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Guest editorialists weigh the pros and cons of instant runoff voting ►10

REAL ESTATE



Fabulous prefab ►26

ARTS



Dressed to the hilt ►33

SPORTS



Prep baseball preview ►37

VIEWPOINT.....	8
NEWS BRIEFS	13
DISTRICT COUNCILS.....	14
CRIME WATCH	20
FOOD	21
KIOSK.....	31

Christy finds comfort and possibly a cure in neighbors' prayers

By TOM CONLON

When Irene Christy was diagnosed with cancer of the liver, sternum, spine and breast last January, her family, friends and neighbors rallied to her side. They organized a network of people to deliver meals to the family and assist with light housekeeping. They also formed a prayer group that continues to meet at 8:15 a.m. every Friday.

"We opened up our hearts and knew we needed to pray for a miracle," said Katherine Howard, Christy's next-door neighbor, who hosts the weekly gatherings.

As word of the prayer group spread, more and more people came to pray with and for Christy, a Macalester-Groveland mother of three young children. The Most Reverend Peter Christensen—the newly appointed bishop of Superior, Wisconsin, and Christy's former pastor at Nativity Catholic Church—celebrated Mass on Christy's behalf on March 14 in the Howards' living room.

"Bishop Christensen told the 30 of us there about faith journeys," Howard said, "how all of us are terminally ill in some way and how through our own struggles in life we must trust God, like the apostles in the boat with Jesus during the storm. (Bishop Christensen) anointed Irene while we all touched her and blessed her. It was quiet for about three minutes—not even a peep out of the 15 small children who were with us."

IRENE CHRISTY ►2



Friends and neighbors of Irene Christy (center) gather around her in prayer.

PHOTO BY TOM CONLON

Governor's veto shocks Central Corridor backers

By JANE MCCLURE

As the 2008 Minnesota Legislature lurches toward adjournment on May 19, supporters of the Central Corridor light-rail line along University Avenue are scrambling to restore \$70 million in state funds for the project that fell victim to Governor Tim Pawlenty's veto on April 7.

The veto took local light-rail backers and elected officials by surprise. Pawlenty had indicated earlier that he would support the \$70

million allocation if the Central Corridor's price tag could be brought within federal cost requirements. That prompted a flurry of cost-cutting earlier this year to pare down the project's price tag to \$909.1 million.

Without the state funds, the 11-mile light-rail project will have a much more difficult, if not impossible, row to hoe in obtaining matching federal funds. The project needs a \$225 million local match by September when it will be submitted to the Federal Transportation Administration. Federal dollars are expected to pay for half of the

project's capital costs.

The bonding bill passed by the House and Senate totaled \$925 million. Pawlenty's line-item vetoes cut it to \$717 million after he said he would not support a bill that topped \$895 million. In announcing the vetoes, Pawlenty said he was trying to prioritize state projects and commit state government to fiscal discipline.

The Central Corridor was the largest single item cut. Pawlenty said he was pulling the proj-

CENTRAL CORRIDOR ►4

Gambling charities' odds are growing longer

By BOB GILBERT

Last August, Tiffany's Bar & Grille owner Blake Montpetit decided to name the Highland Business Association (HBA) as the beneficiary of the charitable gambling operation that operates within leased space at his business. The hope was that the pull-tab booth in the Highland Village tavern would bring in as much as \$50,000 a year for the HBA, helping to cover the costs of its annual Highland Fest.

"We were hoping to replace the money that the HBA lost when Ford Motor Company announced it was closing its assembly plant and

would no longer help underwrite Highland Fest," said Greg Morrison, who was hired last year to manage the HBA's charitable gambling activities.

The HBA may now have to look elsewhere. Highland Fest's budget last year was about \$55,000. In the past, Ford had donated as much as \$25,000 to the three-day summer celebration. Last year it donated \$12,500. And thus far, the pull-tab booth at Tiffany's has barely covered the HBA's expenses.

It's a story that is playing out across Minnesota, where nearly 1,400 nonprofit organizations are the licensed beneficiaries of 3,000

charitable gambling operations, including such local groups as the Highland Central Hockey Association, Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota and the Midway Lions Club.

Charitable gambling is a billion-dollar industry in Minnesota. Its biggest year was 2000 when statewide chairtable gambling grossed \$1.48 billion. That number dropped to \$1.29 billion in 2006 and to \$1.22 billion in 2007.

Pull tabs account for 93 percent of the charitable gambling activity, but there is also bingo, paddlewheels, raffles and tipboards. Over



CHARITABLE GAMBLING ►2

Pull tabs at the booth at Tiffany's.

1 ◀ IRENE CHRISTY

Howard believes a miracle is at work. "When Irene visited her oncologist, the doctors said she had been responding positively to chemotherapy," she said. "Not only had no new cancer cells formed, but the scans showed a clear regression of the spots on her liver and other metastasized areas had faded or left."

Christy, 46, has a family history of breast and ovarian cancer. She and her sister Julie were tested for the BRCA1 gene in 2001 and, when they learned they were predisposed to the disease, had hysterectomies as a preventive measure. Irene contracted breast cancer in 2004 nonetheless. She had a double mastectomy that was thought to be successful until the cancer returned earlier this year.

"Chemotherapy, while controlling and hopefully killing off cancer cells, takes a real toll on your body," said Christy, who works part-time as a second-grade teacher at Wenonah Elementary School in Minneapolis. "If it doesn't kill you, you lose your hair, nails, skin and stomach lining, and it gives you mouth sores and other awful things. So I brought a collection of wigs to school and wore a different one each day to entertain the students. Last week I wore a pink Hannah Montana wig. I wore a green wig for St. Patrick's Day, and I'll wear a big Farrah Fawcett wig someday."

"The kids at school have really been nurturing," she said. "They remind me to drink the frequent water I need. It gives me a chance to share a little about human suffering and empathy."

"One day I was helping serve lunch when a student in the other second-grade class told me she once looked like me. I learned from her teacher that she was a leukemia survivor and that (since contracting the disease) she never opens up to anyone at school. Seeing her bond with me touched us both, and it inspired me to keep going. Even in suffering, I could help someone."



Kate Wollan (left) and Jane Tracy were among the 500 friends and neighbors who turned out at an April 10 benefit for Irene Christy (in pink wig). PHOTO BY TOM CONLON

Fifteen adults and six children gathered at the Howards' on April 4 to get an update on Christy's condition and offer encouragement and prayers. Howard opened the meeting with a reading from the Bible—2 Corinthians 5, 16-17.

"We all have busy lives full of family demands and personal burdens," Howard said. "But this time together unifies us in sharing Irene's burdens. We hope Irene finds joy in the passage, 'Oh Jesus, help me suffer,' in her efforts to draw closer to God as He experienced the same pain on the way to the cross. God will give you what you need when you need it."

Ray Christy, Irene's husband of 12 years, also spoke. "When we're at the bottom of the barrel," he said, "we stop to listen because we

need answers. Jesus never gave up or gave in, but walked to the very end, and He walks with us in our struggles."

The Christys' three children—Rose, 10, Ray, 8, and Robert, 7—attend Nativity School where an 8th-grade religion class has been following their mother's progress. Christy's friends and neighbors have formed the Angels Group, whose members take turns doing light housekeeping for the Christy family. Another neighbor has been coordinating meal deliveries to the family as needed. Yet another group organized a "Rock for Irene" benefit on April 10 at DeGidio's restaurant to help defray medical expenses not covered by insurance. (Donations may still be made by check to Irene Christy, c/o Bank Cherokee, 985 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105.)

Christy's family and friends all say they have benefited from sharing in her struggles. "Mother Theresa believed in doing many small things in a big way," said Julie Turner Patton, Christy's sister, who took part in the prayer group on April 4. "This is so much bigger than Irene having cancer, because so much good has come to us around her. God said he was going to turn a little cancer on in Irene's body to wake up a lot of people, and a lot of beautiful things can happen when you're awake. I'm reading more about Christianity, more than I ever have before, and it has brought our family closer. I, too, am at risk for cancer. If I suffer the same fate, hopefully Irene and our neighbors will have inspired me to grow from it as much as she has."

"Irene's struggles have been a blessing to us all," Howard said. "While we pray, the children pray with us, watch videos or play with their toys. We hope they see our actions as a way to discover and learn about their own faith at their own level."

"As neighbors, we rarely tell one another how much we love and value each other," Howard said. "This prayer group has given us that opportunity. We share her journey. We laugh and cry. It's really nice to come together and put God in the center and express gratitude, hope, love and then ask God for help in Irene's and our lives."

"I live in the present now and take every day one at a time," Irene Christy said. "My whole body is filled with kindness and forgiveness—things I didn't think about before the diagnosis. Other things that were important to me before aren't now. I'm not struggling emotionally anymore. I'm being carried and cared for by wonderful family, friends, neighbors, my students, parishioners and, most of all, God. In accepting that, I'm uplifted. Suffering can help you discover many blessings you never would otherwise experience or appreciate."

For more on Christy's condition, visit <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/irenechristy>.

1 ◀ CHARITABLE GAMBLING

81 percent of the gross revenue is given back to the players through their winnings, 3.9 percent goes to the state in taxes, a maximum of 9.5 percent covers expenses and just over 5 percent is distributed to the charities.

Charitable gambling in Minnesota has been a big business for nonprofit organizations since it became legal in 1985. Over the past 20 years, it has raised an average of \$75 million per year for nonprofit organizations, though that figure dipped to below \$68 million over the past few years.

A St. Paul ordinance requires charitable gambling organizations to give 10 percent of their proceeds to the city's Youth Programs Fund, which benefits the Division of Parks and Recreation. Charitable gambling organizations contributed \$230,148 to the fund in 2002, but by 2007 that amount was down to \$84,847.

The great majority of charitable gambling is conducted in bars, and many people believe that the decline in the proceeds can be attributed to the decline in the bar business in general.

"The statewide smoking ban created more of an impact than any other thing we've seen in the past," said King Wilson of Allied Char-

ities of Minnesota, a trade association that represents more than 900 charitable gambling organizations in Minnesota.

The smoking ban, which had already been in place in Minneapolis and St. Paul, went statewide on October 1, 2007. Wilson cited statistics from the Minnesota Gambling Control Board that showed charitable gambling was down 6 percent in October, 12 percent in November and 18 percent in December 2007 from the same period in 2006.

The charitable gambling receipts for the Midway Lions Club Foundation are down, according to Joe Letourneau, who manages the operation. "We have 6 sites in St. Paul, and they are all doing pretty crummy," Letourneau said. "The smoking ban really crippled us."

The Midway Lions Foundation gives money to the Salvation Army, Dorothy Day Center, Union Gospel Mission, local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops and organizations that serve the blind. The money it gives to St. Paul youth programs through the 10 percent fund is usually about \$500 a month. In March it was only \$65.

"When charitable gambling is hurting, the charities are hurting," Letourneau said. "I don't know if there's any cure for the problem."

Kenneth Wyberg, who has been managing the charitable gambling operations of the



Barbette Wisheart reaches into the bin to pull out a pull tab for a customer of the charitable gambling booth at Tiffany's Bar & Grille. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Czech and Slovak fraternal organization Sokol Minnesota since 1993, said Sokol's receipts are down at least 50 percent. Wyberg's organization sells pull tabs at Hot Rods, a bar on University and Snelling avenues. "At their high point, our profits were \$30,000 per month," he said. "Now they're barely covering our operat-

ing expenses of about \$15,000 per month."

"The smoking ban and the drop in charitable gambling seem to have gone hand in hand," Montpetit said, "but I think there are other factors, too. We've heard more times

HARD TIMES FOR CHARITIES ▶ 3

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2◀ HARD TIMES FOR CHARITIES

than not that people are worried about their jobs. We're certainly seeing it with the Ford plant. They have about 800 people working in the plant right now, down from 2,000 a year ago."

Peg Fuller, who monitors charitable gambling for the St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections, has seen a steady decline in that activity since she took the job eight years ago.

"A lot of people want to blame the smoking ban, but the 0.08 blood alcohol level had

a big effect too," she said, referring to the state law that lowered the legal threshold for driving while intoxicated. "People don't go out and drink like they used to."

Fuller also cited the increased competition from other forms of legal gambling in Minnesota. "A bus will pick you up at Lexington and University Avenue and give you a ride to Mystic Lake Casino," she said. "Members of my mother's generation used to play pull tabs in local bars all the time. But pull tabs are just not that popular with young adults today."

"We know we need to reinvigorate our business," Wilson said. "It's a matter of whether we

need to retool or reinvent charitable gambling. We need a new business model because the business model that's in place hasn't changed since the 1980s. But society has. We have to do some new things or we're going to see the decline continue."

The St. Paul City Council passed an ordinance last year in an attempt to aid the ailing charitable gambling industry. The ordinance, sponsored by Ward 5 City Council member Lee Helgen, allowed bar bingo in the city and permitted bartenders to sell pull tabs instead of requiring a manned pull-tab booth within the bars.

The HBA has not given up on charitable gambling yet. In fact, despite the dearth of proceeds over the past eight months, the association is now exploring the possibility of expanding its pull-tab operations to other sites. There is also talk of offering bingo in the beer tent at this year's Highland Fest.

"We came into the charitable gambling business at a tough time," Morrison said. "and getting the operation up and running hasn't been easy."

"But we're hoping that with the coming of warmer weather, more people will go out and our revenue will increase."

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Business, transit interests debate need for University zoning

By JANE McCLURE

Governor Tim Pawlenty's veto of \$70 million in state bonding for the Central Corridor light-rail transit line has thrown a monkey wrench into the St. Paul City Council's deliberations over zoning provisions that would encourage transit-oriented development on either side of the proposed University Avenue route.

"If the governor sticks to his veto and he doesn't fund the Central Corridor, does it matter if we do this or not?" asked Ward 5 City Council member Lee Helgen. That sentiment was shared by Ward 2 council member Dave Thune, who questioned why the city would approve more dense, transit-oriented development guidelines if the light-rail line is not built.

However, council members Russ Stark of Ward 4 and Melvin Carter III of Ward 1 argue that not adopting the zoning overlay regulations would undermine months of planning.

"There are a lot of people out there looking for signs to say, 'Look, St. Paul is slowing down,'" Stark said. "That would be the wrong message to send."

"Whatever happens, University will remain a dense population center," Carter said. "The zoning overlay is consistent with the existing and projected density."

The proposed zoning regulations are similar to the interim zoning regulations they would replace. They are meant to promote more dense development around Rice, Dale, Lexington, Snelling, Fairview, Raymond and



THE EASTBOUND LANES OF UNIVERSITY AVENUE MAKE THEIR WAY TOWARD THE STATE CAPITOL.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Westgate streets, where the light-rail stations are planned. The regulations would not affect existing businesses. However, they would restrict the heights, setbacks and design of new buildings and their off-street parking requirements. New auto sales, rental, repair and service stations would also be discouraged.

Last year the City Council adopted a Central Corridor Development Strategy as a guide for long-term development along the light-rail route. That is being followed with more detailed planning in the transit station areas.

The interim zoning regulations were adopted last June to control development while the station area plans were being drafted. However, state law only allows interim regulations

to remain in place for a year. The station area plans will not be ready for public hearings until this summer. According to city planner Donna Drummond, it may take up to two years to complete all of the studies and draft the zoning regulations.

Drummond believes the city should be looking at zoning changes along University even if light rail is dropped or delayed. University Avenue already has the highest transit use in the city, she said, so it makes sense to plan for more density. "This is our major commercial corridor in the city; this is where we should be planning for future growth," she said.

Recent developments on University, such

as the new Wilder Foundation headquarters, have required variances because most of the street's current zoning does not allow such tall buildings. Easing the off-street parking requirements, as the proposed zoning regulations do, is viewed as a way to help attract new businesses and encourage developments that are not possible under current zoning.

Paula Maccabee, who represents Midway Center owner RK Midway, and Ultan Duggan, who owns two commercial buildings on University, told the City Council that St. Paul should wait on new zoning regulations until the 2008 Minnesota Legislature acts.

Representatives of University United, the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce and the District Councils Collaborative argued for adoption, saying the city would be making a mistake leaving a gap between the interim and permanent zoning regulations, opening the door to more disputes like the ones that surrounded recent developments in Midway Center, the Midway SuperTarget and Lexington Park.

Susan Kimberly, vice president for economic development with the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, said the chamber is concerned about making what are essentially temporary regulations permanent. However, she said, the chamber is supporting adoption of the zoning overlay district if a sunset clause is included, removing the district if the temporary regulations have not been replaced by the station area plans by June 2011. The sunset clause has also been recommended by the St. Paul Planning Commission.

1◀ CENTRAL CORRIDOR

ect "into the maintenance shed for further inspection."

Of the \$208 million slashed from the bonding bill, \$127 million was tied to St. Paul projects, including every request submitted by the city. St. Paul officials now concede that most of the requests will not be brought back this year, although that could mean the demise of some projects due to the loss of matching grants and pledges.

Although there is support from St. Paul, Ramsey and Hennepin counties, and Minneapolis officials for restoring the \$70 million for the Central Corridor, no one is sure when or if that will happen. Ramsey County commissioner Jim McDonough said he anticipated that if anything does happen, it will be during the last seven to 10 days of the session.

Since the veto was signed, "we haven't heard anything," McDonough said. "It's frustrating."

Some local officials speculate that the Central Corridor could be a bargaining chip in state budget negotiations. Others wonder if there is a move afoot to redesign the project, a step that would mean missing the September deadline for FTA submission. Metropolitan

Council officials have warned that a delay could mean a significant enough rise in construction costs to derail the Central Corridor.

Mayor Chris Coleman said the veto "shows a stunning disregard for the largest economic development opportunity in our region's history" and is "a direct threat to the city's future."

Ward 1 City Council member Melvin Carter III agreed. "This is critical to the future of St. Paul, this is critical to the future of the region, this is critical to the future of the state," he said.

On April 9, both the St. Paul City Council and Central Corridor Management Committee passed resolutions urging Pawlenty and the 2008 Legislature not to adjourn until at least \$70 million is appropriated for the Central Corridor. The council vote was unanimous; the Management Committee vote was 9-0-3, with Metropolitan Council chair Peter Bell, state finance commissioner Tom Hanson and acting state transportation commissioner Robert McFarlin abstaining.

After the veto, Bell issued a statement saying that the Central Corridor project has not been derailed. He expressed confidence that the governor and state lawmakers will find a

way to resolve the issue.

However, state lawmakers have mixed reactions to the Central Corridor's prospects. At an April 8 press conference and in other statements, most members of the St. Paul delegation said they believe the project is dead for the session. Representative Alice Hausman, who chairs the House Capital Investment Committee, believes it may be too late to revive it. Representative Michael Paymar was one of the few who said supporters of the project should not give up.

State lawmakers have indicated that a veto override is unlikely, given that most legislators outside of St. Paul got their projects funded. This is the second year that St. Paul has been shut out of state capital projects. The entire bonding bill was vetoed by Pawlenty in 2007.

Funds for other St. Paul projects vetoed by the governor include:

- \$3.8 million for riprap and other shoreline work from the Upper Landing neighborhood to the High Bridge. The city has received federal funding for a match and has received one extension already for use of those dollars.
- \$2 million for land acquisition to expand the Vento Nature Sanctuary.
- \$11 million for Como Zoo, including

\$800,000 to complete the polar bear exhibit and the rest earmarked for a new gorilla exhibit. Zoo officials believe they can complete the polar bear exhibit with other funds, but said the gorilla exhibit expansion is on hold.

- \$24.5 million to build a new Bell Museum of Natural History on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus.

- \$100,000 to plan for an amateur sports facility in the Midway area.

- \$5 million for an Asian-Pacific Cultural Center at the old Hamm's Brewery. Backers have said the project will be shelved if the \$5 million cannot be restored this session.

- \$4 million for high-speed rail from St. Paul to Chicago.

- \$2 million for turning the Union Depot concourse in downtown into a multi-modal transit hub. A week after the veto, the U.S. Postal Service board of governors approved the sale of the Union Depot concourse to Ramsey County. The purchase price and other details have not been announced. Work on the transit hub would not begin until after the Postal Service moves to Eagan by the end of 2010. Because that project can tap other funds, county officials do not see the veto as a fatal blow.

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A vision of University Avenue in the era of light rail, taken from the city of St. Paul's Central Corridor Development Strategy.

Businesses plead for preservation of parking along Central Corridor route

City officials agree on need to compensate for the loss of on-street parking spaces

By JANE MCCLURE

More than 40 University Avenue business owners met with Metropolitan Council and St. Paul city staff last week to voice their concerns about the projected loss of close to 1,000 of the 1,150 on-street parking spaces on University in St. Paul with the building of the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit line.

"We need to be able to argue our case as a group," Ax-Man Surplus owner Jim Segal told the gathering, which was organized by the University Avenue Business Association, the Hmong Chamber of Commerce and the Hmong Business Association. "Otherwise, we'll get what they decide we'll get."

Like many University businesses, Ax-Man has no off-street parking. Segal, whose store is on the northwest corner of University and Fry Street, may lose all of the on-street parking in front of his store because of the store's proximity to the proposed light-rail station at Snelling Avenue. "Without customer parking in front of our businesses, we're going to go away," he said.

The University Avenue right-of-way is 120 feet wide in most areas. With four lanes of motor vehicle traffic, additional left-turn lanes at signalized intersections, two tracks for light-rail cars, and light-rail station platforms for passengers, that does not leave a lot of room for parking.

