocking birds used to sing

I'd like to see the lazy Mississippi

Hurrying in to spring

Oh, the mardi gras

The memories of Creole tombs that fill the air

I dream--

PAULA SCHROEDER: We're just swinging along here on Midmorning. I'm Paula Schroeder. Thanks for being with us today. It's 10:48 o'clock. Well, it's hard to pull the wool over Darryl Shaw's eyes after 25 years as a polygraph test examiner and private investigator. Shaw is somewhat of an expert on lying. And what he can't detect in person is usually picked up by his partner, the lie detector. Sarah Gu visited Shaw at his workplace, Applied Confidential Services Incorporated in Lino Lakes as part of our Odd Jobs series.

SARAH GU: We're going to strap me in to the polygraph machine. OK. Instrument. Let's do it.

DARRYL SHAW: I'm sensitive about that.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

The first tube that I would attach would go around your abdominal area. And I would attach it around your back [INAUDIBLE]. This top tube I'm going to attach is going around your chest or your thoracic area. Again, it will not get any tighter than it is right now.

As a matter of fact, it may, during the course of the examination, have a tendency to either slip down or give you the sensation that it's getting looser and slipping down because of movement. If that should occur, do nothing about it. This is a standard medical blood pressure cuff. I'm sure you've had your blood pressure taken in the past. I'm going to inflate this on your arm to about 45 millimeters of mercury.

SARAH GU: And what does that mean.

DARRYL SHAW: Which is about 25% of the pressure they do in a doctor's office when they actually take your blood pressure. But I'm going to leave it inflated on your arm for the length of a chart, which is about five minutes. So you can expect it to be uncomfortable. Not painful, but uncomfortable.

SARAH GU: It'll be tight.

DARRYL SHAW: Uncomfortable. What I find interesting is when someone comes into my office knowing that they're about to lie to me about the issue they're in here for, and a person sits there and tries to tell me that they have not been involved in something when they actually have, I find it interesting that they can sit there and look at me with a straight face, knowing that I'm recording their physiological responses and they can see the recording pens are recording their responses.

And they still make no effort to say, well, yeah, you caught me, or I don't want to do this anymore, or-- and they get up and they thank me for making it a pleasant experience for them. And it was nice to meet you and all this kind of pleasantry when the two hours that they've been in my presence, they were lying to me. I find that interesting how people can do that.

SARAH GU: So sounds like there are a lot of people who try to beat the system, try to beat--

DARRYL SHAW: Well, what you try to do is you try to beat the examiner. So when a person comes in here and is lying, they're trying to beat me, the examiner, not the instrument. The instrument does what it's been designed to do. There are different types of techniques that people will try, Self-induced pain or to make your physiological responses change. They'll try self-induced pain, biting their tongue, biting their lip, a tack in the shoe, or tightening different muscles on their body to try and make their physiological responses change or--

SARAH GU: Does that really throw it off? How do they know how to do that?

DARRYL SHAW: Television, media, magazines, different-- I don't know where they learn these things, but they're all silly. In addition, they'll try holding their breath, which is one of the most common ways of trying to beat the instrument is holding your breath or self-induced pain.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Great music. Darryl Shaw was interviewed by Sarah Gu of Minnesota Public Radio. He works for Applied Confidential Services Incorporated in Lino lakes. It's 10:53. You're listening to Midmorning on Minnesota Public Radio. Programming is supported by the Minnesota Resort and Camping Show featuring resort and campground operators to answer your questions, March 7 through 9 at Canterbury Park in Shakopee.

GARY EICHTEN: Hi, this is Gary Eichten. Walter Mondale is back home, and he's going to be joining us on Midday. Former Vice President Walter Mondale is back in Minnesota after spending the last three years winning rave reviews as the United States ambassador to Japan, his final assignment in a career of public service that's lasted nearly 50 years. We'll look back at that half century of service and take a look at some current issues as well. I hope you can tune in and call in. Midday begins each weekday morning at 11:00 on Minnesota Public Radio KNOW FM 91.1 in the Twin Cities.

