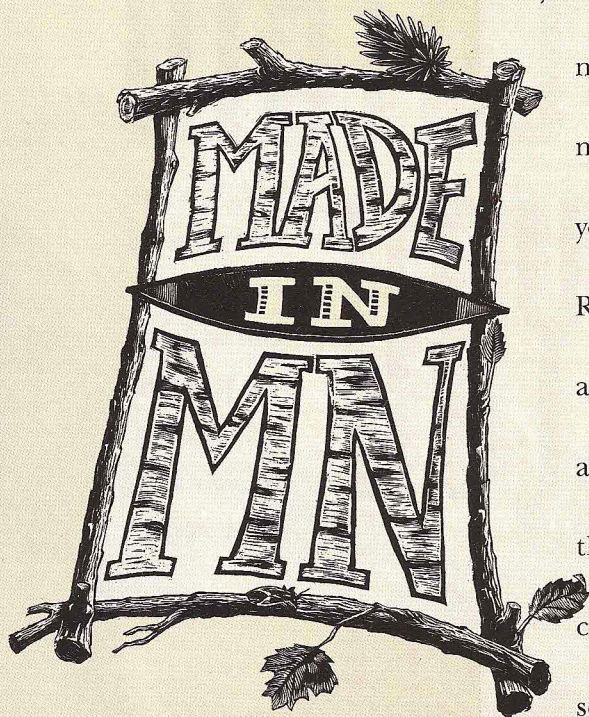


Proud to be a Minnesotan? You should be. Just look at all the good stuff your state has produced. Anyone who can read a license plate knows that Minnesota is the land of 10,000 lakes. Anyone who looks at a national weather map knows that our winters are at best inhumane and at worst insane. And anyone who reads the newspaper knows that this is the home of Walter Mondale, Garrison Keillor and the world champion Minnesota Twins. What you may not know is that your morning bowl of Cheerios—the

number-one cereal in the country—is brought to you by a Minnesota company, General Mills. That the best-selling book on your nightstand, *Iron John*, was written by a native Minnesotan, Robert Bly. And that the funk rock emanating from your teenager's boom box comes to you courtesy of Minnesota's one and only superstar, Prince. The fittest not only survive here, they flourish. They also invent, perform, build, discover, cure, create, act, write, paint, sculpt and engineer. In this special section, we celebrate some of the people and products—both material and creative—that have put Minnesota on the map.



By Elizabeth Kaibel
and Shannon O'Donnell

As far as we know, no one else ever has attempted to pull together so many reasons why Minnesotans take pride in their state and all it stands for. Of course, we don't pretend that this guide is either complete or comprehensive (there's much more to Minnesota than we had room to include), but we do promise that it will inform and surprise you.