"It isn't like we can widen the street to fit everything in," said Dan Soler, a Central Corridor project engineer. "But we have to figure out how we can make this work to serve all of the competing interests."

Though local officials anticipated some parking loss with the building of light rail, no one knew the numbers would be so high, according to St. Paul City Council member Russ Stark. "A lot of us feel pretty sheepish about that," he said.

Stark of Ward 4 and City Council member Melvin Carter III of Ward 3, along with Ramsey County commissioners Janice Rettman and Toni Carter, promised to work on the parking issues. Stark said that though light-rail construction is scheduled to start in less than two years, that is time enough to explore a variety of solutions.

The loss of on-street parking is just one of many uncertainties that University businesses are dealing with as engineering of the light-rail line proceeds in anticipation of the start of construction in 2010. Another is the prospect of customer parking lots becoming de facto park-and-ride lots for commuters.

Chang Thao, whose family owns Foodsmart

in the Uni-Dale Mall, wondered how he will be able to keep light-rail riders from parking in the Foodsmart lot and then boarding the train at University and Dale. He said he is also concerned about losing the few on-street parking spaces available in front of his family's smaller grocery at University and Virginia Street.

Tina Lehmann of Metro Dental Clinic said her business already spends \$8,000 a month to provide employee parking in the nearby Spruce Tree ramp and another surface parking lot. Metro Dental also pays to have an additional parking lot patrolled. "We have no other resources at this time," she said.

The city of St. Paul currently has no fund dedicated to neighborhood parking improvements in its neighborhoods, according to Craig Blakely of the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development. Addressing the problem may mean tapping into the Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization program or assessing local property owners. City officials said they would apply for a portion of the \$32 million that is available for mitigating problems with the building of the Central Corridor line. However, much if not all of that money may be needed to address the parking and traffic problems with the latest plan to forgo the tunnel and run the light-rail trains at-grade across the East Bank campus of the University of Minnesota.

St. Paul and Metropolitan Council staff members have been meeting this month with University Avenue businesses to survey their parking needs. According to Blakely and St. Paul city planner Al Lovejoy, efforts could be made to arrange shared parking among businesses. To help in that regard, they said, the city could relax its off-street parking requirements so that businesses with shared lots would not have to seek parking variances. The city could also offer incentives for businesses that are willing to share parking.

The city created a \$1 million Places to Park fund in the 1990s to encourage the creation of shared parking lots. One lot near Grand and Snelling is still operating through assessments to benefitting property owners. A similar agreement to share the House of Hope Presbyterian Church parking lot on Summit Avenue failed because there were not enough business owners willing to foot the cost.

The city can lease a private lot and improve it for use as shared parking if property owners are willing to pay an assessment for the lot's upkeep, Blakely said. A recent state law also allows cities to set up parking improvement districts, assessing local property owners for improvements to nearby parking lots. Other possibilities under review are alley parking and angle parking on side streets.

"Some businesses might do fine with rear parking," Lovejoy said. "At others, customers need to get in and out quickly. In some places, that's going to be a tougher issue."

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Board OKs Homecroft reuse, asks for better public process

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

The St. Paul School Board voted 6-1 on April 15 to approve Superintendent Meria Carstarphen's plan to replace Homecroft Elementary School in the fall with a variety of school district programs. They include an Early Learning Center for various preschool programs, a half-day arts program for junior and senior high students with emotional and behavioral disabilities, and a full-day treatment and educational program for students in grades 4-10 with mental health problems.

At the same time, the School Board passed two motions directing the superintendent to keep its members informed in advance of any significant program and facility changes and to come up with a process to involve the public in such decisions. The resolution was seen as an effort to avoid future controversies like the one that arose over the district administration's handling of the situation at Homecroft.

The changes at Homecroft were precipitated by the school's failure to make "adequate yearly progress" for several years running under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. Last year was the first year that schools that have not met the goals of NCLB were subject to corrective action. Homecroft is one of eight district schools that are facing changes in the coming school year for that reason.

Two other district schools may be subject to corrective action in the 2008-09 school year, depending on how their students do on tests this spring, according to Carstarphen. However, she said, "it wouldn't be fair to name them because the test results may make a difference and it would just lay more pressure on the students, staffs and communities."

Carstarphen said she is committed to bring-

Homecroft looks back

Homecroft Elementary School, 1845 Sheridan Ave., is seeking old school yearbooks, photos, school T-shirts, trophies and other memorabilia from the school's past for a display at an all-school reunion from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 29.

Those who are willing to lend memorabilia for the display are asked to bring it to the Homecroft School office between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays, now through May 16.

Written memories of Homecroft experiences are also welcome. Materials la-

beled with their owners' name and address will be returned promptly.

Homecroft Elementary will close for good this June and the building will reopen in the fall for a variety of districtwide programs. The reunion is intended as an opportunity to pay tribute to Homecroft's 86-year history as a neighborhood school.

Homecroft alumni and their families, former teachers and staff are invited to tour the school on that day and browse through the displays as well as the science, social studies, writing and art projects completed by current students.

For information, call 651-293-8955.



ing "more accountability and transparency into anticipated major programming changes due to NCLB and state law." As part of that effort, she said, her administration will regularly present to the School Board the deadlines for various actions required by federal and state laws and will work with the board and individual schools to create a process for receiving "more and clearer feedback" from the public on potential changes.

However, she added, "school principals and site councils must be vigilant in addressing any problems they're having in meeting goals for adequate yearly progress by anticipating the need for program changes and, through communication with the community, coming up with solid ideas in enough time to get the logistics and any needed money together."

Carstarphen's initial plan for Homecroft

was to replace the neighborhood elementary school with two junior and senior high school programs—one for students with special education needs and one for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities. The first that local residents heard of the plan was in late November 2007—three weeks before the School Board was scheduled to vote on it. When 150 Homecroft neighbors turned out on December 12 to oppose the plan, Carstarphen relented and established a Homecroft advisory team to suggest alternatives.

Twenty local residents volunteered for the advisory team and with the help of district staff came up with three alternative elementary school programs. The district added six more options to the mix, including the one ultimately approved by the School Board.

The board's vote disappointed members of

the advisory team. "The process was flawed," advisory team member Bill Rosenbloom told the School Board on April 15. "The advisory team was lied to, and the community has been disrespected. The advisory team was sent on Mission Impossible with an outcome preordained by the administration. As we speak, the administration is chiseling out the word 'public' in public education. The board is acquiescing and the public is paying. As long as the board condones and encourages this behavior and neighborhood schools are taken away and programs are shoved down our throats by fiat and not collaboration, the community will continue to take its students out of the public schools and put them into charter, private and parochial schools."

School Board member Keith Hardy cast the lone vote against Carstarphen's plan for Homecroft. Though the plan will save the district about \$180,000 a year, Hardy said he was hoping that any new use for Homecroft "would generate new revenue for the district."

The plan outlined by Carstarphen at a recent School Board meeting is to consolidate the district's pre-kindergarten programs in the Early Learning Center. The center will have Early Childhood Family Education and Early Childhood Special Education classes for up to 120 youngsters and their parents, a resource library, offices for birth-to-age-5 staff and a teacher training program.

The half-day arts program, called The Lab, will serve up to 50 junior and senior high students who have emotional and behavioral problems. They would be bused to Homecroft from their regular schools.

The Riverast Day Treatment Program will serve up to 48 students in grades 4-10 who, because of emotional disabilities or mental health problems, are not equipped to succeed in a regular classroom.

RK Midway given another year to redevelop Snelling-St. Anthony site

BY JANE MCCLURE

The St. Paul City Council, acting as the board of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), voted unanimously on March 26 to extend until June 29, 2009, an agreement with Midway Center owner RK Midway to develop the vacant parcels of land on St. Anthony Avenue between Snelling Avenue and Pascal Street.

RK Midway's site plan for a new home improvement store on the northwest corner of

St. Anthony and Pascal was approved by the St. Paul Planning Commission in June 2007. However, the company does not know exactly when it will begin construction, according to RK Midway representative Paula Maccabee. The company first wants to construct new buildings for Walgreens and Big Top Liquors at Snelling and Spruce Tree Drive, she said.

RK Midway owns the parcel at St. Anthony and Pascal and would like to purchase the Metro Transit bus barn site immediately to the west on Snelling and St. Anthony for the

construction of other retail stores.

The District 13 Council supported the extension of the development agreement with RK Midway, although residents are ambivalent about having big-box retail stores on the site, according to District 13 Land Use Committee chair Scott Banas. The parcels are less than a quarter-mile from the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit line, and some people would rather see them developed with businesses that are more compatible with transit. Some residents are also concerned about the

effect that big-box stores would have on traffic congestion near some of the most congested intersections in the Twin Cities.

City Council member Melvin Carter III, whose Ward 1 includes the Midway site, has promised a "substantive community process" before the bus barn property is redeveloped.

According to Ward 4 City Council member Russ Stark, the bus barn property is "one of the best development sites in the city," and

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Highland Park turns out in droves to elect new district council reps

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

Citizen participation would seem to be alive and well in Highland Park. Close to 250 area residents turned out for the Highland District Council's annual meeting on April 9 to get an update on the organization's activities over the past year and elect eight new members to its board of directors.

"It was wonderful to see so many people take an interest and show up," said HDC community organizer Kathy Carruth.

"By far, it was largest turnout I've seen since I've been on the district council," said Shawn Bartsh, who has represented the Highland Business Association on the HDC board for the past 15 years. "It was great to see the community show up, become engaged and voice their opinions."

"It was truly amazing to see such a large turnout," said Ruby Hunt, a former member of the St. Paul City Council and Ramsey County Board and co-chair of a League of Women Voters committee that has been studying the city of St. Paul's district council system. "This doesn't happen often for district councils."

In fact, the turnout on April 9 was four or five times the turnout at the HDC's annual meeting in 2007 when a push by local members of the Republican Party to get out the vote resulted in another surprising turnout and the election of seven new members to the council's board of directors.

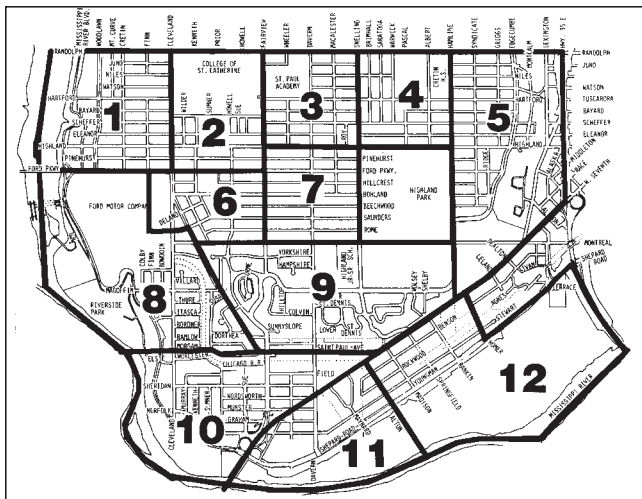
Eight of the 18 seats on the HDC's board are up for election each year (two board members represent the Highland and West 7th business associations). None of the incumbents chose to run for re-election.

Elected to two-year terms were Mike Wilson and Dan Smith, replacing Ted Davis and Jenny Winkelman as the two new at-large representatives; Marilyn Tamsky replacing Bill Driver in Grid 2; Phil Ledermann replacing Dave Pinto in Grid 4; Loren Sorenson replacing Peter Armstrong in Grid 6; Christopher Priebe replacing Gary Marx in Grid 8; Jennifer Taylor James replacing Bill Mahaffey in Grid 10; and Paul Krech replacing Al Abrahamson in Grid 12.

Returning board members who will be up for re-election in April 2009 include Brent Van Tassel in Grid 1, Joseph McCabe in Grid 3, Bill Klein in Grid 5; Tim Puffer in Grid 7; Steven Lentsch in Grid 9; Will Jefferson in Grid 11; and Bill Poulos and Georgia Dietz, the other two at-large representatives.

Dan Greenberg serves on the board as the representative of the West 7th Business Association.

"I thought the meeting went very well for how many people showed up," said Klein, the current president of the HDC board. "Community members were genuinely respectful in their questioning of the candidates. I'm grate-



Highland District Council grid areas.

ful for those who ran for election because this past year has demanded more of a time commitment than most of us expected. I hope those who didn't prevail in the elections will stay involved, perhaps by joining one of our committees."

The HDC has three standing committees—Transportation, Community Development and Community Services—that are open to any Highland Park resident who is interested in serving. The council also has a Crime Prevention Committee in the absence of a crime prevention coordinator.

The past 12 months have been tumultuous for the HDC as it wrestled with a debt of more than \$56,000 in back taxes, penalties and interest owed the IRS for failure to pay withholding taxes and to file quarterly tax forms for several periods between 1998 and 2007. An investigation by a local accounting firm hired by the HDC attributed the tax liability to sloppy bookkeeping and minimal oversight by previous HDC boards.

The HDC has worked out a resolution with local IRS officials by agreeing to pay \$8,042.25 of the money owed. A ruling on the proposed settlement is expected from the national office of the IRS by May 9, according to Puffer, the HDC's current treasurer.

The HDC has since changed its financial operations, Puffer told those gathered at the annual meeting. "From now on, an outside firm will be handling our payroll, tax and financial reporting responsibilities and reporting to the board monthly," he said.

"We're in a transition period now, and I'm hoping that in the future the council can operate in a more positive vein," said Klein, who indicated that he will "probably" seek re-election as HDC president when new officers are chosen at the board meeting on May 1.

Klein was elected president in February to fill the unexpired term of Poulos, who was removed by a vote of the board. Also up for election on May 1 are two alternates on the HDC board who sit in for any board member who cannot make a meeting.

The HDC board meets at 7:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. For more information, call 651-695-4005 or visit www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org.

6◀ OLD BUS BARN SITE

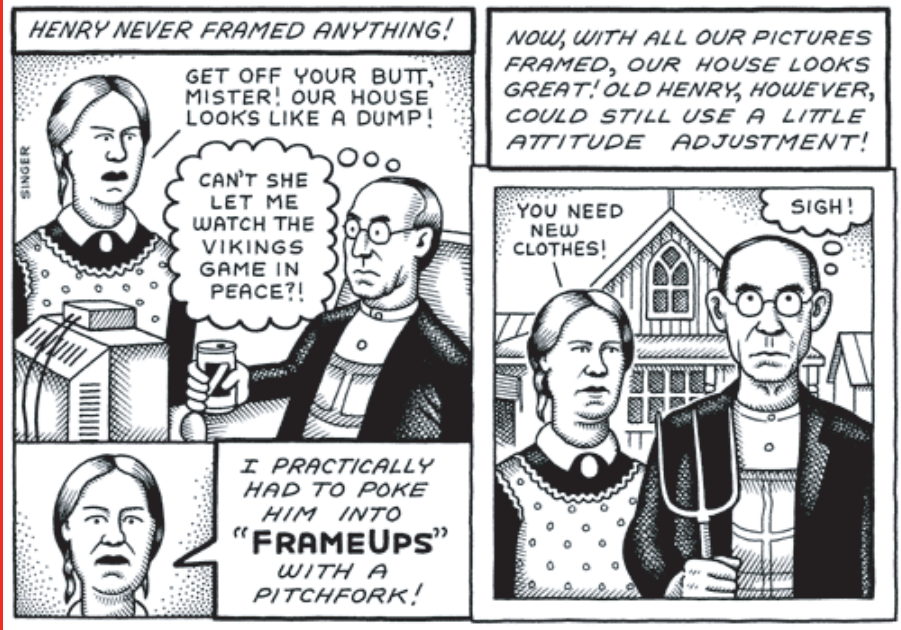
other alternatives for its use should be considered.

How to redevelop the area south of Midway Center has been debated for 20 years. In 1998 the HRA entered into an agreement with the owner of Midway Center to clean up polluted soil on the Pascal-St. Anthony site and the Midway Marketplace property to the east. RK Midway received \$1.6 million for the cleanup and in exchange agreed to spend \$4.5 million improving the 4.7-acre site. Various developments, including restaurants and a movie theater, have been considered for the property, but none have come to fruition.

In 1999 Metro Transit began construction

of a new bus barn north of downtown St. Paul. The Snelling garage was demolished in 2002. Metro Transit initially considered replacing it with a smaller transit facility. In June 2001 the HRA extended the development agreement to give RK Midway time to work with Metro Transit on a combination retail/transit center/bus garage, but that too died on the vine.

Metro Transit has been reluctant to part with the bus barn property because it needs another bus facility in the east metro area. Various sites have been studied, but none has met its requirements. Metro Transit still has a couple of sites in mind, according to spokesperson Bob Gibbons, but will not get into serious discussions with their current owners until later this year.



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Low Vision Doctors Help Legally Blind to See

Members of the *International Academy of Low Vision Specialists* help those with macular degeneration to keep reading and driving.

By Elena Lombardi
Freelance Writer

Jackson, New Jersey Donald Paquette, 72, a former assessor from Anaheim, California thought that his driving days were over. "I could not read the street signs soon enough and I couldn't pass the vision test at the DMV office."

Gonzalo Garcia, 74, Albuquerque, New Mexico, wanted to be able to read and write more easily. He wanted to see the nails and screws when he tried to use them in home repairs. He wanted see his grandchildren singing in the church choir. But he thought those days were over when he was diagnosed with Macular Degeneration.

Neither Donald nor Gonzalo knew that a low vision optometrist could help with some of those issues.

"In New Jersey, Biotopic Telescopic Glasses can be used to pass the vision test for driving," says Dr. Chris Palmer, optometrist in Minneapolis, Mn. "This can allow some with conditions like macular degeneration to continue driving."

"Amazing!" says Donald. "I can read the street signs twice as far as I did before and even see the television better!" Mr. Paquette received biotopic telescopic glasses and also special prismatic reading glasses for easier newspaper reading.

People don't know that there are doctors who are very experienced in low vision care. "Not many doctors like to work with people who are often upset and anxious" says Dr. Palmer, who traveled to California for special training recently. "I love to see their faces light up when they see again."

Macular Degeneration is the most common eye disease among the senior population. As many as 25% of those over 65 have some degree of degeneration.

The macula is one small part of the entire retina, but it is the most sensitive and gives us sharp images.

When it degenerates, ARMD leaves a blind spot right in the center of vision making it impossible to recognize faces, read a book, or pass the driver's vision test.

The experts do not know what causes macular degeneration. But major factors include UV light from the sun, smoking, aging, and improper nutrition.

Vitamins can help. The results of two studies, AREDS and LAST demonstrated a lowered risk of progression by about 25% when treated with a high-dose combination of vitamins.

A new, proprietary supplement based on the scientific studies is available from these doctors. A very powerful formulation, Macula Therapy Formula is available from Dr. Palmer's office.

Nine out of ten people who have macular degeneration have the dry type. There is no medical treatment except for vitamins. The wet type is more aggressive and results in more dramatic vision loss. It involves leaky blood vessels that sometimes can be sealed with hot or cold laser. Newer treatments, such as Macugen, Lucentis and Avastin are injections to prevent leakage.

"Our job is to figure out everything and anything possible to keep a person functioning," says Dr. Palmer. "Whether it's driving, reading, watching television, seeing faces, playing bridge...we work with whatever is on the persons "wish list".

"Telescopic glasses usually cost over \$2000," says Dr. Palmer, "especially if we build them with an automatic sunglass". Reading glasses start at \$500 and hand magnifiers under \$100. Every case is different because people have different levels of vision and different desires.



RICHARD DOUGHERTY WITH TELESCOPE GLASSES

Richard Dougherty, 89, of Palmdale, California came to Dr. Shuldiner in June, 2003. He has returned every two years to have the DMV vision report form filled out to keep driving.

Dr. Shuldiner prescribed biotopic telescopic glasses to read signs and see traffic lights farther away in June, 2003. At his visit on March 3, 2007,

Mr. Dougherty said "The telescopic glasses keep getting better and better!". "They are actually better, by far, than the day I got them. The doctor is a genius! Definitely worth the \$2300 I paid for them". On his visit this past March, Mr. Dougherty reported that the special prismatic reading glasses were still working fine.

The following are some of the very experienced doctors working with low vision patients. They are members of the International Academy of Low Vision Specialists and are happy to speak with you:

Chris Palmer, OD Minnesota	888 882 2040	Brian Saunders, OD Georgia	877 948 7784
Yanna Nachtigal, OD Pennsylvania	877 523 2020	Marc Gannon, OD, FFAO Florida	866 942 2020
Randolph Kinkade, OD Connecticut	800 756 0766	Ross Cusic, OD Washington	877 823 2020
Richard Shuldiner, OD, FFAO Southern California	888 610 2020	Sheldon Smith, OD Michigan	877 677 2020
David Armstrong, OD Virginia	866 321 2030	Larry Chism, OD Texas	888 243 2020

Viewpoint

Lighting a candle in the darkness

BY MARY-HELEN MISCHÉ

My “baby” just passed a big milestone in her life—she completed her kindergarten screening through the St. Paul Public Schools. That means next year she will be off to the same “big school” as her older brother, and both of my little ones will be another year closer to not being little ones anymore.

As a member of the Junior League of St. Paul, a volunteer community service organization whose members have been serving the citizens of St. Paul for 90 years and whose newest project is the “Building Bonds through Reading and Play” initiative, I had the benefit of some extra insight going into the kindergarten screening.