PAULA SCHROEDER: In the weather today, we're expecting light snow across the state of Minnesota. In the Twin cities, look for one to three inches of accumulation by tomorrow morning. Temperatures today will range from about 20 the North for a high, getting up into the mid 30s in the South. In the Twin Cities today, the high should be right around 30 degrees. It's 10:54. Here's Garrison Keillor.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

GARRISON KEILLOR: And here is the Writer's Almanac for Monday, the 3rd of March, 1997. In Boston today, the Museum of Science, it's the opening of the exhibit on Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo da Vinci, scientist, inventor, artist. Over 250 drawings and working models of his inventions and other attractions. The exhibit will be there for six months before it moves on to Singapore.

It was in 1931, on this day that Congress designated The Star-Spangled Banner as the National anthem of the United States. The words from Francis Scott Key, the tune, an old British drinking song. It's the birthday of crime writer Nicholas Freeling, born in London, 1927, who wrote several series of detective novels. Police inspector Pete van der Valk, the Dutch detective, and then another series starring his wife Arlette, and the third detective, Henri Castang.

It's the birthday of poet James Merrill, New York City in 1926. His divine comedies won the Pulitzer Prize 20 years ago. It was on this day in 1923 the first issue of *Time Magazine* appeared on the newsstands. A weekly news magazine was something new in America back then. Henry Luce was its editor just out of Yale. The first issue was 32 pages long, divided into 22 departments from national affairs to theater that have stayed pretty much the same ever since.

It's the birthday of cartoonist Ronald Searle in Cambridge, England, 1920. Cartoonist with dark humor and also the author of several books about the schoolgirls of Saint Trinian's, which became the subject of four separate movies. It's the birthday of biochemist Arthur Kornberg in Brooklyn, 1918, who, along with Severo Ochoa received the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1959 for their discovery of the mechanisms in the biological synthesis of ribonucleic acid and deoxyribonucleic acid, RNA and DNA.

It's the birthday of stage producer Robert Whitehead in Montreal, 1916, who's produced 50 Broadway shows, including The Member of the Wedding a Man for All Seasons and After the Fall. It's the birthday of Jean Harlow, born in Kansas city, 1911, became a star at the age of 19, died at 26 of uremic poisoning. It's the birthday of General Matthew B. Ridgway in Fort Monroe, Virginia, 1895. He parachuted with his troops into Normandy on D-day.

It's the birthday of Hall of Famer Wee Willie Keeler, no relation. Born in Brooklyn, 1872. He hit 341 in the majors and said, "keep your eye clear and hit em where they ain't." And it was in 1875 on this day, the first performance of Bazett's opera, Carmen was staged at the Opéra-Comique in Paris. Here's a poem for today by Naomi Long Madgett entitled Woman with Flower.

I wouldn't coax the plant if I were you. Such watchful nurturing might do it harm. Let the soil rest from so much digging, and wait until it's dry before you water it. Beliefs inclined to find its own direction, give it a chance to seek the sunlight for itself. Much growth is stunted by too careful prodding, too eager tenderness.

The things we love, we have to learn to leave alone. A poem by Naomi Long Madgett, Woman with Flower found in the collection The Garden Thrives published by Harper Perennial. Used here by permission of the poet on the Writer's Almanac, Monday, March 3 made possible by Cowles Enthusiast Media, publishers of *Wild West* and the historynet.com where history lives on the world wide web. Be well, do good work, and keep in touch.

PAULA SCHROEDER: Well, that's Midmorning for today. Thanks so much for joining us. And tomorrow, we are going to be talking about the language of names. What does your name mean? Not only what is its real meaning, but what does it mean to people who might meet you for the first time? That will be during hour two of Midmorning tomorrow. Hope you can tune in. Stay tuned now for Midday.

SPEAKER: Gordon, on the next future tense, you don't have to spend a ton of money to get a good computer. Future tense in one half hour on Minnesota Public Radio, KNOW FM 91.1.

PAULA SCHROEDER: You're listening to Minnesota Public Radio. 29 degrees at KNOW FM 91.1, Minneapolis, Saint Paul. Light snow is likely in the Twin Cities today, especially this afternoon. One to three inches expected by tomorrow morning. Look for a high today, around 30 degrees. The overnight low near 20, and tomorrow's high should be right around 27 degrees.

GARY EICHTEN: Good morning. It's 11:00 o'clock and this is Midday on Minnesota Public Radio with Monitor Radio's David Brown. I'm Gary Eichten. In the news this morning, a major winter storm is moving through the Western and Northern parts of the region today. Up to eight inches of snow with strong winds are forecast--