For instance, I already knew that seven out of every 10 children enrolled in the St. Paul Public Schools come from low-income families, and that by 3rd grade only 52 percent of those children have become proficient in reading. I had already spent many hours researching the importance of parent-child bonding. I had learned that the lack of bonding between parents and children leads to an increased risk of child abuse. I knew the crucial role that reading can play in establishing those critical bonds. I was aware that the love of reading is a lifelong gift, and that those children who are proficient readers fare better in school and beyond.

As my 5-year-old and I sat in the hallway of the school district’s Placement Center waiting for her name to be called, I wondered about the other 3,500 families in St. Paul who would have their children screened for kindergarten this year.

Did they know that spending time together reading and playing can help prepare their children for school? Were their children receiving regular one-on-one reading and bonding time with Mom or Dad or another significant adult in their lives? Did those children have favorite books that they clamored to have their parents read to them again and again? I hoped so.

I hoped that those families enjoyed gathering at bedtime and reading stories under the comfort of quilts and flannel sheets as my children and I have done. My own children have learned and imagined from the stories we have read to them, and now they can both read for themselves.

I hoped that the other children at the Placement Center that morning would be entering kindergarten with those same foundation-building experiences. However, I knew that many will not.

That is why I take heart in knowing that all children who go through the kindergarten screening process in this city will now be receiving their own beautiful books from the Junior League of St. Paul, and knowing that their parents will be getting Junior League brochures that explain, in four languages, the importance of reading with children, a suggested book list for little ones, and a message encouraging families to apply for a public library card.

I love the words of Margaret Fuller, who said: “If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it.”

That is exactly what the Junior League of St. Paul is attempting to do.

Our work educating families about the importance of building strong bonds and reading with children will light the candles of many in our city. Our project can make a difference in the lives of other people who can begin to replace darkness with light.

If we can begin to light the candles of those most in need among us, then our community’s brightest days are surely yet to come.

The writer is a resident of the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood of St. Paul. She has been a member of the Junior League of St. Paul since 2005 and serves as its communications chair this year.

I love the words of Margaret Fuller, who said: “If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it.”

Society’s costly love affair with technology

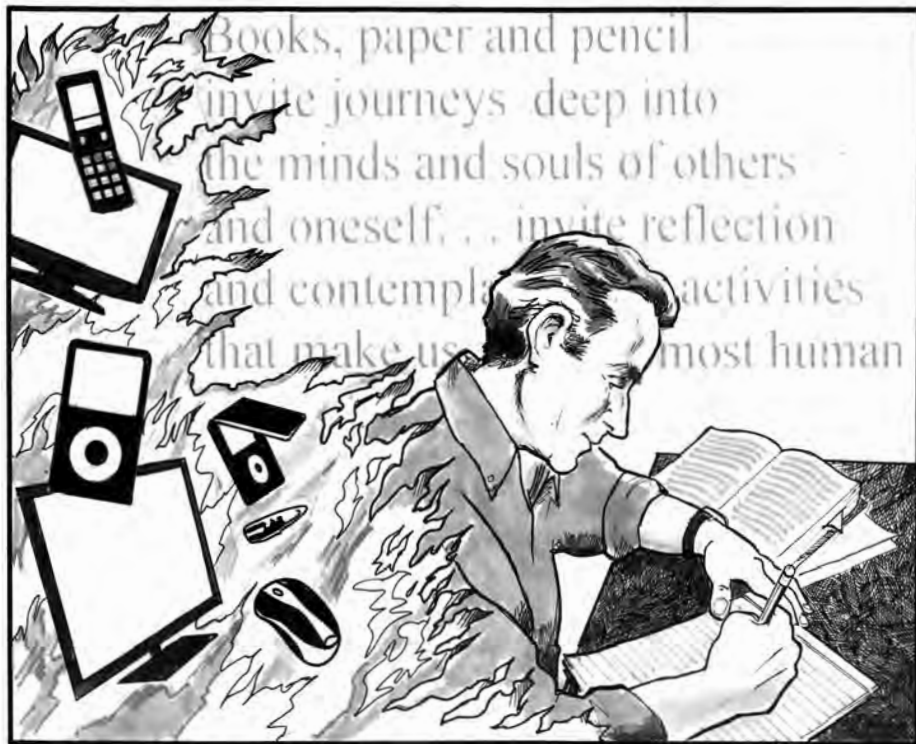
BY SCOTT J. RASKIEWICZ

As another birthday approaches and I grow deeper into middle age, I feel more estranged from modern life. The mindless, excessive consumerism that largely defines this economy and country seems to me a horrible mistake. America’s obsessive love affair with computers, cell phones, video games and other such gadgetry—items that are filled with toxic material and are now crowding landfills and seeping into groundwater—seems a Kafkaesque nightmare from which we will not wake until it is perhaps too late.

Yes, I am old-fashioned. I prefer paper to the toxic glare of a computer screen. When reading a book, I love the sound of turning pages. I love the look of the printed word, line after neat line, in black and white, with pristine borders. It is so unlike a computer screen, with its beeps, glaring colors, blinking icons and crowded borders inviting attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity and an even faster, more unnatural pace of life. And unlike Internet access, which must be purchased month after month, one pays only once for a book.

When writing, I love the feel and sound of my pencil and hand gliding across smooth, white paper. I even love the familiar scrawl of my imperfect handwriting. It is human, so unlike the electronic, soulless words that appear on a computer screen.

Books, paper and pencil invite journeys deep into the minds and souls of others and oneself. Computer screens invite journeys of incredible range but little depth. That nearly nonexistent depth is perhaps the hallmark of our era. From our popular entertainment to our political leaders, nearly nonexistent depth seems a prerequisite for success in America today.



Books, paper and pencil invite reflection and contemplation, the activities that make us most human—and most humane. Computer screens encourage the bane of modern society and reinforce the unofficial, unspoken motto of the United States: Bigger, Faster, Louder, More!

I realize that computers, cell phones and similar gadgets offer benefits—particularly to those who have earned billions of dollars from America’s love affair with technology. But I cannot shake the feeling that as individuals and as a society our full-speed-ahead love affair with technology has cost us more than we have gained.

I may be an aging dreamer, but I prefer the real-life community of my long-ago boyhood and college years to the virtual communities, quickening pace and ever-increasing shallowness of modern life.

Scott J. Raskiewicz is a Highland Park writer and director of the Ideal Society Center, a non-partisan think tank.

Inbox

Thune’s vision

To the editor:

How lucky we residents of St. Paul are to have Dave Thune on the City Council looking out for us. Thanks in part to his courageous leadership, St. Paul may soon be the only municipality in the nation that sees the wisdom of banning no-frills gyms like Anytime Fitness that aren’t staffed 24 hours a day (*Star Tribune*, March 31). These franchise owners had a lot of nerve spending their own money to open up legitimate businesses without checking with him first. But as Thune sagely pointed out, “These kinds of gyms don’t benefit the city with more jobs.” And if someone has a heart attack in those gyms, help might not come fast enough.

The idea that St. Paul residents might want a safe, convenient, affordable place to work out is absurd. Perhaps we can get coffee shops in those sites instead; St. Paul needs more of those. Yet, I fear Thune is not going far enough. There are thousands of people in this town who irresponsibly go jogging on city streets alone! That kind of activity creates no jobs, and any one of those joggers could have a heart attack at any time.

Thune also showed great vision in opposing later bar closings during the Republican National Convention. Instead of defending his position by raising possible concerns like the need for an increased police presence, he pointed out that the people in his ward “don’t want a bunch of puking Republican lobbyists on the streets at four in the morning.”

Thune was right again. Everyone knows that all Republicans are rich oil company fat cats who can’t hold their liquor. But I still don’t think he’s going far enough. I’ve heard rumors that there are actual Republicans living in the city of St. Paul. As many as one in five residents might be affiliated

with “those people.” We can’t be the truly progressive city we so want to be while there are people here who don’t think exactly alike, so having Thune show his disdain for the thousands of ordinary people who will attend the convention is a good first start in finally driving all Republicans back to Texas or Minnetonka or wherever they came from.

I used to wonder how Thune managed to keep getting re-elected over and over again. Now that I’ve seen more examples of his courageous, visionary leadership, I have to agree that leaders like him come around only once in a generation, and we are smart to hold on to him.

*Mark Paske
Macalester-Groveland*

University parking is no problem

To the editor,

There are some areas along University Avenue where on-street parking is limited and very important to small businesses. Unfortunately, there was little consideration in the April 9 *Villager* article of the abundant and underutilized off-street parking along much of the Central Corridor. The owner of the Finn Sisu ski shop asked where his customers would go if there is no on-street parking in front of his store. One alternative might be the 246-space surface parking lot that has many empty spaces 50 feet from his door.

According to a study by the city of St. Paul, there are well over 20,000 off-street parking spaces in the Central Corridor. A previous study by the Midway Transportation Management Organization indicated that 40 to 60 percent

8◀ INBOX

of the spaces in off-street parking lots along University Avenue were empty during periods of peak demand. If 40 percent of the 20,000 off-street parking spaces in the Central Corridor were empty, that means there would be 8,000 off-street spaces available to replace the 1,000 on-street parking spaces that might be eliminated on University Avenue through the construction of the light-rail line.

I hope the city of St. Paul and the Metropolitan Council will work with local businesses to evaluate the potential of off-street parking to compensate for reductions in on-street parking. The need for parking should be reduced because the light-rail line will attract many new riders who previously arrived by car. With an open-minded and innovative approach to this issue, University Avenue will become a much more economically vibrant and attractive place.

Chip Welling
Merriam Park

Editor's note: Chip Welling sits on the Central Corridor Community Advisory Committee as a representative of the Union Park District Council.

A lifetime of parking problems

To the editor:

I wish to address the issue of the parking variance requested by Life Time Fitness (*Villager*, April 9). I live on Pinehurst Avenue and have been a resident here for 40 years. I have been directly affected by the increased traffic and parking on my street by the patrons of Life Time Fitness. I have not complained, just endured.

If the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals, in its wisdom, felt that a specific number of parking spaces should be required for a specific number of square feet in use, why should this wisdom be ignored? We know that the real issue here is the subsequent request for a wine and beer license, if the parking variance is granted. People eating and drinking park longer than those simply working out. We still remember Pudge's. If the parking variance and wine and beer licenses are granted, we will have all of our issues exacerbated.

They want *us* to compromise? Haven't we already? St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris, please support our neighborhood and your constituents against this variance.

Diane Sineps
Highland Park

Rethink the Snelling median

To the editor:

In response to two letters to the editor in the April 9 *Villager*: Yes, it is difficult to turn from southbound Snelling Avenue into the Lincoln Commons parking lot. But placing a median down Snelling will not allow any vehicles traveling south on Snelling to turn into Lincoln Commons.

Those of us who cross Snelling Avenue to ride the bus or to walk to amenities on the opposite side can attest to the hazards. But the amenities are only between Lincoln and Summit avenues. There are four stoplights at Snelling and Grand avenues that should be used to access these amenities. Only students at Macalester College would be crossing Snelling at Lincoln to access the amenities.

Yes, as anywhere in any city, you do take your life in your hands when you cross with the green light. Snelling and Grand is not immune from this. If you cross with the light at the appropriate time,

you will have no problem.

Place a median down Snelling all the way to I-94? What happens when emergency vehicles from the fire station at Ashland Avenue need to go north on Snelling?

Do you really believe putting in a median on Snelling will make vehicles stop when someone is trying to cross the street just to get onto the median? It is not going to make any difference. People will continue to travel the way that they do now.

Letter writer Vernon Jorgensen is correct: 99 percent of the use of the median will be to access Macalester College, and all stores, restaurants, etc., can be reached by using the intersections with traffic lights. Macalester is only looking to beautify the avenue like it tried on Grand just west of Snelling.

People really need to think this proposal through.

Timothy Kay
Macalester-Groveland

Median is a waste

To the editor:

I've lived in the area of Snelling and St. Clair avenues for more than 30 years and drive on Snelling often. Snelling is probably the busiest north-south thoroughfare in St. Paul. It's dangerous to cross except where there are signal lights. However, the proposed medians (*Villager*, March 26) seem like such a waste of money, especially when our property taxes are so high and the state Department of Transportation needs money to replace and maintain bridges.

If there are enough pedestrians to warrant it, why not put in a signal light at Snelling and Lincoln avenues? It's quite dark on the west side of Snelling, so why doesn't Macalester College have more lighting at the intersections between St. Clair and Grand? Also, it's very difficult to grow trees and other plants in a median and keep them healthy. They have to struggle with salt, drought, soil compaction and difficult maintenance conditions in the middle of a busy street.

Al Prusinske
Macalester-Groveland

Don't squeeze Snelling traffic

To the editor:

It's amusing that letter writer Ginny Housum, who lives in Merriam Park, is so confident that the people who actually live off of Snelling Avenue across from Macalester College know so little about the traffic median that is proposed for Snelling (*Villager* April 9). Ms. Housum discounts our "speculative concerns" regarding traffic patterns. Which speculative concerns are those?

Was what I observed as I stood on my block during the median test speculative? Were the dozen or so cars making U-turns in the Snelling traffic lanes every hour speculative? How about the dozens of other cars making three-point turns on our block? Were the additional cars cutting through our alley speculative? How about the car that ran up on the boulevard in front of my house and narrowly missed a neighbor and me on the sidewalk? Hologram? Hallucination?

I'm comforted that Ms. Housum has absolute confidence when the city's Public Works Department states something "unequivocally." Too bad she didn't know that they put their traffic counters at the far eastern end of the blocks and missed all of the speculative action at the west end—near Snelling where the median would go.

INBOX ▶ 11

VILLAGER

Volume 56, Number 4

Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

757 Snelling Ave. S., St. Paul, MN 55116
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The Villager serves the Highland Park, Lexington-Hamline, Macalester-Groveland, Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Summit Hill, Summit-University and West 7th neighborhoods of St. Paul, the Longfellow and Nokomis neighborhoods of Minneapolis, Lilydale, Mendota and Mendota Heights.

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CIRCULATION

The Villager is published twice a month by Villager Communications Inc. The paper has a press run of 60,000, including 50,000 copies delivered to households and businesses and another 10,000 copies distributed via newsstands. Mail subscriptions are available at \$35 per year for those who live outside the home-delivered area.

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Instant runoffs: A vote for and a vote against

IRV would benefit voters, enhance democracy, reward good candidates

BY DANIEL DUDDINGSTON
AND AMY BRENDMOEN

Over the past 12 months, nearly 6,000 St. Paul voters have signed a petition asking for a progressive, meaningful change in the way we elect our city officials. The message is clear: St. Paul voters are ready for election reform and, like voters in numerous cities across the country, we are yearning for a more democratic method to elect our public officials.

The electoral reform involves the use of a voting method known as instant runoff voting. IRV would efficiently replace the more drawn-out, two-step system where an initial primary election determines the top two candidates who then advance to a second general election.

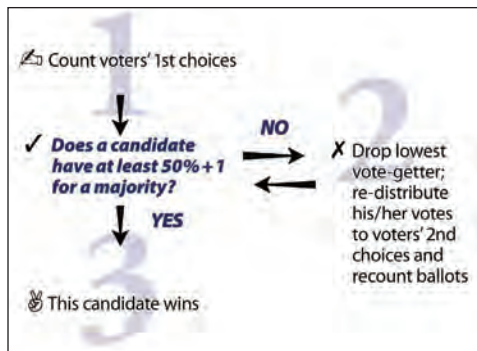
With IRV, voters rank the candidates on the ballot in order of preference (first choice, second choice, third choice, etc.) in a single November general election. No low-voter-turnout primary election is required to

winnow a field of three or more candidates down to two.

IRV is based on winning a majority. If a candidate gets over 50 percent of the first-choice votes in the first round of balloting, he or she wins. If no candidate receives over 50 percent in the first round, an instant runoff is triggered. The candidate with the fewest first-choice votes is eliminated. Voting machines then look to the second-choice votes on the ballots of the eliminated candidate, redistributing those votes to the remaining candidates. The ballots are then recounted.

This redistribution and recount process continues until a candidate achieves a majority. So IRV does in one election what currently takes us two, and it ensures that the winner has received the approval of the majority of those casting votes.

Under IRV, a voter's second preference counts only if his or her first preference is eliminated, just as it is now in the two-step process: Under the current electoral system, if a voter's preferred candidate is



How instant runoff voting works.

dropped in the primary election, the voter casts a second-preference vote in the general election.

The benefits of IRV are many:

- IRV is a more democratic approach to elections, because more voters vote for a wider selection of candidates. IRV eliminates the need for primary elections, which in St. Paul are mostly ignored. Only 5 percent of voters turned out for the municipal primary election in 2007 to choose the candidates who advanced to the general election. IRV, on the other hand, would bring the whole slate of candidates to the November election, when turnout is highest and most diverse.
- IRV encourages participation by the

disenfranchised voter who thinks that his or her vote won't count. Voters can always vote their conscience and still cast their second- and third-choice votes to the insiders or favorites.

- IRV keeps candidates on issue and discourages negative campaigning because the candidates need to appeal to the majority while not alienating supporters of other candidates.

- IRV does not benefit any one particular political party. However, it benefits strong candidates, it benefits the voters and it benefits democracy.

In 2005, mayoral candidate Chris Coleman campaigned with a promise to "bring everyone to the table" to make a better St. Paul. He promised a better democracy, one that is more inclusive, fairer and more representative. IRV helps us move toward the goals that now Mayor Coleman envisioned. It ensures that the majority of us in St. Paul actually gave the nod to our elected public officials. Majority, after all, is what democracy is all about.

Daniel Duddingston and Amy Brendmoen are members of the organizing committee of the Better Ballot Campaign in St. Paul.

Complications would alienate voters, open the door to unintended results

BY MIKE BEACH

There has been a lot of interest lately in a little understood voting system commonly known as instant runoff voting. IRV would allow voters to rank candidates in order of preference rather than vote for just one. If no candidate receives a majority of first-choice votes, the candidate with the least number of first-choice votes would be eliminated and the second-choice votes on those ballots would then be transferred to the remaining candidates. This process is repeated as necessary until a "majority" winner is manufactured.

IRV proponents pitch it as a new, improved, fairer, more progressive, more democratic, quicker and cheaper voting method. Sounds a lot like Billy Mays pitching detergent. So let's do some comparison shopping.

New? Instant runoff voting has been called a new and easier way to vote, but it's neither new nor easy. Preferential voting has been around for more than 100 years, but it hasn't caught on because it is a confusing, undemocratic system.

Fair? IRV gives some voters what amounts to more than one vote. Ranking multiple candidates equates to what the Minnesota Supreme Court in the 1915 Brown v. Smallwood case called "more than a single expression of choice," which the court ruled unconstitutional. The court also ruled that

preferential voting systems were "contrary to the intent of our Constitution."

Democratic? IRV ballots are not counted equally. IRV only tallies the second-choice votes on ballots cast for defeated candidates. We cannot know if our ranking order will help or hurt our candidate of first choice. IRV is a shot in the dark where the less-favored candidate could win after ballots are counted and reallocated, recounted and reallocated, etc.

Quicker? In IRV elections the results will likely not be calculated until weeks or months later, as in San Francisco's 2003 ballot counting. Confidence in the process and individual elections will be further weakened. The delays and confusion with the "hanging chad" problem in Florida in the 2000 presidential election will appear insignificant compared to this voter-disenfranchising nightmare.

Improved? Hardly. The most troubling flaw of the IRV scheme is what has been called the "nonmonotonicity paradox," whereby voting for our favorite candidate can actually hurt that candidate's chance of winning (see box). Because of this, IRV places us in the precarious position of not knowing whether we are helping or hurting our favored candidate by ranking him or her first.

Cheaper? Statewide, millions of taxpayer dollars are now being wasted in the attempt to implement IRV even though

The paradox of IRV

Consider the following scenario under instant runoff voting. Three candidates (A, B and C) are running for a single office. A total of 17 voters turn out for the general election and rank the candidates in order of preference. The voters rank the candidates in four different ways:

- Six voters rank the candidates ABC
- Five voters rank the candidates CAB
- Four voters rank the candidates BCA
- Two voters rank the candidates BAC

Since no candidate has a majority of at least nine first-place votes, C, the candidate with the fewest first-place votes, is elimi-

nated. The second choices of the five voters who chose C first are then counted and A wins the election with a majority of 11 (six plus five) votes.

Now, assume the two voters in group IV instead ranked the candidates "ABC." Again, nobody has a majority of nine first-choice votes. But now "B" has the fewest number of first-choice votes and is the first to be eliminated. The second choices of the voters who picked "B" first are then counted and "C" wins with a majority of nine (five plus four) votes.

In summary, candidate "A" wins when he is ranked second by the voters in group IV, but he loses when he is ranked first by those same voters. Thus, "A" wins when fewer voters favor him, and he loses when more voters favor him.

preferential voting has already been ruled unconstitutional. And with IRV, ballot counting will be much more laborious.

IRV proponents claim that this ballot-counting method would eliminate the need for primary elections. However, primaries are a vital part of our representative government. That's where we engage and choose who the candidates will be from our political parties. Eliminating primary elections would reduce our involvement in, and influence over, our government.

The court said in Brown v. Smallwood, "The preferential system of voting directly diminishes the right of an elector to give an effective vote for the candidate of his choice. The mathematical possibilities of the application of this system are infinite.... We

do right in upholding the right of the citizen to cast a vote for the candidate of his choice unimpaired by the second and additional choice votes cast by others."

IRV violates the Constitution. IRV disenfranchises voters and further alienates us from the political process. The Minnesota Voters Alliance filed suit in Hennepin County District Court against the city of Minneapolis on December 20, 2007, challenging the constitutionality of IRV, which Minneapolis voters recently approved. Details of the complaint challenging the IRV scheme are on the Minnesota Voters Alliance website at www.mnvoters.org.

Mike Beach is a volunteer with the Minnesota Voters Alliance.

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9◀ INBOX

Ms. Housum is right to be concerned about traffic enforcement at intersections and crosswalks. I regularly watch in disbelief how motorists, pedestrians and cyclists ignore basic rules of law and courtesy. And if Ms. Housum wants a traffic median in the blocks north toward I-94, she should work for that, as there are lots of individual streets and businesses where pedestrians might want to cross. However, between St. Clair and Grand avenues, the west side of the Snelling is a single, monolithic block occupied by Macalester College. There is no reason to cross mid-block unless one is taking a short cut to the college.

A tree-lined median would be pretty, and calmer traffic would be desirable, but there is simply not enough room on this section of Snelling without forcing additional parking onto our neighborhood streets or cutting lanes out of one of the few remaining major north-south arteries in this area. If Macalester had considered the median before embarking on its Snelling Avenue construction projects, they could have shifted their buildings west to make room for it. Otherwise, squeezing traffic in one part of the city will only force it into other parts. Even into Merriam Park.

*Philip Jacobs
Macalester-Groveland*

Looking back at Bakken

To the editor:

Janet Lunder Hanafin's story on the evolution of the Bakken Quartet/Trio/Experience (*Villager*, March 26) provided a keen insight into the workings of this fine, long-respected chamber group, but an addition is in order. Cellist Katja Linfield, a member of the Bakken Trio from 1991-2001, is alive and well and living in Golden Valley and can be heard most weekends from the cello section of the Minnesota Orchestra in downtown Minneapolis. She left Bakken after learning that she was about to found her own trio—her triplet baby girls. I know this for a fact since Katja is my daughter-in-law and the baby girls, soon to be 6, are my identical, beautiful granddaughters—Maya, Zoe and Gabriella.

*JoAnn Rice
Mendota Heights*

Co-op overlooked

To the editor:

I was happy to read that Mississippi Market has found a new home (*Villager*, April 9). I have been a member of Mississippi Market since 1989, and I'm pleased to see the co-op growing in our community.

However, the story stated that Mississippi Market is the "last remaining food co-op in St. Paul." It missed what is the oldest and most charming food co-op in St. Paul—Hampden Park Co-op. Hampden Park Co-op has been around since 1973 and serves a wide variety of natural foods at 928 Raymond Ave.

*Bill Busse
West End*

Another useless project

To the editor:

Oh heck, why not build the medians on Snelling Avenue (*Villager*, March 26)? Let's make it an even half dozen of wasteful, useless projects. The other five are the (never open) eastbound entrance ramp to I-94 off Pascal Avenue, the (doesn't hardly reduce any) sound barrier along St. Anthony Avenue in Merriam Park, the preserve (by paving over) Meeker Island Park, the (nobody's ever given a good reason for) medians on Marshall Avenue, and, the father of them all, the Selby Bridge (over nothing).

*J.P. Kolbinger
Merriam Park*

Stinky truth

To the editor:

The letter to the editor from the person who thought it was refreshing to receive a pretty flyer that outlined Rock-Tenn's "environmentally friendly" energy spin rather than the facts and consequences of their plan (*Villager*, March 26) didn't consider the whole picture. I could market my own natural gas as an environmentally clean solution in an appealing and colorful brochure, but I'm willing to wager that no one would want to live next to me while we harness that energy.

*Richard Ehrich
Macalester-Groveland*

A dose of sanity

To the editor:

Publisher Michael Mischke's column on the Sara Jane Olson debacle was the most thoughtful I've seen (*Villager*, March 26). He brought out the very human and local nature of the slow-motion tragedy that Olson's family is going through. And he did so without dismissing the gravity of her crimes or demonizing her. This stands in stark contrast to her shrill detractors on the right and her thoughtless apologists on the left.

Thanks for bringing a welcome dose of sanity to what has been a very polarizing story.

*Steve Compton
Longfellow, Minneapolis*

Fresh air, cold fannies

Dear editor:

Dave Wright's column "Enjoy the Dome while you can" (*Villager*, April 9) hit the nail on the head. The bigger question, however, might be whether or not a new generation of fans born after 1982 and accustomed to indoor baseball will adjust to outdoor baseball. The months of April and May can be chilly. What will the new ballpark have to compensate—state-of-the-art seating heaters?

*Steven Hubbell
Downtown St. Paul*

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St. Paul addresses foreclosure crisis

City goes after lenders responsible for vacant properties

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and members of the City Council unveiled a multi-pronged approach on April 9 to stem the tide of home foreclosures in the city and help homeowners as well as neighborhoods where vacant homes are a growing problem.

One key piece of the city's effort is to retain Mark Ireland, a staff attorney for the Foreclosure Relief Law Project, as special counsel. He will initially work with the City Attorney's Office to contact the six firms that own or have legal control over about a quarter of the more than 1,700 registered vacant properties in St. Paul. Those firms include MERSCORP (Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems Inc.), which has 143 properties, U.S. Bancorp (94), Deutsche Bank (93), Wells Fargo (64), HSBC Bank (43) and JP Morgan Chase Bank (10).

Letters to those firms that went out on April 8 stated that the vast majority of the vacant properties are deteriorated, fail to comply with city ordinances and are a public safety hazard. Residents who live near the vacant properties have seen the value of their own properties decrease and have reported an increase in vandalism and arson.

"We want to be clear," Coleman said about lenders connected to vacant properties in the city. "If they don't come to the table, we're going to go after them. We're going to make sure that we resolve these problems."

The city is giving the six firms 30 days in which to spell out their plans for fixing up the houses and getting them re-

occupied.

Ward 4 council member Russ Stark, who lives in an area with many vacant buildings, came up with the idea to contact the lenders. Not long after the press conference, Stark learned that several vacant dwellings near his family's home had their copper stripped. The theft of copper, stained-glass windows and other valuable items from vacant homes is a growing problem. In Minneapolis, the theft of copper pipe has caused natural gas explosions in some vacant homes.

"To date, the city hasn't gotten an adequate response" to the issues it has raised with the lenders, Stark said. "Our goal is to get responsible management of these properties."

Ward 1 council member Melvin Carter III said owners of vacant property must recognize the detrimental effect their neglect has on neighborhoods and either repair the properties or sell them to buyers who are willing to.

The city would prefer not to tear down vacant buildings, said council president Kathy Lantry. However, the costs of securing and maintaining the structures is rising. The city must board open or broken windows, cut grass and weeds, remove trash and shovel snow.

Lantry said the city cannot manage the vacant properties for the lenders. However, when contacted, some of the lenders said they are not in the property management business either. That responsibility falls to the firms servicing the loans and not the trustees for the loans. Still, the trustees are usually the parties listed on property documents.

MERSCORP and Wells Fargo are

among the firms that have indicated they are willing to work with the city.

The city is also using other measures to address the foreclosure crisis, Coleman said. They include creating a mortgage foreclosure prevention division within the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development. The city will have 6.5 staff members working on foreclosure prevention in the new division.

The city is also using \$17 million in Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization funds as part of the Invest St. Paul neighborhood improvement program. Twenty-two properties in targeted neighborhoods have already been acquired or have accepted purchase agreements through the program. Another 11 have outstanding offers and an additional 18 have been identified for acquisition.

Additional facets of the city's effort include:

- Designating alternative locations where foreclosure prevention counselors can provide assistance to residents.
- Continuing targeted mailings, informational sessions and educational workshops to reach at-risk homeowners.
- Staffing a call line to provide personal and timely assistance to homeowners facing foreclosure.
- Continuing to work with lending partners to assist in refinancing and new product development.
- Developing and supporting legislative initiatives that insure the protection and rights of homeowners and tenants.
- Developing incentives for new homeowners and renters who want to live in St. Paul.

Summit of Ramsey Hill and Highland Pointe housing developments are moving forward

By JANE MCCLURE

Real estate development projects around St. Paul have been hit hard by a slow economy and sluggish housing market. That is true of large-scale housing projects as well as smaller infill projects. There has also been a slowing of downtown office construction and warehouse-to-residential conversions. The few projects that are being built are geared toward meeting workforce and low-income housing needs.

However, two of this area's large-scale housing projects are moving ahead. One is the redevelopment of the former St. Paul's Church Home, 484 Ashland Ave., into senior citizen cooperative housing. Developer Real Estate Equities will appear before the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) at 5:00 p.m. Thursday, April 24, for a review of building permits that are needed to demolish a wing of the existing building

and construct a new addition and new townhouses.

Presales for the project are going well, according to Keith Jans of Real Estate Equities. The firm has worked with HPC staff for the past few months on design plans for the buildings, which include 44 senior co-op units for those 55 and older, and five new market-rate townhouses. The historic Ashland Hotel portion of the property will be preserved, and newer additions to the nursing home will be demolished.

Called the Summit of Ramsey Hill, the project has already been through many months of neighborhood and city reviews. Some residents favored the senior co-ops, while others said the building would be too dense for the neighborhood. Last October, the St. Paul City Council denied an appeal and allowed the variances for the project to stand.

Another project that is moving ahead is Highland Pointe Lofts, a four-story apartment complex at Davern and West

7th streets. That project won approval for tax increment financing and changes to the construction plans last year. The project has been switched from condominiums to market-rate apartments because of the softening condo market, but otherwise has not changed, said Wally Johnson of Stonebridge Acquisition and Development.

Highland Pointe Lofts will be located on a corner that was occupied for many years by the Manor restaurant and Casey's strip club. Those buildings were torn down four years ago.

Highland Pointe went through an extensive neighborhood review process before the Highland District Council and the Shepard-Davern Task Force. It will be the last piece of the 12-acre Gateway Village development, which also includes the Graham Place senior citizen apartments, River Crossing apartments and Highland Pointe condominiums and townhouses.

Senior News

An Aging Splendidly seminar will be held at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, May 8, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave. The St. Paul Police's crime victim coordinator Pamela McCreary will speak on "Wolves in Sheep's Clothing." A video on scams that target seniors will also be shown. The cost is \$6.00. A health check will be offered at 11:30 a.m. Call 651-699-5560.

An OWLS (Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors) program will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 6, at the Dodge Nature Center in West St. Paul. DNR wildlife specialist Jan Welsh will provide fun facts, stories and information on Minnesota's favorite bird, the not-so-ordinary common loon. The program is free. A \$12 lunch is optional. Call 651-455-4531.

Wishes on Wheels makes power wheelchairs available to seniors age 65 and older as well as the permanently disabled. Usually there is no charge for the chairs, including shipping and final adjustments by a technician. A doctor's recommendation is required. For information, call 1-800-823-5220 or visit www.threewishes.com.

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News Briefs

BZA approves variance for Mac's new global institute

The St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approved a variance on April 7 for the construction of Macalester College's new Institute for Global Citizenship. Groundbreaking is scheduled for May 16, with construction to be complete by the summer of 2009.

No one has appeared at public hearings to speak against the variance. However, the BZA did receive written communications from some neighbors objecting to campus growth in general.

The proposed \$7.5 million, 17,000-square-foot building would be erected at the northwest corner of Grand and Snelling avenues where the one-story Winton Health Services building now stands.

No zoning changes are required, since the site lies within the campus boundaries. However, a setback variance was required from Grand Avenue. The campus' conditional use permit with the city requires a 50-foot setback. The new building will be set back 34 feet from Grand and 73 feet from Snelling.

The center will house the college's internship program, civic engagement center and international center. Plans are also under way to develop a six-course, multidisciplinary concentration in global citizenship.

St. Paul allows coffee houses to entertain without licenses

Coffee houses and small restaurants that want to host a limited number of entertainment events will be allowed to do so without a license as a result of an ordinance adopted by the St. Paul City Council on April 8. The ordinance would allow a coffee house or restaurant with fewer than 50 seats to have up to 12 events in a calendar year without getting a cabaret license from the city.

The ordinance, brought forward by council president Kathy Lantry, would especially benefit coffee shops, which otherwise have to pay \$172 for a cabaret license and go through a neighborhood notification and review process.

No one appeared at a recent public hearing to speak for or against the proposal.

When coffee houses began popping up across St. Paul in the 1990s, the city cracked down on establishments that hosted entertainment without a cabaret license. Several businesses complained at the time that the



Kari Forde-Thielen and husband Scott Theilen quickly assembled their own rain barrel during a seminar by Verde Strategies at the 16th annual Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair on April 19 at Cretin-Derham Hall. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

license requirement was onerous.

The vote on the ordinance was unanimous. Ward 2 council member Dave Thune, who owns a tea house and art gallery on West 7th Street, abstained.

Lilydale rezones riverbluff lot for single-family home

The Lilydale City Council voted 4-1 on April 14 to rezone a 0.85-acre parcel the city owns on Highway 13 near Lexington Avenue from open space to single-family residential in hopes of selling the riverbluff property and using the proceeds to erase the city's current budget deficit.

The lone dissenter was City Council member Marilyn Lundberg, who has long argued for keeping the parcel as undeveloped open space. Lundberg also contends that there may be legal problems with any sale. According to her, the zoning variance needed to build on the steeply sloped site may only be granted in cases of hardship, and since any buyer would know beforehand of the need for a variance, the buyer could not claim hardship.

The Lilydale Planning Commission had

recommended the zoning change with the stipulation that the eventual developer make an effort to save existing trees and manage stormwater runoff. The City Council subsequently assigned a subcommittee to report back in May on the minimum size of development that would be governed under a new city stormwater management ordinance.

"If we recommend that the ordinance pertain only to large developments, then we have to answer the question, 'What does it mean for that particular lot?'" said Lundberg, a member of the subcommittee.

The City Council initially wanted to rezone the riverbluff parcel to multi-family residential, but amended that plan in response to the concerns of the Metropolitan Council and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The DNR has oversight over any development there because the property lies within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area.

As of last week, Lilydale City Attorney Mike O'Brien had not heard back from the Metropolitan Council on whether the revised rezoning will need to be reviewed by the Metropolitan Council before it is presented to the DNR for its approval.

STAR restructuring aims to revive riverfront renovation

The St. Paul Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) Board voted 7-4 on April 2 to recommend restructuring a \$100,000 grant and \$100,000 loan from the city's STAR program to help pay for the renovation of the historic GTA Head House and Sack House on Shepard Road and Chestnut Street.

The restructuring was made necessary when ADRZ Development bowed out of the project earlier this year. ADRZ had been granted the STAR funding four years ago to help with the redevelopment of the long-vacant grain terminal as a restaurant and labor and transportation history interpretive center. The city's parks department is also interested in incorporating the building in the riverfront recreational trails.

The cost of redeveloping the two adjacent structures has been estimated at \$9.5 million. In March 2007 the city agreed to contribute \$1.56 million toward the project.

The STAR Board's recommendation has been forwarded to the City Council for final action. According to Bob Hammer of the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development (PED), city officials are eager to start work on the building so that federal funds for the project aren't lost. According to Ward 2 City Council member Dave Thune, city staff have discussed the project with several prospective restaurant tenants.

Wine, beer licenses granted to Highland, West End cafes

The St. Paul City Council on April 2 waived the 45-day notice requirement and granted on-sale beer and wine licenses to the Highland Cafe and Bakery at 2012 Ford Pkwy. and Chris and Rob's Chicago Taste Authority at 603 W. 7th St.

The Highland District Council's Community Development Committee had recommended the waiver for the Highland Cafe. The new licenses were needed due to a recent change in ownership.

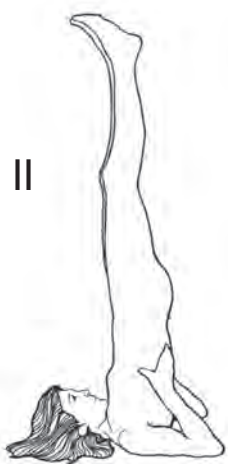
The West 7th/Ford Road Federation recommended the waiver for the Chicago Taste Authority, a small Chicago-style diner that will open in the former Villa Roma Pizza once renovation is completed.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure and Dave Page.

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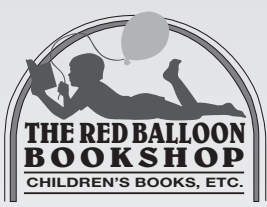
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District Council News

Highland Park

www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Annual election results—The Highland District Council held its annual meeting and elections on April 9 at Ford Motor Company's Twin Cities Assembly Plant. New board members include Marilyn Tamsky in Grid 2, Phil Ledermann in Grid 4, Loren Sorenson in Grid 6, Christopher Priebe in Grid 8, Jennifer Taylor James in Grid 10, Paul Krech in Grid 12 and at-large members Mike Wilson and Dan Smith.

Board meeting set—The HDC's board of directors will hold its next meeting at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 1, in the auditorium of Ford Motor Company's Twin Cities Assembly Plant. (Enter off Ford Parkway across from Bakers Square.) The agenda will include elections of board officers and new committee chairs. All residents and business people are invited to attend.

Highland Area GarageFest—The Highland District Council and Highland Business Association are teaming up this year to hold a neighborhood garage sale on Friday and Saturday, May 16-17. Those who are interested in participating are asked to call 651-259-1204 and leave their name, address, types of items being sold and the days and hours of their sale.

Neighborhood cleanup—The Highland and Macalester-Groveland community councils will hold their annual spring cleanup from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, in the parking lot of the Ford plant (enter off Mississippi River Boulevard). Those who volunteer to work a shift during the cleanup will receive a free pizza lunch and an opportunity to drop off one load of items for free. To lend a hand, e-mail Kathy Carruth at hdc@visi.com.

Wipe out graffiti—The St. Paul Police Department has been increasingly aggressive in identifying and arresting graffiti vandals for their crimes. To report graffiti in the Highland Park neighborhood, call 651-266-8989 or visit www.ci.stpaul.mn.us/forms.asp?FID=65.

Mark your calendar—Executive Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Monday, April 28, Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.; board of directors meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 1, Ford plant auditorium; neighborhood garage sale, Friday and Saturday, May 16-17; spring cleanup, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, Ford plant parking lot; National Night Out kickoff, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 29, Como Park picnic pavilion.

Macalester-Groveland

www.macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Annual meeting notes—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council held its annual meeting and board elections on April 10. The following individuals were newly elected to the board: Joel Clemmer in Grid 2, Todd Curtis in Grid 4, Gena Berglund in Grid 6, Robb Westawker in Grid 8, John Haggemiller in Grid 10, Melanie Peterson-Nafziger in Grid 12, Mike Kowski in Grid 14, Lorin Velikonja in Grid 16, at-large representatives Andrew Olson and Carrie Butler, business repre-

sentative Steve Matysik and educational representative Scott Swanson.

MacGrove Moves—The third annual Mac-Grove Moves has begun. Participants who walk or bike around the neighborhood at least 15 times between now and August 13 will be eligible to enter a drawing for prizes from local businesses. Stop by the Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St., to pick up a registration form or download one from the website.

Happy surfing—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council has launched a new and improved website at www.macgrove.org. Neighbors should find it more informative and user-friendly. To suggest other improvements, e-mail mgcc@macgrove.org.

Prepare for battle—Bands of all kinds are invited to apply for the Battle of the Bands at Grand Old Day on June 1. Band members must be 18 or older as of June 1. The application deadline is 4:00 p.m. Friday, May 9. For an application or information, e-mail marie@macgrove.org.

Run for Melpomene—The 25th annual Melpomene 5K run will be held on Saturday, May 3. Serious runners, race walkers, families, casual runners and teams are all welcome to stretch their legs on the banks of the Mississippi River. The 5K women's and men's run and race walk and coed walk will start at 8:30 a.m., followed by half-mile and mile kids' fun runs at 9:30 a.m. Call 651-789-0140 or visit www.melpomene.org.

Mark your calendar—Housing and Land Use Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 23, Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St.

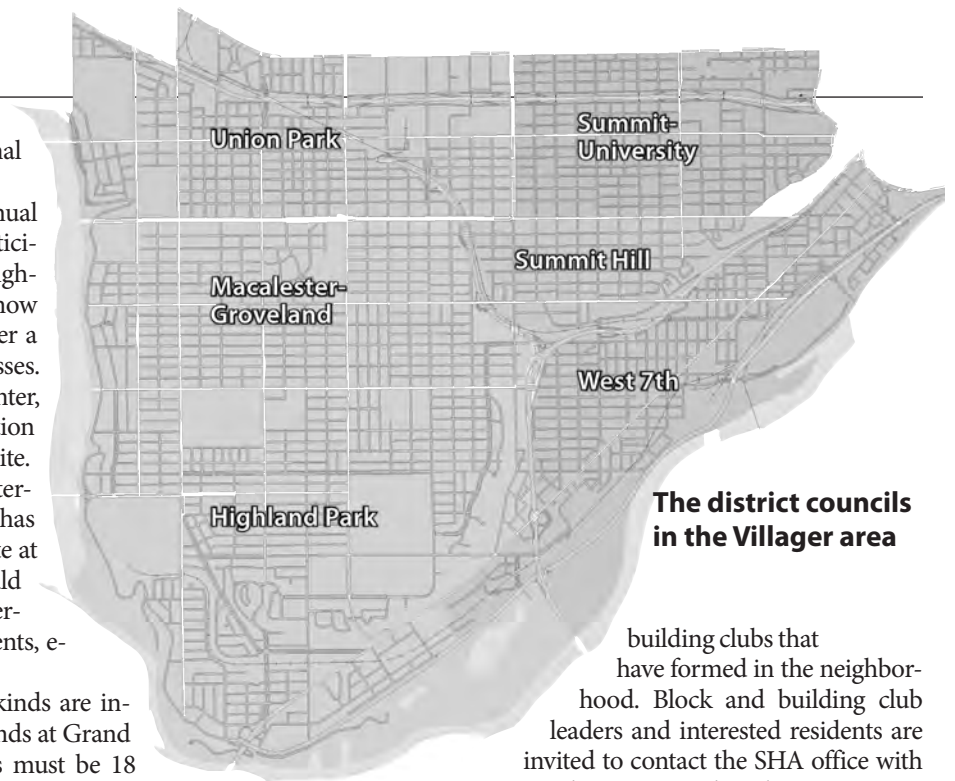
Summit Hill

www.summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

SHA board notes—The Summit Hill Association's board of directors voted on April 10 to support a resolution calling on the governor and Minnesota Legislature to appropriate at least \$70 million for the Central Corridor light-rail line before the 2008 legislative session adjourns. The board also supported an application from Cooks of Crocus Hill to transfer its liquor license to new owners so liquor may continue to be served to people taking cooking classes. The next board meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 8, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave.

SHA House Tour tickets—Looking for an ideal gift for Mother's Day? Stop by the SHA office at the Linwood Recreation Center or check the association's website to purchase tickets for the Summit Hill House Tour, which will be held on Sunday, September 14. Gift cards are available with ticket purchases.

Block/building clubs—The Summit Hill block leader manual is now under revision to include the growing number of



The district councils in the Villager area

building clubs that have formed in the neighborhood. Block and building club leaders and interested residents are invited to contact the SHA office with suggested revisions and to obtain a copy.

Neighborhood garage sale—The Summit Hill Association will hold its annual neighborhood garage sale on Saturday, May 3. Participating households pay \$15, which covers the cost of advertising the sale and two garage sale signs. Each household conducts its own sale and keeps the profits. The deadline for registration is Friday, April 25. The list of sale locations will be available on the SHA website starting May 1, and will also be available at the SHA information table at the Linwood Recreation Center and at each sale location on the day of event.

Neighborhood cleanup—The SHA neighborhood cleanup will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 10, on Pleasant Avenue between the Ramsey County compost site and Victoria Street. Residents may bring bicycles, concrete, construction debris, scrap metal, fluorescent light bulbs and more to the site. Admission is \$5.00-\$15, depending on the size of the vehicle. Additional items, such as small electronics and tires, will be collected for an extra fee of \$2.00-\$8.00. Proof of residency in District 16 will be required for all drop-offs. Volunteers who work from 7:30 to 11:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. will receive lunch and free disposal of one load of materials. Call the SHA office or visit the website for more information.

Volunteers needed—The SHA's Environment Committee still needs volunteers to help water, mulch and maintain the upper gardens and Sam Morgan prairie at the Linwood Recreation Center. Call or stop by the SHA office for more information and to pick up a copy of "The Blue Thumb Guide to Rain Gardens," a publication made available by the Capitol Region Watershed District.

Dates to remember—Spring progressive supper, Saturday, April 26; Communications Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Monday, April 28, Linwood Recreation Center, 1860 St. Clair

DISTRICT COUNCILS ► 15

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Religious Notes

Wisdom Ways Center for Spirituality is offering the following programs in the next two weeks at the Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph Ave.: a May Day ritual on the outdoor labyrinth at noon Thursday, May 1; and a professional development day for spiritual directors and pastoral ministers from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday, May 5 (\$65, includes lunch). Call 651-696-2788.

Temple of Aaron Synagogue, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd., will host the St. Paul/Minneapolis Yom HaShoah (Holocaust remembrance day) commemoration, "A Play for Life," at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 1. The free program will feature selections from the children's book *Brundibar* by Maurice Sendak and Tony Kushner, which is based on the Hans Krasa opera that was performed 55 times by the children of the Theresienstadt ghetto. Call Jodi Elowitz at 612-338-7816.

"Women at the Well" will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 26, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave. The day will be spent focusing on the spiritual and ecological properties of water. The registration fee is \$30. Child care will be available for \$5.00 per child. Call 651-699-5560 or visit www.immanuelstpaul.org.

"Remembering Paul VI: The Gifts of Life and Joy," a symposium sponsored by the St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity of the University of St. Thomas, will continue with Bishop Vincenzo Paglia of the Diocese of Terni, Italy, speaking on "Paul VI and Evangelization" at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 23, in the Owens Science Hall on the university's south campus; and Janet Smith of Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit speaking on "Paul VI's Humane Vitae: A Prophetic Document" at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 24, in the

O'Shaughnessy Educational Center on the university's main campus. Admission is free. Call 651-962-5050.

Evensong for Eastertide will be presented by the parish choir at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4, at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, 60 Kent St. A reception will follow the service. Call choir director James Frazier at 651-228-1172, ext. 38.

Groveland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1671 Summit Ave., will offer the following talks at 10:15 a.m. on Sundays: "Twin Cities Unitarian Universalist History" by Reverend Charles Ellis on April 27 and "For Good or Evil: The Impact of Technology on Our Daily Lives" by Virginia Bergman on May 4. Call 651-699-4440.

A journey to the Holy Land will be led in June by Steven Derfler of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Call Sean Herstein at 651-255-4739.

Spirit of Hope Catholic Community will celebrate "Another Way to be Catholic in the World Today" from 5:00 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday, April 26, at St. Anne's, 2035 Charlton Road, Sunfish Lake. The evening will begin with Mass and continue with dinner and the presentation. Call 651-303-6497 or visit www.spiritofhopecatholiccommunity.org.

The Calvary Coffee Haus is open from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. every Friday at Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church, 341 S. Hamline Ave. A large room in the church has been transformed into a spot where all ages can sample coffees, espresso drinks, teas, Italian sodas, hot cocoa and desserts for free. The space includes an area with seating and toys for younger children and another area for older children to play board games and chess.

14◀ DISTRICT COUNCILS

Ave.; neighborhood garage sale, Saturday, May 3; SHA board meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 8, Linwood; neighborhood cleanup, Saturday, May 10. For more information, contact the SHA office.

Summit-University

www.Summit-U.com • 651-228-1855

SUPC board elections—The Summit-University Planning Council will hold its annual election for board members on Saturday, May 17. Voting will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Rondo Library, 461 N. Dale St.; Golden Thyme Cafe, 921 Selby Ave.; and Nina's Cafe, 165 N. Western Ave.; and from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the SUPC office, 627 Selby Ave. Candidates are needed for board seats in all six subdistricts of the Summit-University neighborhood as well as five seats representing local organizations. Interested candidates may obtain an application form at the SUPC office or by downloading the form from the council's website. The application deadline is 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7.

Annual Meeting—The SUPC will hold its annual meeting at 5:00 p.m. Thursday, May 22, at St. Paul Travelers, 385 Washington St. The keynote speaker will be David Haley, a state senator from Kansas and the nephew of *Roots* author Alex Haley. Senator Haley will share his insights on human and economic development. Tickets are \$30. For more information, call 651-632-8350.

Union Park

www.unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Rock-Tenn meetings—A neighborhood discussion with the Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel (RCAP) will be held at 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 12, at Bethel Christian Fellowship, 1466 Portland Ave. The public is

invited to learn and discuss how a new energy source for the Rock-Tenn paper recycling plant at University Avenue and Vandalia Street may affect local neighborhoods. RCAP will hold its next regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 5, at Wilder Center, 451 N. Lexington Pkwy. For details on either meeting, contact Nina@sapcc.org or 612-788-4151.

Merriam Park recreation—A public meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, April 24, to discuss programming and building hours at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. The agenda will focus on opening the lines of communication with the St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation, Keystone Community Services and the residents they serve.

St. Paul Comprehensive Plan—The city of St. Paul will hold an open house on changes to its Comprehensive Plan from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 30, at the Central Corridor Resource Center, 1080 University Ave.

Recycling bins—Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline residents may pick up recycling bins between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, at the Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

Lex-Ham Theater—The Lex-Ham Community Theater will perform a reading of Jeannine Coulombe's play *Beakers* at 2:00 p.m., Sunday, April 27, at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave., as part of the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library's labor history series *Untold Stories*. Admission is free. The theater company is also teaming up again with St. Paul Community Education to offer acting classes. For details, visit www.lexhamarts.org/theater/Classes/classinfo.htm.

Upcoming meetings—Parks and Recreation Committee, 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 5, Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.; Neighborhood Issues Committee, 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 5 (call for location); board of directors, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, Merriam Park Community Center.

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A perfect fit

Mark Moeller has another jewel in his crown as new president of the American Gem Society

BY LARRY ENGLUND

Mark Moeller, CEO of R.F. Moeller Jeweler, has been elected president of the American Gem Society, a 74-year-old organization that is dedicated to maintaining high standards of ethics and professionalism in the jewelry industry. He has been serving on the board of directors of the same organization since the early '90s.

"As president, my job will be to conduct day-to-day business for the AGS, oversee the board and help the 1,500-member organization maintain its momentum and create new initiatives," said Moeller, 56.

The American Gem Society was established in 1934 by a group of independent jewelers under the leadership of Robert Shipley, the founder of the Gemological Institute of America. Only a small percentage of jewelers who apply to the AGS are granted membership, and in order to qualify, members must meet these criteria:

- The firm's owners and employees must have achieved a high level of gemological knowledge and proficiency. That includes having studied and completed an accredited program from the GIA or Gemological Association of Great Britain.
- The firm must have earned a reputation for integrity in the local business community.
- The firm must have demonstrated its financial stability.

According to Moeller, any member found in violation of the AGS's code of ethics is subject to investigation and expulsion. "I like to refer to the AGS as the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for the jewelry buyer," Moeller said. However, according to him, the cornerstone of the AGS credo is exceptional service.

Moeller believes it was his late father's reputation for service that laid the cornerstone for the success of the business. "He exceeded cus-

Moeller's philosophy of providing exceptional service seems to be serving the company well. "Each of the last five years has been a record year for us," Moeller said, "and we were just recognized by Harper's Bazaar as one of the top jewelers in the country."

tomers expectations before it became the thing to do," Moeller said.

Robert F. Moeller learned the watchmaking trade on the GI Bill after serving in World War II. In 1951 he purchased a small jewelry repair shop in a retail strip at the southwest corner of Ford Parkway and Cleveland Avenue where he worked alongside his wife, the late Bernice Moeller. "We still have the bill of sale—for \$10,000," Moeller said.

That building was razed in 1961 to make way for Powers Department Store, in which his father then leased space. Ten years later, the business moved into 550 square feet of space across Ford Parkway. In 1981, the business moved down the block into 2,200 square feet of space. In 1991, with Mark Moeller now at the helm, R.F. Moeller Jeweler doubled in size by incorporating the adjacent commercial space. And in 2001, the Highland Village store took over the entire northwest corner of Ford and Cleveland.

"Now we have 11,000 square feet in the



Mark Moeller at R.F. Moeller Jeweler in Highland Village. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Highland store," Moeller said. "In fact, my office today is pretty much the entire old store."

R.F. Moeller Jeweler also expanded in 1994 with the purchase of Korst & Sons at 50th and France in Edina. "We rebuilt the Edina store in 1996 and expanded it in 2006," Moeller said.

Another store opened in the skyway level at Gaviidae Common in Minneapolis in 2001.

Despite the growth of business, R.F. Moeller Jeweler remains a family affair. Moeller's wife Carol is director of inventory, his sister Nancy is a sales associate, his brother Robert II is president and director of sales, and his son James is director of operations.

Today the staff of 30 includes four goldsmiths, two watchmakers and nine certified gemologist appraisers. The business also takes advantage of the latest computer-aided design

and laser welding technologies. "We're unique as a full-service jeweler," Moeller said. "When you bring something in for repair, it never leaves the store."

Moeller's philosophy of providing exceptional service seems to be serving the company well. "Each of the last five years has been a record year for us," Moeller said, "and we were just recognized by *Harper's Bazaar* as one of the top jewelers in the country."

Though it has been 17 years since his father died, Moeller said the example he set is still a constant reminder. "People still come in and say, 'Your father always treated us with respect,'" he said.

Moeller said that message is not lost on him or his staff. "If I don't appreciate my customers," he said, "I'm out of business."

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Business Briefs

A **Business After Hours** event will be sponsored by the Highland and Grand Avenue business associations, St. Paul Area and Midway chambers of commerce, and St. Paul Convention & Visitors Authority from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 24, at the Hilton Garden Inn St. Paul City Center, 411 Minnesota St. The evening will include networking, a trade show and, new this year, a tech show. Admission is free. Call the HBA at 651-699-9042 or GABA at 651-699-0029.

An **Extreme Makeover 6-Week Challenge** is being sponsored by Aspire Chiropractic and the St. Paul Jaycees on April 30-June 4. Participants are required to register their weight and body fat by April 30. They and their accountability partners also must attend four out of six workshops that will be offered at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays at the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce to be eligible to win. The winner will be chosen based on most weight/body fat lost, best life-changing testimony and workshop attendance. The entry fee is \$30 per person. Prizes include gift certificates, cash and memberships. Call Aspire at 651-294-2332.

TivoliToo in Mendota Heights is once again creating statues to help raise funds and awareness for a special project. This time, instead of "Peanuts" characters, the statues will be 60 Peace Doves in honor of Israel's 60th birthday. The approximately 5-foot-tall, custom-painted doves will be on display at the Mall of America during the week of May 1-7 and then dispersed around the Twin Cities. The Peace Dove Project is being coordinated as part of the Israel@60 Celebration. For sponsorship information, call Pat Kaplan at 612-759-2468.

SCORE small business counselors will offer the following seminars: "Website Planning" from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 30 (\$39); and "Going into Business" from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7 (\$59). Both will be held at Anchor Bank, 1570 Concordia Ave. Call 651-632-8937.

Latuff Brothers, 880 University Ave., received the Governor's Award for pollution prevention during the Minnesota Air, Water, and Waste Environmental Conference. The company was honored for its use of waterborne finishes and curing equipment in auto body repair. Latuff Brothers has realized a 58 percent reduction in emissions and a 95 percent reduction of hazardous air pollutants due to its efforts. The fourth-generation, family-owned company has been in business since 1933.

Names in the News

Nine Sustainable St. Paul Awards were presented on April 16 by the St. Paul City Council and Mayor Chris Coleman. Honorees for their efforts to make St. Paul an environmentally friendly city were Macalester College, Gordon Parks High School, Community of Peace Academy, St. Paul Bicycle Classic, the environmental services staff of the St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation, Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, Eco Education, Como Park High School Environmental Club and Larry Zangs of St. Paul's Department of Safety and Inspections.

Army First Lieutenant Nicholas Najjar has returned to Alaska after being deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is assigned to the 725th Brigade Support Battalion at Fort Richardson in Anchorage. Najjar is the son of Dominique and Susan Najjar of Mendota Heights. He is a 2001 graduate of St. Thomas Academy.

Army Reserve Specialist David Gertz has been mobilized for deployment to an undisclosed overseas location in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Gertz is a psychological operations specialist with the 13th Psycho-

The city of St. Paul recently was awarded two grants from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development: \$174,500 for redevelopment of a .91-acre site at the corner of University Avenue and Dale Street, and \$70,000 for redevelopment of a .49-acre former parking lot near 5th and Wall streets in Lowertown. For the former project, the funds will be used for demolition and infrastructure costs as part of a plan to put a 46-unit senior housing facility, drug store, cafe and coffee shop on the site. For the latter project, funds will be used to relocate utilities and make streetscape improvements for the 48-unit condominium building that will include an indoor farmers' market on the first floor.

7th Street Storage, 2060 W. 7th St., will hold its grand opening from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 3. Visitors may bring up to five boxes or bags of personal papers to be shredded for free during the opening. There also will be prize drawings every half hour, coupons for free rent and self-guided tours. The facility offers temperature-controlled storage, drive-up accessible storage, and outdoor RV and boat storage. It also rents trucks and sells boxes, tape and other packing supplies.

Euphoria Salon, 256 S. Cleveland Ave., will hold its fourth annual Haircut-A-Thon to benefit the Breast Cancer Awareness Association from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4. For a \$30 donation, guests will receive a haircut and style, a gift bag, appetizers and refreshments. A silent auction also will be held. For an appointment, call 651-698-6385.

Julie Harrigan of Kessler & Maguire Funeral Home, 640 W. 7th St., has been awarded Certified Preplanning Consultant designation from the National Funeral Directors Association. She has been helping families preplan funerals since 1988.

BodyMind Chiropractic Center, 1650 Iglehart Ave., will offer the following free presentations: "Clean Living through Organic Foods and Movement" at 7:45 p.m. Monday, April 28; and "How to Handle Cravings and Emotional Eating" at 7:45 p.m. Monday, May 5. Call 651-293-1497 to register.

The St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce will present the 27th annual Deubener Awards to five local organizations during the Small Business Awards of Excellence Luncheon at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, May 15, at the Prom Center, 484 Inwood Ave. N., Oakdale. The cost is \$40. Call George Stoj at 651-265-2795.

logical Operations Battalion based in Arden Hills. He is the son of Darryl Gertz of Minneapolis' Longfellow neighborhood.

Monell Jakel, a Highland Early Childhood Family Education parent educator, is retiring after more than 23 years of teaching local families. She will be honored during the Highland ECFE's season-ending picnic at 5:30 p.m. Monday, June 2, at Newell Park.

Army Private Jason Lendway has graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He is a 2002 graduate of Henry Sibley High School.

Navy Lieutenant, Junior Grade Ben Stein, son of Sue and Pete Stein of Highland Park, was designated as a naval aviator on April 12 at Kingsville Naval Air Station in Texas. Stein, a 2001 graduate of Central High School, is a 2005 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. He earned a master's degree in aeronautical engineering at the University of Maryland in 2006. He will serve as a jet pilot instructor at Kingsville for the next year, after which he will report to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego to begin piloting an F-18 Hornet.

Publication dates for 2008

MAY						
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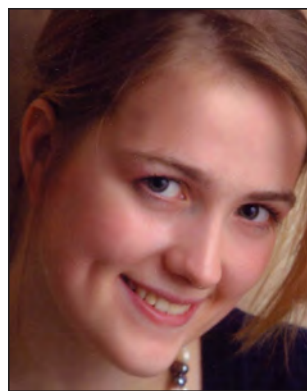
Kathleen Cann



Molly Geske



Megan Howard



Courtney Kranz



Cecilia Noecker



Ali Vandercook

Athena Awards honor achievements of area's top female athletes

Forty-one young women representing St. Paul area high schools were honored for outstanding achievement in athletics during the 14th annual Athena Awards ceremony on April 16. The winners of the St. Paul Area Athena Awards for 2008 from the Villager area are:

Central—Megan Howard

Sports: volleyball (3-time letter winner, all-conference and honorable mention, captain, best offensive player); softball (letter winner); track (2-time letter winner, all-conference); basketball (3-time letter winner, all-conference, captain, most coachable).

Other activities: Link crew, Habitat for Humanity, student council, advisory leader, senior class liaison, eucharistic minister, lector, altar server, volunteer for Loaves & Fishes and homeless shelters.

Scholastic achievements: "A" honor roll, academic excellence awards, 2007 MSHSL Excel Award winner, 3.52 GPA.

Post-high school plans: attend a four-year college and play basketball.

Cretin-Derham Hall—Molly Geske

Sports: basketball (3-time letter winner, 2-time all-conference, captain, all-star series selection); tennis (3-time letter winner, 2-time all-conference, honorable mention, state tournament participant); softball.

Other activities: Wendy's High School Heisman winner, eucharistic minister, Choice Club, Friendship Club, Dorothy Day, Life-works, Urban Challenge.

Scholastic achievements: National Honor Society, CDH President's List, 4.55 GPA.

Post-high school plans: attend Gustavus Adolphus.

Highland Park—Cecilia Noecker

Sports: swimming (5-time letter winner, 4-time all-conference, outstanding swimmer in conference, state qualifier, hardest worker team award, academic achievement); nordic skiing (letter winner, all-conference, most improved team award); track (4-time letter winner, all-conference, captain, most improved distance runner team award).

Other activities: band, jazz band, National Honor Society treasurer, Habitat for Humanity and 7th-grade religion teacher at the Basilica of St. Mary.

Scholastic achievements: top-ranked student in her class, perfect score on ACT, U.S. Presidential Scholar candidate, National Merit finalist, awards in the American Math Contest and National French Contest, Triple "A" Award from Minnesota State High School League.

Post-high school plans: study math, science and music at a small liberal arts college (possibly St. Olaf).

Henry Sibley—Ali Vandercook

Sports: volleyball (3-time letter winner, 2-time captain, 2-time MVP, best offensive player, South Central High School all-star team, 2-time all-conference and 1-time honorable mention, Northern Lights and Sting Junior Olympic volleyball teams); gymnastics (4-time letter winner, captain, section bars and all-around teams, 2-time conference champion team, 2-time all-state and 3-time all-conference honorable mention, most improved); track (3-time letter winner, captain, conference champion team, conference high jump and relay champion, Will to Win Award).

Other activities: Environmental Club, band, peer helper, student exchange program, Humane Society and Feed My Starving Children volunteer, church school teacher.

Scholastic achievements: "A" honor roll, student of the quarter and outstanding academic achievement awards, scholar-athlete award, honorable mention academic team.

Post-high school plans: attend the University of St. Thomas or Northland College.

St. Paul Academy—Kathleen Cann

Sports: track (3-time letter winner, captain, 2-time all-conference honorable mention, 2-time section qualifier); cross country running (2-time letter winner, captain, all-conference and honorable mention, section team runner-up, team state qualifier); nordic skiing

(4-time letter winner, 3-time all-conference honorable mention, team conference champions, team section runners-up, 3-time state qualifier, most improved, 35th in age group in American Birkebeiner Korteloppet); swimming (4-time letter winner, 3-time all-conference, 2-time team conference champions, conference dual meet team champions, 4-time section finals qualifier, 2-time state qualifier).

Other activities: schoolwide Scrabble tournament champion, YMCA Camp Widjiwagan.

Scholastic achievements: first honor roll, first effort roll, honors math and science classes, National Spanish Exam finalist.

Post-high school plans: run track and cross country at Oberlin College.

Visitation—Courtney Kranz

Sports: basketball (4-time letter winner, 3-time all-conference, conference champs, 1,000-point scorer, most improved, 3-time most dedicated, MVP, captain); volleyball (3-time letter winner, 3-time most improved, all-conference, 3-time conference champs, academic all-state).

Other activities: Choose executive board and STAND secretary.

Scholastic achievements: honor roll all semesters.

Post-high school plans: play Division I basketball at University of Northern Colorado.

Minneapolis winners to be honored May 9

The 36th annual Minneapolis Athena Awards will be presented to 52 of the best and brightest female athletes in the Mill City during a luncheon ceremony that begins at 11:00 a.m. Friday, May 9, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Local winners are:

Minnehaha—Cassie Burke

Sports: soccer (4-time letter winner, captain, MVP, 2-time all-conference

and 2-time honorable mention, all-metro, all-state and 2-time all-state honorable mention); skiing (6-time letter winner, captain, MVP, 4-time all-conference, honorable mention, state participant); and golf (letter winner).

Other activities: choir and French Club.

Scholastic achievements: five semester honor roll student.

Post-high school plans: attend Carleton College.

Roosevelt—Krystalyn Kersten

Sports: soccer (5-time letter winner,

3-time captain, 3-time MVP); basketball (2-time letter winner); and baseball (2-time letter winner).

Other activities: Hi-Tech Girls Society and National Honor Society.

Scholastic achievements: 4.04 GPA.

Post-high school plans: attend Augsburg College.

The Minneapolis Athena Awards will be presented by Allie Cronk, a public address announcer with the Minnesota State High School League. For tickets, e-mail Pam Lindberg at Lindberg@mpls.k12.mn.us.



Cassie Burke



Krystalyn Kersten

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Crime Report

The following police calls were gathered from recent Community Watch reports provided by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department. For more information, visit www.co.ramsey.mn.us/sheriff/communitywatch.htm.

Highland Park

Burglary—A home on the 700 block of Mount Curve Boulevard was broken into between March 11-16.

—The SuperAmerica on Ford Parkway and Snelling Avenue was broken into between 3:30 and 4:00 a.m. Wednesday, March 19. The Mobil station on Ford Parkway and Kenneth Street also was burglarized at about 3:00 that morning.

—Police arrested three men, ages 22-24, for burglary after they broke into a residence on the 1500 block of St. Paul Avenue at about 4:30 p.m. Sunday, March 23.

Theft—Jewelry was stolen from the College of St. Catherine between 11:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Saturday, March 15.

—A theft from auto occurred between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m. Wednesday, March 26 at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave.

Assault—A road rage incident occurred at about 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 10, when a woman driver turned in front of another car on Hamline Avenue and Ford Parkway. The driver of that car, a 46-year-old Highland Park man, began following the woman's car closely. She turned down a side street to get away from him, but he soon reappeared driving right on her bumper. The man was finally stopped by police at Snelling and Dayton avenues and was arrested for DWI and child endangerment. His 14-year-old daughter was in the car during part of the incident.

Lexington-Hamline

Burglary—A house on the 1200 block of Portland Avenue was broken into between 1:00 and 7:30 a.m. Friday, March 21.

Weapons—A bomb threat was called in to Central High School at about 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 11. The school was searched, but no explosives were found.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—An air compressor was stolen from a storage locker at an apartment building on the 1600 block of Randolph Avenue between 7:00 p.m. Saturday and 1:00 a.m. Sunday, March 15-16. Entry was forced through the rear door of the building.

—A dentist's office on Hamline and Summit avenues was broken into between 5:00 p.m. Wednesday and 8:30 a.m. Thursday, March 12-13.

—The Uptown House, 1344 Summit Ave., was broken into between 9:00 p.m. Sunday and 5:00 a.m. Monday, March 23-24.

Theft—Money was stolen from several newspaper racks at Hamline and Randolph avenues between March 8-14.

—A projector was stolen from Randolph Heights Elementary School, 348 S. Hamline Ave., before 7:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 26.

Miscellaneous—Staff at Ramsey Junior High School, 1700 Summit Ave., called police concerned about a mother who appeared to be drunk and had picked up her child at the school at about 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 25. Police later arrested the 46-year-old Summit-University woman for driving while intoxicated and child endangerment. Her 14-year-old child was in the car.

Merriam Park

Robbery—Oasis Market, 2057 Marshall Ave., was robbed at about 6:30 a.m. Saturday, March 22.

Burglary—An apartment on the 300 block of Wilder Street was broken into between midnight Wednesday and 9:00 p.m. Saturday, March 19-22.

—An apartment on the 400 block of Dewey Street was broken into at about 1:30 a.m.

Bomb threat closes Sibley

Classes were canceled at Henry Sibley High School on Wednesday, April 9, after a bomb threat from an anonymous caller was found on the school's answering system before classes started. The building was evacuated, e-mail and phone alerts were sent to inform parents and students that school was canceled, and bus drivers were notified on their routes so students could be returned home instead of being brought to school.

Bomb-sniffing dogs searched the building, and by mid-morning the school had been declared safe. It reopened at 2:30 p.m. for students to attend games or practices.

The Mendota Heights Police Department is offering a \$500 reward for information leading to the arrest of the person who made the threat. Anyone with information is asked to call the department at 651-452-1366 or the tip line at 651-255-1170.

Wednesday, March 26. The resident was home at the time.

—Residents interrupted a burglary on the 2100 block of Dayton Avenue at about 8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 20.

Theft—A car was stolen on the 400 block of Wilder Street between 11:00 a.m. Monday and 11:00 a.m. Wednesday, March 24-26.

—A Bobcat loader was stolen from the 400 block of North Fairview Avenue between 4:00 p.m. Thursday and 9:00 a.m. Monday, March 20-24.

Miscellaneous—A 23-year-old Minnetonka man was cited for disorderly conduct at the University of St. Thomas at about 2:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 19. The man reportedly pushed security staff when they tried to intervene.

—A 47-year-old St. Paul man was cited for begging and accosting strangers at Snelling and Concordia avenues at about 5:30 p.m. Friday, March 21.

—Police arrested a 40-year-old St. Paul man for obstruction at about 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 25, at Concordia and Snelling avenues. The man, who was panhandling at the bus stop, became uncooperative with police and spit on them.

Summit Hill

Theft—A theft from auto occurred at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave., between 4:00 and 10:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 25.

Summit-University

Theft—Property stolen from the rectory of the St. Paul Cathedral was recovered on the 200 block of Selby Avenue at about 9:45 a.m. Tuesday, March 25.

Miscellaneous—Graffiti was sprayed on the base of the New York Life Eagle sculpture in Lookout Park on Ramsey Street and Summit Avenue between 10:00 p.m. Tuesday and 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, March 18-19.

West End

Burglary—Police arrested a juvenile for burglary at about 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 26, on the 400 block of Michigan Street. The homeowner discovered the juvenile in her house and called police.

Assault—A woman and her adult son argued with unknown people at a gas station on the 200 block of Grand and Smith avenues at about 1:45 p.m. Saturday, March 22. One of the people brandished a handgun. The suspects fled before police arrived.

Miscellaneous—Four Minneapolis men ages 19-31 were cited for trespassing at the former Schmidt Brewery at about 2:00 a.m. Thursday, March 20. Evidence indicated the group had been in the caves and sewer system beneath the brewery.

Food



Hot Dish By Morgan Smith

Satisfaction takes a front seat at Saji Ya

Saji Ya's Patrick Kallemeyn calls the Grand Avenue restaurant he has co-owned for the past few years a "work in progress." Taking over a restaurant that has been operating for close to 30 years means taking on a lot of baggage, Kallemeyn said, and sometimes that makes it hard to move forward. And the statewide smoking ban and recent changes in the state's DUI laws didn't help.

Kallemeyn started out as a server at Saji Ya to earn extra money while he was still playing in a band. He eventually became a partner with five others in the business, which also includes the restaurant next door, Dixie's on Grand. Two years ago, Kallemeyn and his partners followed through with a long-planned remodeling of both restaurants. While the makeover created a more unified look at Dixie's, Saji Ya came through with somewhat of a split personality.

"The front doors of Saji Ya still look like the entrance to a suburban business park," Kallemeyn said, "so we're planning to redo the front of the restaurant."

Saji Ya did get a bright, new sushi bar and larger bar area. The space occupied by the original sushi bar became additional seating for the regular bar, and the main dining room was spruced up throughout. However, the upstairs Teppanyaki Room and outdoor balcony still look pretty much the same.

I reserved a seat in the Teppanyaki Room for 5:00 p.m. on a recent Sunday. The room takes its name from the two large grills, or teppans, that diners sit around. Come in a small group when it's busy and you can expect to be seated with strangers at one of the room's large tables. On this evening, my friend and I were the only ones dining at our table for six.

A big part of the teppanyaki experience are the culinary, acrobatic and theatrical skills of the chef, who slices, sautés and serves the food right in front of the diners, interacting with them all the while. Being relatively new to the teppans, our chef wasn't as deft with a knife and spatula as other teppanyaki chefs I've witnessed. At the same time, he didn't make me nervous about losing a finger—his or mine.

Although he wasn't flashy—I've seen teppanyaki chefs flip shrimp from the grill onto the plates or right into the mouths of diners—he was pleasant and efficient and happily answered all of our questions. And his lack of showmanship may have had more to do with his audience—a middle-aged couple more interested in the ingredients than the acrobatics.

Teppanyaki meals at Saji Ya come with egg drop soup, a house salad, a grilled shrimp appetizer, stir-fried vegetables and steamed rice. (I substituted fried rice for \$4.00.) Since my friend loves sushi, we also ordered the Saji Ya maki sushi as an appetizer (raw tuna, salmon, shrimp and yellowtail with thinly sliced gari ginger and wasabi; \$9.00). She raved about it. Though not a big fan of raw fish, I can honestly say it tasted a lot better than I thought it would.

I don't deliberately set my lips on fire, so I didn't try the wasabi, but the vinegary rice was cooked just right, the raw fish was flavorful and the ginger was fresh.



Diners in Saji Ya's Teppanyaki Room have a front-row seat as chef Benny Cachuela works his magic, grilling food and juggling condiments. PHOTOS BY JANET HOSTETTER

I appreciate a little heft in my soups, and Saji Ya's egg drop soup has it. It isn't the thin, bland broth with bits of egg and green onions that passes for egg drop soup at many Asian restaurants. The house salad could have been a bit crisper, though the dressing was delicious.

The shrimp appetizer was served with a ginger sauce and a shrimp sauce, the latter made with mayonnaise, mustard, saki and paprika. Very tasty. The grilled vegetables included carrots, broccoli, red and green peppers, mushrooms, asparagus and onion. I don't usually eat all my vegetables—just ask my mother—but I did at Saji Ya. The fried rice was also delicious.

As entrées, my partner ordered the combination shrimp and salmon (\$28) and I ordered the combination ribeye steak and chicken (\$27). The shrimp was a larger version of the appetizer, and the salmon was colorful and scrumptious. The ribeye was tender and the chicken was moist.

Be forewarned, in the Teppanyaki Room an 18 percent gratuity is added to your bill. Our server was fast, friendly and solicitous without being a pest, but I didn't know about the minimum gratuity. She explained that all tips were split between the server and chef. Fair enough.

It had been nearly 20 years since I had eaten at Saji Ya, but as I said to my friend on the way out the door, it won't be anywhere near that long before I eat there again. In fact, I stopped back for dinner later that week. Seated in the main dining room, I noted that the chicken tempura (\$18) was flying out of the kitchen, so I thought I'd give it a try. My partner ordered the calamari appetizer with tonkatsu sauce (\$7.00).

The calamari was great, and not in the least bit chewy. I liked the tonkatsu sauce so much that I asked for extra to dress up my chicken tempura. The chicken tempura comes with vegetable tempura, including onion, sweet potato, red and green peppers, mushrooms, asparagus, cucumber and zucchini as



well as a sauce that I wasn't that crazy about.

The next time I dine at Saji Ya, I'm planning to try the lunch menu. The stir-fried vegetables (\$7.00), teriyaki chicken (\$8.00) and shrimp tempura (\$9.00) are among a dozen items on the menu that come with salad, ginger broccoli, the appetizer of the day, egg drop soup and rice. That's a great deal.

Kallemeyn said he loves his job as co-owner despite the long hours. "When I was in the band, I was always on the road and it was hard to see my friends," he said. "Now they come here if they want to see me."

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After 25 years as owner and gracious host at Forepaugh's, Ed Christie will be saying good-bye to the Irvine Park restaurant and its historical elegance at the end of April.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Squeezed by gov't, Christy walks away after 25 years at Forepaugh's

BY BOB GILBERT

Ed Christy is calling it quits at the end of April. The Galveston, Texas, native has owned and operated Forepaugh's Restaurant overlooking St. Paul's Irvine Park for the past 25 years. With his lease coming up for renewal, he weighed the emerging business climate and decided that if his restaurant were to continue to succeed, it needed a new owner with deeper pockets.

Christy cited several trends that he thinks will lead to the closing of other independent restaurants in the near future. And the state of the U.S. economy is not the primary one.

"State and local governments have created an environment where small independent business owners are at a disadvantage," Christy said. "I may be among many independent restaurant owners who give up their business."

Christy had seen his bottom line shrink in recent years as a result of increases in liquor license fees, annual property tax increases that been averaging about 15 percent, rising food costs and the reduction of the blood alcohol level for a DWI in Minnesota to 0.08. But what finally convinced him to close up shop was the proposal to increase the minimum wage from \$6.15 to \$7.90 an hour. That, he said, is more than his business could absorb.

Christy said he is not opposed to the minimum-wage increase in principle, but he does not think it should apply to his wait staff, who on good nights can earn as much as \$30 an hour in tips.

"That legislation is going to force prices higher and reduce the number of times people can afford to go out to eat," Christy said. "It's just too much."

Despite Forepaugh's imminent closing, Christy is proud that he was able to maintain a restaurant at the same location for 25 years. Many other fine dining establishments in St. Paul—Gallivan's, the Blue Horse, Gannon's, Fhima's, Tulips, the Vintage and Zander's to name just a few—closed their doors during that time.

Christy credited his quarter-century of success to the stability of his 51-member staff. Managers Joan Frantz and Kathy Gosiger, head chef Eric Schlenker, and servers Dana Jorgensen and Lori Enselein have all worked with him for more than 20 years.

"It wasn't only the money that made people stay on here," Gosiger said. "There's a lot of respect for Ed. He's just a great person to work for."

"Ed is the perfect host," said Bob Kurtz of Highland Park, a regular at Forepaugh's for the past seven years. "When you walked in the

door, Ed always greeted you with a great big smile. I'm sorry to see him go. He's an institution there."

Christy, 63, purchased Forepaugh's in 1983, six years after the restaurant opened in the refurbished 1870 home of Joseph Forepaugh, a St. Paul businessman who made his fortune in dry goods. With a nod to St. Paul's French and French-Canadian roots, Forepaugh's served a continental cuisine in nine dining rooms spread over three floors of the elegant Victorian manor. Much of his business over the years has been catering weddings, prom gatherings, anniversary parties and corporate events.

Christy attended Villanova University and earned a master's degree in business administration at the University of Indiana. He came to Minnesota in 1968 to work for General Mills, but three years later the company transferred him to the East Coast. Soon after, he left the corporate world to open his own restaurant in Baltimore.

A former president of the Minnesota Restaurant Association, Christy is currently on the board of the St. Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau and chair of its Membership Committee.

Forepaugh's will continue as a restaurant after April 30. However, it will close for at least two months, according to new owner Bruce Taher of Taher Corporation, a food service management company with 2,100 employees in five states. Taher's company recently opened several fine dining establishments, including the Wayzata Eatery and the Alaska Eatery in Minnetonka.

Forepaugh's "is going to be totally remodeled and revamped on the inside," Taher said. "The building is protected by Minnesota Historical Society standards, so the integrity of the building will remain intact." However, it will get a new kitchen and new wallpaper, chairs, carpet and lighting. Taher also hopes to retain Christy's staff.

"Whether you have deeper pockets or not, the costs that (Christy) spoke about are real and everybody is affected by them," Taher said. "We have to find a way to deal with those costs; that's the challenge of the business. Our hope is that by redoing the restaurant, the added support of the community will cover the costs."

Christy is not leaving the hospitality industry entirely. He is also a partner in Lord Fletcher's, the long-lived Lake Minnetonka bar and restaurant. Still, leaving Forepaugh's is going to create a void in his life.

"I'm going to miss this place," Christy said. "It's not easy to just walk away, but the stars are all aligned to do it now."

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Discussions offer chance to weigh in on Rock-Tenn process

By JANE MCCLURE

The Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel (RCAP) has scheduled a series of neighborhood discussions in the next few weeks as it continues to study a new source of energy for Rock-Tenn's paper recycling facility at University Avenue and Vandalia Street.

Rock-Tenn has recycled paper in the Midway area for a century. It is now the state's largest paper recycler, currently employing 500 people. Rock-Tenn has been using on-site boilers to burn a mixture of natural gas and fuel oil since losing its source of steam power last year. The company, which requires as much energy as 20,000 homes, needs to find a more cost-effective energy source and would like to see a new power plant up and running by 2011.

RCAP is scheduled to complete its studies and prepare a report on a new energy source for Rock-Tenn in May or June, according to RCAP coordinator Nina Axelson. The report is considered a pre-environmental review.

"We're nearing a key point in the study process," Axelson said.

RCAP is looking at different fuels, energy production technology and related issues in order to identify an environmentally friendly energy source for the plant. The report will address the economic and technical feasibility of the various fuel types, and prospective environmental emissions and controls for each. Part of the report will cover ways to improve energy efficiency at the Rock-Tenn

Neighborhoods to discuss Rock-Tenn's energy plans

Minneapolis: 10:00 a.m. Saturday, April 26, at the Luxton Recreation Center, 112 Williams Ave. S.E.

St. Anthony Park: 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 3, at the South St. Anthony Park Recreation Center, 890 Cromwell St.

Macalester-Groveland: 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, at Groveland Park Elementary School, 2045 St. Clair Ave.

Union Park (District 13): 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 12, at Bethel Christian Fellowship, 1466 Portland Ave.

Hamline-Midway: 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 17, at the Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave.

For more information, call 612-788-4151, e-mail nina@sapcc.org or visit www.rtdadvisory.org.

facility and find additional uses for the steam and electricity generated by the power plant, which would be owned and operated by the St. Paul Port Authority.

The report will be reviewed by the Hamline-Midway, St. Anthony Park, Union Park and Macalester-Groveland district councils before it is sent to the St. Paul City Council this fall. The City Council will then decide which options should receive further environmental review or send the matter back to the RCAP.

Rock-Tenn's high demand for energy means that some sources, such as wind, solar, hydroelectric and geothermal, have been set aside. Various forms of biomass, ranging from wood waste to agricultural byproducts, are still being studied. However, biomass options may be limited because of the availability of materials and the high cost of transportation.

The latest technology discussed on April 7 is anaerobic digestion, a process that uses microbes to decompose organic material to produce biogas. Biogas, such as methane, can be used to produce thermal energy in the form of steam or electricity.

Various feed stocks are used in an anaerobic digestive system. Patrick Hill, an engineer who has worked on several types of anaerobic digestion systems, said the most viable feed stock for a system for Rock-Tenn would be agricultural or food byproducts. Human waste or animal waste has been used in systems elsewhere, but the quantity required makes that infeasible for Rock-Tenn.

Anaerobic digestion has its pros and cons, Hill said. The pros are that it uses renewable fuels in a low-temperature, low-pressure form of fuel gas production, that it is an efficient form of energy production and allows for the recovery of water and nutrients, and that organic solids that are a byproduct of anaerobic digestion can be sold as topsoil.

The cons are that Rock-Tenn would need an anaerobic facility of eight to 10 acres that would require six 3 million gallon digester tanks and cost up to \$60 million to build. Another con is the potential for odor, although

the system would be enclosed to prevent the escape of methane.

Some RCAP members were concerned about odor and the risks involved with methane. "It's not just that it (methane) smells bad, but it's extremely toxic," said RCAP member Alan Schultz.

Another challenge in anaerobic digestion is that the system can be easily disrupted and go off-line, making it necessary to have a backup power source. As a result, it requires a consistent quality and quantity of feed stock. Hill said that also would be a challenge in using garbage as a fuel source. Plants in Europe that burn garbage need to have the trash carefully sorted before it is used in a digester.

Hill said he doubts there is enough food or agricultural waste in the Twin Cities to make anaerobic digestion work. "The technology is definitely viable," he said, "but do we have the quality and quantity of materials available? I don't think so."

That means either hauling in dry material and slurrying it with water to run a digestive system here or setting up a system near an outstate agricultural processing plant. The latter option would most likely mean working with an ethanol plant to use spent corn or a potato processing plant. The biogas would then have to be piped in.

Some RCAP members said if that is the case, it may make more sense for the outstate facilities to generate and use their own energy through anaerobic digestion, rather than piping the biogas to Rock-Tenn.

'Untold Stories' continues look at local labor history

Local labor history is relived in "Untold Stories," a month-long series sponsored by the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library that will continue on Sunday, April 27, with a dramatic reading of Jeanine Coulombe's play *Beakers*, inspired by the 1989 labor conflict at the Boise Cascade plant in International Falls. The Lex-Ham Community Theater performance begins at 2:00 p.m. at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave.

Jennifer Klein will discuss her book, *For All These Rights: Business, Labor, and the Shaping of America's Public-Private Welfare State*, at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 30, at the Dayton's Bluff/Metropolitan State University Library, 645 E. 7th St.

A panel of historians and scholars will review 150 years of labor history in Minnesota at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 1, at the St. Paul Labor Centre, 411 Main St. The panel will include professor Hy Berman of the University



Claiming the City author Mary Wingerd will join a panel discussion on labor history in Minnesota on May 1 at the St. Paul Labor Centre. PHOTO BY BRAD STUAFFER

of Minnesota, *Claiming the City* author Mary Wingerd, and author and professor Annette Atkins of the College of St. Benedict.

The Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company will perform *The Triangle Factory Fire Project*, about a fire that killed 146 workers, the subsequent trial, and the social and political changes that resulted, at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4, in the auditorium of the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1974 Ford Pkwy. A discussion with Rachleff and others will follow the show. (Those who mention "Untold Stories" will receive a \$5.00 discount on their tickets.)

Tim Robbins' film about artists during the Great Depression, *Cradle Will Rock*, will be shown at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. A discussion will precede the screening at 6:00 p.m.

"Thank God and FDR," an exhibition of more than 160 examples of New Deal art from the Minnesota Historical Society's collection, will be displayed at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 13, at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave.

Labor history will also be the focus of student exhibits, original performances and presentations on Minnesota History Day, Wednesday, May 14. The program will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the St. Paul Labor Center, 411 Main St.

Dave Riehle will lead a bus tour to Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake and Centerville on Saturday, May 17, to tell of local labor history and American Indian and French Canadian settlements. The tour will depart at 2:00 p.m. from the Sun Ray Library, 2105 Wilson Ave.

These Shining Lives, a new play about the Radium Dial Watch Company and the suit filed against the firm by the "Radium Girls" who suffered anemia, bone fractures and death, will be performed at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18, at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. A discussion and reception will follow.

Most of the events are free. For information or reservations, call 651-222-3242 or visit www.thefriends.org.

School Notes

The St. Paul Public Schools is asking the public to help define its future success with a "Focus on Success" session from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 24, at the Rondo Red Atrium, 560 Concordia Ave. A language-specific session for the Spanish-speaking community will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 7, at the district administration building, 360 Colborne St. The district is holding the sessions prior to a discussion of its 2008-09 proposed budget on Tuesday, May 20. Call 651-767-8110.

The Cretin-Derham Hall class of 1988 will hold its 20-year reunion from 7:00 p.m. to midnight Friday, May 16, at Billy's on Grand, 857 Grand Ave. The cost is \$20 per person or \$35 per couple. Register by May 1 with Sarah Hood Floersch at

sarahfloersch@msn.com. Include photos for a class video.

Cyndi Leshner, an Xcel Energy executive and president of the Minnesota host committee for the Republican National Convention, will be the guest speaker of the St. Thomas Alumni Association's final luncheon of the year at noon Friday, May 2, at Crowne Plaza Riverfront Hotel, 11 E. Kellogg Blvd. The cost is \$25. Call 651-962-6430 by April 25.

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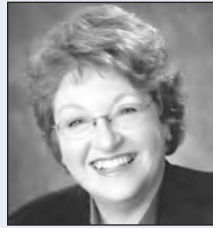
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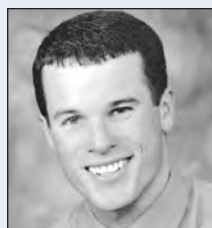
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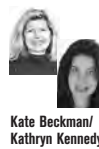
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Lovely, well-built Dutch Colonial. Landscaped 70' lot, parquet floors, beautifully paneled FR, spacious LR w/FP, large eat-in kit., adjoining screened porch, 5 BRs and 2 full baths on 2nd floor. 2155 Princeton.

JANE AUSTIN McGRATH
651-282-9625 • \$645,000



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McGrath



HIGHLAND PARK

Traditional stucco Tudor w/1st floor FR, updated kitchen w/eating area, 4 BRs, 1 1/2 baths, LL rec room w/FP, double tuckunder garage. 1667 Highland Pkwy.

JANE AUSTIN McGRATH
651-282-9625 • \$495,000



Jane Austin
McGrath



NEW LISTING

All the charm of a home built in the 1920s w/every modern update. Custom kit., new master bath & walk-in closet, new 2nd floor full bath, newly refinished 3rd floor w/5th BR used as FR, new landscaping, sprinkler system, sports court & outside lighting, central air. 2240 Sargent.

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651-282-9625 • \$1,225,000



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SARAH KINNEY
651-282-9621



Sarah Kinney



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SARAH KINNEY
651-282-9621 • \$645,000



Sarah Kinney



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This dazzling, complete restoration features an open floor plan, fireplace, hardwood floors, large windows, a luxurious LL (with built-in bar, wine cellar & walk-in humidor) and old fashioned front porch with picturesque views of historic Summit Avenue. 676 Summit Ave. #101.

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Sarah Kinney

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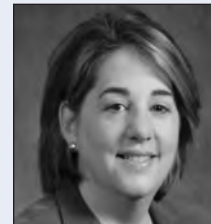
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JIM BURTON
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997 Portland Ave. is an immaculate 3-story home with LR FP, formal DR, first floor FR, hwd. floors, nat. vdwk. galore, third floor waiting to be finished. Remodeled kitchen and bath, newer roof and furnace. It is spectacular!

PAT MCGILL CRS
651-695-4311 • \$549,900



PRICE REDUCED!
1900 Sargent Ave. is a spectacular 3-BR, 2+ story stucco home w/cozy LR fireplace, formal DR w/corner cabinets, nat. vdwk., hwd. floors, first floor sunroom, wonderful eat-in kitchen, 2-car garage.

PAT MCGILL CRS
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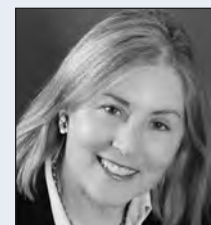
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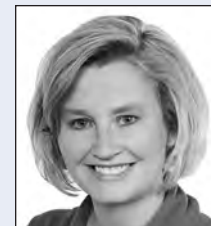
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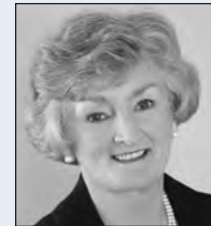
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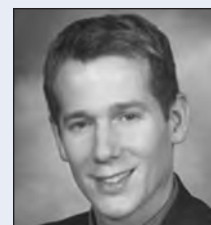
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Real Estate Guide



The Arado weeHouse that started it all in 2003. PHOTO FROM ALCHEMY ARCHITECTS

Fabulous prefab

Creator of weeHouses proves good design can come in small packages

BY FRANK JOSSI

Five years ago, Minnesota violinist Stephanie Arado began discussing with Macalester-Groveland architect Geoffrey Warner her dream of building a small, affordable home atop a bluff in Pepin, Wisconsin. Warner embraced the challenge and went to work designing a modular home for Arado that could be transported to the Mississippi River town on trucks and then reassembled.

A subsequent newspaper feature on the "weeHouse" generated enough interest from potential customers that Warner decided to launch a line of modular, contemporary, prefabricated homes from his Alchemy Architects firm at 856 Raymond Ave. Alchemy has since built 15 weeHouses throughout the United States and Canada and has another 24 on the drawing board.

The weeHouses range in size from 350-square-foot studios to 2,200-square-foot, three-bedroom homes and in price ranging from \$79,000 to \$245,000. The homes feature such environmentally friendly elements as bamboo flooring, fiber-cement siding, radiant heating and high-efficiency lighting. One trademark of the line is a series of nearly floor-to-ceiling sliding doors on one or more sides of the homes.

The elegant, shoebox-shaped structures immediately captured the attention of the architectural industry. In 2006, the Walker Art Center showcased the weeHouse in an exhibition of contemporary prefab homes. Soon to follow were articles in many magazines and newspapers, among them the *New York Times*, *Dwell*, *Time* and *Midwest Home*.

The first residential weeHouse in Minneapolis was placed on its foundation last fall in the Linden Hills neighborhood. The not-so-wee, 2,200-square-foot home features four bedrooms and 3½ baths. (Phillips Garden on Cedar Avenue in Minneapolis also has a rooftop weeHouse addition.)

No weeHouses exist in St. Paul as of yet, though a Highland Park site had been under consideration. But with so little land available in the Capital City, Warner said he is not surprised a weeHouse customer has not stepped forward so far.

"We don't want you to tear down your house and put up a weeHouse; that wouldn't be very environmental," Warner said with a grin. The majority of his customers are erecting weeHouses in the Hudson River Valley of New York as weekend escapes or primary homes.

Warner noted that weeHouses allow for plenty of customizing on both the exterior and interior. The prefab process offers efficiencies in design and production, though Warner said it still takes time to complete the planning, manufacturing and assembling of a weeHouse.

"The whole process takes around nine months, though we've done them as fast as two to four months," he said. The manufacturing is done at plants around the country to cut down on the distance between factory and home site.

Despite the growing interest in prefab homes, selling weeHouses in large numbers remains a challenge. "If these homes were hugely popular there'd be dozens of people working in our office," Warner said, "and a lot of other people would be doing it. But the



Alchemy's Geoffrey Warner with models of a weeHouse and other projects. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER



The weeHouse in Minneapolis' Linden Hills neighborhood. PHOTO FROM ALCHEMY ARCHITECTS

whole house construction culture doesn't lend itself to building this way."

Warner, 43, graduated from Como High School and earned a degree in architecture with honors from the University of Minnesota. He worked for a few years for the Architectural Alliance in Minneapolis before winning a Dinkeloo Traveling Fellow Award, which he used to study at the American Academy in Rome under Carlo Scarpa, an Italian modernist who died in 1978.

For a time, Warner dabbled in furniture making and fabricated materials from found objects. That interest is evident in his office, where slender light bulbs hang between the wires of a weathered box spring attached to a blue and white MnDOT carpool sign. Next to his chair is a lamp created out of a metal tripod and a bowling ball.

Although Warner has generated plenty of interest in the weeHouse, his firm also does business on several other fronts. He pointed to a model of a proposed building for Specs Optical on Hennepin Avenue and mentioned his design for a new 13,000-square-foot building for Popular Front, an interactive communications agency in northeast Minneapolis.

A 2,300-square-foot country home that Warner designed for a customer in Clearwater, Minnesota, was the *StarTribune's* Home of the Month in April. The converted bungalow that Warner shares with his wife, Dawn Dekeyser, who is also an architect, and their two girls on Goodrich Avenue has two new garages with a distinct weeHouse influence.

Alchemy's touch can also be found in the building it occupies at Raymond and Hampden avenues. Warner helped redesign the building for a host of creative tenants, including a landscaping firm and a photographer.

The media attention paid to the weeHouse has brought other work from large companies, including Saturn, Volkswagen and Marriott, all of whom have tapped Alchemy for creative input on building prefab structures, Warner said.

Yet despite the media exposure the weeHouse has gotten, the concept of living in a prefab house does not reverberate with many Americans. In fact, Warner said, the company would probably be doing better in Europe, where living small is more popularly embraced.

For now, though, Warner's focus remains on changing the outlook for prefab housing in this country. "We're still retooling the way we do things," he said, "and how we can do things better for our clients and ourselves."



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Neighborhood	Homes Sold 2006	Homes Sold 2007	Median Price 2006	Median Price 2007	Percentage price change
Highland Park	316	270	\$274,400	\$276,000	0.58%
Macalester-Groveland	275	275	\$278,000	\$280,000	0.72%
Merriam Park	149	102	\$275,500	\$272,400	-1.13%
Homecroft/West 7th	102	98	\$180,290	\$180,000	-0.16%
Summit Hill/Summit-U	267	239	\$266,000	\$267,875	0.70%
Downtown St. Paul	277	151	\$195,000	\$187,715	-3.74%
Mendota Heights	136	155	\$330,200	\$390,000	18.11%
Mpls. Longfellow	394	349	\$207,500	\$214,900	3.57%
Mpls. Nokomis	869	778	\$225,000	\$225,000	0.00%

Statistics from the Regional Multiple Listing Service and the St. Paul Area Association of Realtors indicate that while the number of homes sold decreased in 2007 in most of the areas served by the *Villager*, the prices for those homes appears to be holding steady and even increasing in some areas.

Housing market on the mend? Realtors find hope in performance of area homes

BY FRANK JOSSI

Despite all the national news about a housing "crisis," you can't fault a real estate sales person for being optimistic about the local housing market, especially since there are signs that the downturn in the market may be abating. Though the median sale price of homes in Ramsey, Hennepin and Dakota counties continued to drop during the first three months of 2008, the decline for all of 2007 was not as steep as in 2006 in almost every neighborhood served by the *Villager*, and in several neighborhoods the median sale price increased.

Though the statistics are mixed for *Villager* neighborhoods, overall they are much better than in other parts of St. Paul, Minneapolis and Dakota County, according to Kathie Phillips, vice president of Coldwell Banker Burnet's Highland Park office. Vacant properties are few and far between in the area, with the exception of a small pocket near West 7th Street and Grand Avenue.

"Home buyers are more picky than they were two or three years ago," Phillips said. "There's a lot more negotiation between buyer and seller. But we're not seeing the big drop in prices that they're seeing in other areas."

The number of homes sold was down in every *Villager* neighborhood in 2007 except Macalester-Groveland and Mendota Heights. However, only downtown St. Paul and Merriam Park saw a significant decrease in the median sale price from 2006, and Mendota Heights and Minneapolis' Longfellow neighborhood saw increases in the median sale price (see chart below).

The long, cold winter did not help the housing market any, said Scott Brownlee, a Realtor in Remax Results' Grand Avenue office, but according to him, home-buying activity is picking up with the warmer weather. Last week there were 25 pending home sales in Macalester-Groveland and 75 homes on the market—not a bad situation at all, he said. Brownlee said he is hearing from



Home sellers are having to try harder in the current buyers' market.

many prospective buyers who sat on the sidelines during the winter, but now "want to get it done."

The Grand Avenue office of Edina Realty "has been selling on target this year, even a little over last year," said general manager Vickie Gay. She attributed the relatively rosy performance to many local residents who prefer a house in their neighborhood to one across town or in the suburbs. Still, the market has changed, she conceded, with few sellers receiving multiple offers and most having to wait several months to close on a sale.

In Ramsey County, the average time on the market for homes sold in the first three months of 2008 was 156 days, according to the Minneapolis Area Association of Realtors. That is up from 132 days in the first three months of 2007. The median sale price of homes in Ramsey, Hennepin and Dakota counties was down 11.5, 7.4 and 7.3 percent, respectively, in the first three months of 2008 compared to the same period in 2007.

Phillips expects that those numbers will improve with the increased real estate activity that spring typically brings. Sellers in the *Villager* area, she said, are generally getting at least 91 percent of their initial asking price, though they are having to wait longer than in previous years.

According to Greg Bauman, president of the St. Paul Area Association of Real-

tors, the inventory of homes for sale is dropping and prices are stabilizing in the 13-county metropolitan area. From February to March of 2008, he said, the number of homes that were sold in the Twin Cities jumped by 33 percent and the median sale price of those homes increased 2.5 percent.

Homes priced above \$1 million or below \$250,000 are currently selling faster than those that are priced in between, according to Phillips. "People are looking for move-up homes that are in pristine condition," she said. "That's where the demand is. They want a house that they don't have to do a lot of work on. They're flocking to the homes in the best condition."

"What we're seeing is, if a house is staged right and it has a warmth and is clean and not cluttered, it'll sell, especially in this market," Gay said.

To successfully market their homes, sellers need to mind the three P's, Brownlee said—pricing, painting and patience. Shortcomings in housing maintenance that a prospective home buyer may have overlooked in the sellers' market of a decade ago may now kill a deal, he said.

Today's housing market, Brownlee said, is not so different from the market that prevailed in 1991 when he entered the real estate profession. Realtors back then figured it would take an average of three to four months to sell a home, according to him. "It isn't all that different, now," he said.



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Brewery plans 'coming along well'

By JANE MCCLURE

Plans for the future use of the former Schmidt Brewery took a key step forward this spring with the property's submission for the National Register of Historic Places and the completion of the second phase of environmental studies of the West End site.

Developer Brewtown LLC, which is made up of father-son developers Jeff and Craig Cohen and the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, continues to work on plans for turning the 15-acre property into a mixed-use urban village. The first phase of construction for the estimated \$200 million project is expected to begin in spring 2009.

The West End Business Association will hear an update on the brewery plans at 3:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 29, at Summit Brewing Company, 910 Montreal Circle. Those plans include creating artists' lofts, market-rate townhouses, apartments or condominiums, and retail and restaurant space. The site plan also includes about 2,000 underground parking spaces. Many details still have to be resolved, such as where any public spaces would be located and whether a previously vacated section of street would be reopened.

"Things are coming along quite well," said Craig Cohen. "It's an enormous undertaking and it's incredibly complex, but we're where we want to be."

Redevelopment of the former brew-



A mural decorates the old Schmidt Brewery on W. 7th. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

ery, which ceased producing beer in 2002, will be staged in phases over the next several years. Earlier this year, Brewtown extended its purchase agreement for the property until October. The developers are buying the site from the operators of the former Gopher State Ethanol plant that closed on the same site three years ago.

Craig Cohen said the environmental testing that has been done thus far showed "about what we expected." Asbestos and lead were detected in the older brewery buildings, but soil contamination was found not to be a problem.

The first phase of construction is

expected to begin next spring after Dominion Development and Acquisition closes on the sale of the 100,000-square-foot bottling house, which it plans to turn into 100 artists' lofts. Dominion recently redeveloped the former Johnson Brothers liquor warehouses on University Avenue into the Carleton Lofts housing complex.

The bottling house is adjacent to a 2.5-acre Erie Street parcel that the West 7th Federation plans to develop as about a dozen market-rate townhouses called Brewery Row.

Other plans call for redeveloping the historic art deco office building on West 7th Street for retail and restaurant use. That will include restoring the ratskeller, which was a public gathering place for many years.

Brewtown has also talked about restoring the public spring water tap or even bottling its own water.

The final phases of the project over the next three to five years would include redeveloping the castle-like brewhouse, the keg house and the warehouse. The brewhouse would have retail shops on the ground floor and up to 100 housing units above. It is not clear yet whether they would be apartments or condos, Craig Cohen said.

The keg house would provide about 100,000 square feet for retail. The warehouse's 110,000 square feet would be converted into rental or owner-occupied housing.

Qualifying for mortgage becomes tougher

By KEVIN DRISCOLL

The neighborhoods served by the *Villager* have weathered the downturn in the U.S. housing market better than most areas of the Twin Cities, according to representatives of the local banking and mortgage industries. Nevertheless, as home market values level off or dip and mortgage foreclosures accumulate, prospective home buyers may be finding fewer willing lenders and tighter restrictions on qualifying for a loan.

"Home values are staying relatively stable in this area," said Greg Marzolf, a mortgage loan officer at Bremer Bank and a resident of Highland Park. "It's actually a great time to buy, because mortgage rates are so low right now. What's changed are the loan-to-value (LTV) ratios and the rating of a buyer's current credit score."

LTV is the measurement of the prospective loan value and a borrower's other debts against his or her income.

Credit score is a measurement of an individual's financial situation; the higher the credit score, the more creditworthy the borrower.

"It used to be a credit score of 680 was good enough to get a mortgage," Marzolf said. "But Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (the quasi-federal agencies that insure loans and buy loans from lenders) are now insisting on a minimum score of 720 if the buyer wants to avoid any fees or (percentage) points added to the loan."

"The FHA, which guarantees home mortgages, has raised the amount of a regular conforming loan it will insure from about \$270,000 to \$369,000," Marzolf said, "but there are no more zero down payments. At least 3 percent down is required now."

In addition to a home buyer's credit score and LTV ratio, "we look at the type of property it is and the neighborhood it's in," said Bonnie Kalen, vice president of Wells Fargo Home Mortgage-Minnesota.

"While St. Paul property values in general are declining, homes in Highland Park, Macalester-Groveland and Merriam Park are actually seeing some rise in values," said Ed Shanks, an executive vice president with U.S. Bank Home Mortgage. "But each neighborhood does have some pockets of decline, and it's important not to compare these areas with others when determining the overall market and deciding where to buy."

Some banks have gotten out of the first-home-mortgage business altogether. "We do strictly home equity loans," said Jason Korstange, senior vice president and director of corporate communications for TCF Bank. "We got out of first mortgages about two years ago. Our underwriting amounts haven't changed, but since home prices and values are down, we have tightened our underwriting standards."

In the current market, fixed-rate mortgages are the safest bet for most

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Opus Northwest envisions high-rise offices, condominiums and a hotel along St. Paul's riverfront where the former county jail and West Publishing buildings now stand.

Developer requests more time for riverfront project

Opus terminates purchase of county jail, West buildings on day before \$1 million was due

By Jane McClure

Opus Northwest will likely get more time to redevelop the former Ramsey County jail and West Publishing buildings as The Riverfront, a \$200 million project that would include condominiums, offices, retail space and a hotel. The Ramsey County Board, meeting as the county's Facilities Committee, agreed on April 15 to meet as early as this week in a closed session to determine new terms and conditions for the project.

A development agreement approved by the County Board in January was terminated on April 14, the day before it was set to expire. The agreement called for Opus to purchase a stretch of seven riverfront buildings along Kellogg Boulevard between Market and Wabasha streets for \$10 million. However, without an anchor office tenant in hand, Opus officials said they could not justify giving the county a \$1 million nonrefundable deposit.

Tim Murnane, senior vice president of Opus, said the company needs another six months to work on the project. "We have no intention of throwing in the towel, but we do need more time," Murnane said. "It's a very tough economy."

The former West Publishing buildings date from the 1890s, and the county jail from the 1970s. County commissioners are eager to see the properties back on the tax rolls. The county purchased the West buildings for \$1 in 1992 after West relocated to Eagan, but never intended to use the space permanently. Several county offices have since moved out. About 600 employees remain.

Murnane said he feels strongly about the prospects for Opus to develop one of the region's prime pieces of real estate. Opus already has invested about \$250,000 in the project.

Current plans call for a 22-story office tower with up to 500,000 square feet of space to be built first. It would be St. Paul's first new Class A office building since the Lawson Software building went up in the 1990s. There currently is a 26.3 percent office space vacancy rate downtown, but little of that space would be comparable to what is proposed for the riverfront.

There also would be a 30-story tower with a 250-room hotel and 100 condominiums. Nearby would be a six-story condominium building hugging the side of the bluff. Nicknamed the "cliff dwellers" building, the structure would have 26 units with river views. A quarter-acre park would be located at

Wabasha Street and Kellogg Boulevard, as well as more green space on the bluff.

Murnane said Opus had to drop the idea of incorporating a winding street, like San Francisco's Lombard Street, into the project. Instead, an extensively landscaped staircase has been proposed. Parking would be at the lowest levels of the development along Shepard Road.

Opus would like to see Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for the buildings, a designation given to structures that meet energy efficiency and other "green" design guidelines. The buildings would feature a lot of glass, but have buff stone bases as a nod to traditional St. Paul architecture and the Qwest building across Kellogg.

"We have no intention of throwing in the towel, but we do need more time," Murnane said. "It's a very tough economy."

Discussion about selling the properties began in 1999, but nothing materialized. One earlier proposal fell through in 2006 when the condo market began to dip.

Last year, Ramsey County officials discussed redevelopment options with Opus and WingField Development, a Belgium-based firm. WingField had proposed an ambitious \$600 million project with three high-rises next to a new Minnesota Museum of Modern Art. WingField was founded by St. Paul native Dean Johnson, whose firm is also hoping to redevelop the vacant Wabasha Court site in downtown St. Paul.

While county commissioners admired the vision Johnson had for the riverfront, they cited Opus' development track record in making their choice. Opus' previous projects have included the Medtronic headquarters in Mounds View, Best Buy's corporate campus in Richfield, University of St. Thomas buildings in St. Paul and Minneapolis, and the Highland Crossing retail center in Highland Village.

If Opus can land an anchor office tenant, it still could take many months before ground would be broken. Opus first plans to conduct an environmental assessment worksheet on the site. The city of St. Paul will be involved with site plan approval, zoning changes and variances, which could be complicated because of the proximity to the Mississippi River.

There is also the question of city financial assistance, which Murnane has indicated would be in the form of tax increment financing.

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ADDRESS	TIME	REALTOR	PRICED	BR/BA
1248 Edgumbe Rd.	5:00-7:00	Daniel Buchen	\$359,900	3/3
579 Summit #303	5:00-7:00	Victor Wittgenstein	\$249,900	1/2
117 Mackubin St. #2	4:00-6:00	Joan Johnson	\$259,900	3/2
625 Dayton #10	5:00-8:00	Jill Wentland	\$595,000	3/3
625 Dayton #1	5:00-8:00	Angela Brasel	\$359,900	2+/3
63 Avon St.	5:00-7:00	Betty Runyon	\$263,000	2/1
1810 Scheffer	3:30-5:00	Edelstein/McKiernan	\$469,000	3/3
1583 Bohland	4:30-6:00	Tom Distad	\$219,900	2/2
1082 Lombard	5:00-7:00	Nancy Maas	\$399,000	4/1
2296 Benson #B	5:30-7:00	Lolly McNeely Salmen	\$139,900	2/2
SATURDAY 4/26				
ADDRESS	TIME	REALTOR	PRICED	BR/BA
625 Dayton	12:00-4:00	Victor Wittgenstein	\$299K-\$595K	2/2
579 Summit #303	1:00-3:00	Rebecca Couillard	\$249,900	1/2
2155 Hartford	1:00-3:00	Jeannie Marver	\$399,000	4/3
370 Marshall #505	1:00-4:00	Joan Johnson	\$349,000	2/2
370 Marshall #307	1:00-4:00	Joan Johnson	\$218,000	1/1
370 Marshall #204	1:00-4:00	Joan Johnson	\$221,000	1/1
625 Dayton #10	12:00-6:00	Jill Wentland	\$595,000	3/3
625 Dayton #1	12:00-6:00	Angela Brasel	\$359,900	2+/3
63 Avon St	1:00-4:00	Betty Runyon	\$263,000	2/1
1575 Race St.	12:00-4:00	Sue Nichols	\$222,900	3/2
1655 Race St	12:00-4:00	Sue Nichols	\$184,900	2/1
1818 Wellesley	2:30-4:00	Gillisa McKiernan	\$329,000	3/1
2211 St Clair	12:00-2:00	Gillisa McKiernan	\$779,000	5/4
1089 Overlook	12:03-2:03	Edelstein/Gydesen	\$549,000	3/3
1810 Scheffer	1:03-3:03	Edelstein/Silverman	\$469,000	3/3
2545 Concord Way	2:33-4:03	Tom Edelstein/Gydesen	\$199,500	2+/2
1847 Morgan	1:30-3:00	Dick Distad	\$229,900	3/1
741 Victoria	12:00-5:00	Leonard Schwartz	\$319,900	2/3
1082 Lombard	1:00-3:00	Katherine Lund	\$399,000	4/1
711 Maple Park Ct.	2:00-4:00	Gary Fabel	\$650,000	4/3
80 Western Ave.	12:00-5:00	Western Row	\$359,000+	2/2
SUNDAY 4/27				
ADDRESS	TIME	REALTOR	PRICED	BR/BA
775 Holly	12:00-4:00	Vic Wittgenstein	\$459,900	6/3
147 Nina Street	12:00-2:00	Tanya Nozaki	\$199,900	1/1
790 Delaware	12:00-2:00	Q Moet	\$249,900	3/1
579 Summit #303	12:00-4:00	Kennedy/Lund	\$249,900	1/2
544 Ashland	1:00-2:30	Dennis Breining	\$177,000	1+/1
551 Ashland	2:30-4:00	Dennis Breining	\$496,000	3+/2
117 Mackubin St. #2	3:00-5:00	Joan Johnson	\$259,900	3/2
2155 Hartford	3:00-5:00	Jean McCahey	\$399,000	4/3
370 Marshall #505	12:00-2:00	Joan Johnson	\$349,000	2/2
370 Marshall #307	12:00-2:00	Joan Johnson	\$218,000	1/1
370 Marshall #204	12:00-2:00	Joan Johnson	\$221,000	1/1
625 Dayton #10	12:00-6:00	Jill Wentland	\$595,000	3/3
625 Dayton #1	12:00-6:00	Angela Brasel	\$359,900	2+/3
408 Laurel	1:00-3:00	Rebecca Couillard	\$369,000	2/2
549 Dayton	1:00-3:00	Sarah Kinney	\$495,000	Duplex
1082 Lombard	1:00-4:00	Nancy Maas	\$399,000	4/1
63 Avon St.	1:00-4:00	Betty Runyon	\$263,000	2/1
1575 Race St	12:00-4:00	Sue Nichols	\$222,900	3/2
1655 Race St	12:00-4:00	Sue Nichols	\$184,900	2/1
1130 Charles	2:30-4:30	Luke Walbert	\$120,000	1/1
2211 St Clair	12:00-2:00	Gillisa McKiernan	\$779,000	5/4
1675 Ford Pkwy	3:00-4:30	Gillisa McKiernan	\$264,000	3/2
1494 Edgumbe	1:00-3:00	Jeannie Marver	\$439,900	3/2
1641 Sherburne	12:00-2:00	Luke Walbert	\$159,900	2/1
1361 Murray	1:00-3:00	Bob Yankovich	\$289,900	5/3
822 Osceola	1:03-3:03	Edelstein/Salmen	\$539,000	3/3
2132 St. Clair	12:00-2:00	Jim Burton	\$279,900	3/1
1732 Sutton Lane	12:03-2:03	Edelstein/Gydesen	\$364,800	3/3
1583 Bohland	2:30-4:00	Tom Distad	\$219,900	2/2
2193 St. Clair	12:30-2:00	Dick Distad	\$449,900	3/2
1847 Morgan	12:30-2:00	Tom Distad	\$229,900	3/1
995 William Ct	1:00-4:00	Peter Donovan	\$389,000	4/3
552 Brimhall	1:00-3:00	Leonard Schwartz	\$239,900	3/2
741 Victoria	12:00-5:00	Leonard Schwartz	\$319,900	2/3
1847 Faro Ln.	2:30-4:00	Edelstein/Gydesen	\$529,000	5+/4
339 Summit	1:00-3:00	Lily Garcia	\$349,000	2/2
143 Nina	12:00-2:30	Jean McCahey	\$264,900	2/1
1958 Saunders	3:00-5:00	Nick Kropf	\$309,000	3/2
1587 Beechwood	3:00-5:00	Gary Fabel	\$429,900	3/2
2059 Temple Ct.	12:00-2:30	Gary Fabel	\$239,900	2/1
1717 Jefferson	1:00-3:00	Jim & Sue Lindsay	\$319,900	5/2
968 Fairmount	1:00-4:00	Kathy Jambor	\$439,900	3/3
80 Western Ave.	12:00-5:00	Western Row	\$359,000+	2/2
1757 Stanford	1:00-3:00	Sue Johnson	\$424,900	4/3

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28◀ MORTGAGE RESTRICTIONS

home buyers, according to Marzolf. Mortgage rates vary from lender to lender and can change daily. As of April 15, the interest rates were hovering between 5.5 and 6 percent for a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage and between 5.125 and 5.75 percent for a 15-year fixed-rate mortgage. The interest on fixed-rate FHA and VA loans was a flat 6 percent. The fixed rates for jumbo loans (more than \$417,000) were between 6 and 6.75 percent.

Adjustable rate mortgages (ARMs) offer lower interest rates than fixed-rate mortgages, but of course those rates may and often do increase following an initial term, increasing the monthly mortgage payments.

The spike in home foreclosures over the

past three years can largely be attributed to a kind of ARM called subprime mortgages, which generally have a higher interest rate than prime-rate loans and may have built-in fees and interest rate increases over time or if a payment is missed. Often requiring no down payment and very low monthly payments initially, they were popular among real estate speculators and among home buyers with poor credit scores or LTV ratios who could not qualify for a prime-rate loan. The holders of subprime mortgages may have been hoping for a quick profit by reselling the home or they may have been planning to refinance in a few years at a more favorable rate.

Home market values in the Twin Cities had been rising by 10 to 20 percent annually for much of the past decade. But when those

values leveled off or began to decline, refinancing was no longer an option. That forced many mortgage holders with escalating interest rates and monthly payments to default and lose their homes to foreclosure. Some simply locked their home, mailed the keys to the bank and walked away.

"And there are lots of those loans that have yet to adjust," Marzolf said, "so we aren't anywhere near the end of this."

The Minnesota Legislature has been considering a measure that would block foreclosures for a full year. Under that bill, the mortgage must be subprime or a loan with negative amortization for which the minimum payment has increased. It would apply to owner-occupied properties only.

The legislation is intended to induce lenders

to modify the loan rather than foreclose, and to allow borrowers to keep making payments, but at the initial interest rate or at 65 percent of their payment at the time of default, whichever is lower.

Bremer Bank has "never offered subprime loans," Marzolf said. "I've never even been a big fan of ARMs. Why risk an ARM when fixed rates are so low now?"

U.S. Bank has also refrained from offering subprime mortgages, Shanks said, though it offers a variety of other mortgage products, including three- and five-year ARMs.

"Many prospective home buyers are holding off, waiting for even lower home prices and interest rates," Shanks said. "But I don't see rates going much lower, and home values in some areas are starting to level off."

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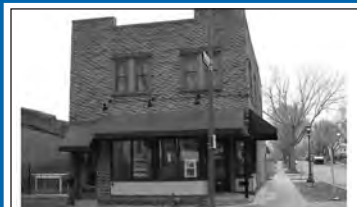
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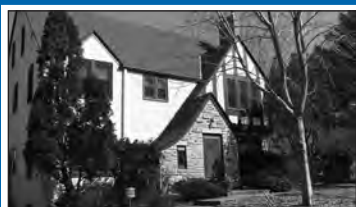
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651 699-7476 \$469,900



Anita McKeown

The Kiosk

Wednesday/April 23

THE RAPTOR CENTER, 1920 Fitch Ave., will present a free public lecture on the effects of mercury on wildlife by adjunct professor Dave Evers at 7:00 this evening and at noon tomorrow. Call 612-624-9750.

THE WOOLLY BEARS program for parents and preschoolers will continue with "Seeds and Beaks" from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. today, tomorrow and Saturday at the Dodge Nature Center in West St. Paul. The cost is \$12-\$14 per child. Call 651-455-4531.

THE ARCHITECTURE of Summit Avenue will be discussed by author and historian Larry Millett at 7:00 this evening at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. Refreshments and house tours will follow. The cost is \$4.00-\$8.00. Call 651-297-2555.

Thursday/April 24

MIDDLE EAST EXPERT Phyllis Bennis will speak on the "Challenging Empire" from 7:00 to 9:00 this evening at Macalester Plymouth Church, 1658 Lincoln Ave. Her appearance is sponsored in part by Merriam Park Neighbors for Peace and Women Against Military Madness. Call WAMM at 612-827-5364.

DAVE EVERS, an adjunct professor at the University of Southern Maine, will speak on "The Toxicity of Mercury: Effects of Mercury on Wildlife," including the local loon population, at noon today at the Raptor Center, 1920 Fitch Ave. For reservations, call 612-624-9750.

ISRAEL CONNECTIONS, a monthly program on deepening the understanding of events in Israel, will meet again at 7:00 this evening at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Admission is free. To register, call 651-698-0751.

"THE TELLTALE HEARTH: Geometric Pottery and the Greek Family," a free lecture by Susan Langdon, associate professor of art history and archaeology at the University of Missouri, will be offered at 7:00 this evening in Room 126 of the John Roach Center at the University of St. Thomas. Langdon will also address "It's a Man's Man's World: Social Identity and Early Greek Pottery" at 4:30 p.m. tomorrow in Room 155 of Nicholson Hall at the University of Minnesota. Call 651-962-5660.

"CUISINE FOR CHANGE...from Minnesota with Love," a benefit for Second Harvest Heartland, will be held from 6:00 to 10:00 this evening at the Crowne Plaza Riverfront Hotel, 11 E. Kellogg Blvd. The evening will feature gourmet food by some of the region's premiere restaurants, a wine tasting, entertainment by painting performer Michael Israel, and live and silent auctions. Call 651-209-7994.

Friday/April 25

A RUMMAGE SALE will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. today and tomorrow and from 9:00 a.m. to noon on Sunday in Carolyn Hall at St. Mark's School, 1976 Dayton Ave. The coffee shop will be open. Call 651-644-7724.

ARBORFEST, a beer-tasting fundraiser for the Family Tree Clinic, will be held from 5:30 to 9:00 this evening in Kagin Commons at Macalester College. The



Gerardo Alonso, above, looks out from a boxcar while playing the part of an Italian immigrant during the "We Came by Train" interactive exhibit at the Jackson Street Roundhouse on April 19-20. At left, Tim Kaufenberg, 10, of Highland Park plays ring toss while dressed as an early settler. The exhibit is being held to kick off Minnesota's sesquicentennial celebration and will continue from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, April 26-27. Call 651-228-0263. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

eight annual event will feature hand-crafted beers to sample, live music, food, a beer swag raffle and nonalcoholic drinks. Tickets are \$45 and available at www.ticketworks.com or 651-209-6689.

Saturday/April 26

A "BRINGING BACK THE '50S" auction, dinner and dance will be held from 5:30 to 11:30 this evening at Holy Spirit School, 1406 Randolph Ave. Music will be provided by the Fairlanes and Rhythm Engine. Call 651-698-7233.

CHEMISTS IN THE LIBRARY, featuring hands-on science activities for all ages, will be held from 10:00 to 11:30 this morning at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Local members of the American Chemical Society will present "Candy Chemicals," "Vitamin C in Drinks," "Memory Metal" and "Silly Putty." Call 651-695-3700.

A HEALTH FAIR FOR WOMEN will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. today at the West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St. The free fair will feature exhibitors from 25 health and wellness-related agencies; workshops on cancer prevention, salads, personal safety and pesticides in the home; and free health screenings, chair massages, hair braiding, mini-manicures and makeovers. A free lunch will be provided and door prizes will be awarded. Call Pa Nou Xiong at 651-298-5493, ext. 215.

A RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP will be held at 1:00 this afternoon at the Dodge Nature Center in West St. Paul. All materials will be provided for constructing a rain barrel, which can help residents lower water costs and reduce water pollution. The cost is \$35-\$40. Call 651-455-4531 to register.

BIRD WATCHING for beginners will be offered at 10:00 this morning at Fort Snelling State Park. Binoculars and bird

guides will be available. Then at 1:00 p.m. a fitness and phenology walk will be held to see what is blooming around the park. The programs are free. Call 612-725-2724.

A PANCAKE BREAKFAST will be served between 7:30 and 11:00 this morning at Mendota Heights United Church of Christ, 680 Highway 110, Mendota Heights. The cost is \$8.00 for adults (\$7.00 with food shelf donation) and \$3.00 for children. Call 651-454-1311.

"MY KIDS WON'T EAT THAT," a workshop for child-care providers and parents, will be presented by Robin Hanson of Providers Choice from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. today at the Rondo Library, 461 N. Dale St. Admission is free. To register, call 651-458-0265.

A RUMMAGE SALE will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. today at Randolph Heights Elementary School, 348 S. Hamline Ave. Tax-deductible donations will be accepted from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, April 23-24, and from 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 25. Proceeds will benefit the library fund. Call Stephanie at 651-290-2485 or Lori at 651-699-6234.

THE FUTURE OF MINNESOTA will be the topic of a panel discussion from 9:00 a.m. to noon today at Unity Church-Unitarian, 732 Holly Ave. The panel will include Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Ritchie, director of Parents United for Public Schools Mary Cecconi, president of Growth and Justice Dane Smith, executive director of Pangea World Theater Meena Natarajan, and members of the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Funding Program. Admission is free. Call 651-228-1456.

STATE REP. MICHAEL PAYMAR will hold a constituent meeting from 10:00 a.m. to noon today at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-296-5999.

Sunday/April 27

A WILDFLOWER WANDERING will take place at 1:00 this afternoon at Fort Snelling State Park. Join the naturalist for an easy walk looking for splashes of color in the woods and prairies. The program is free. Call 612-725-2724.

A GARLIC MUSTARD PULL will be conducted by the Friends of the Mississippi River and the Gorge Stewards from 1:00 to 3:00 this afternoon in the Longfellow neighborhood of Minneapolis. Volunteers will meet at East 35th Street and West River Parkway to receive brief training and then work to remove garlic mustard at the nearby river flats and oak savanna. Register at srich@fmr.org or 651-222-2193, ext. 14.

AN URBAN EXPEDITION to Thailand will be offered from 1:00 to 3:00 this afternoon in the cortile at Landmark Center. Visitors will be able to enjoy many elements of Thai culture without leaving St. Paul. Admission is free. Call 651-292-3276.

Tuesday/April 29

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE, 943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. Frank Kroncke, a member of the Minnesota Eight who destroyed draft records in 1970 in an effort to keep young men out of the Vietnam War, will be the guest. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 7:30 tonight on Water Street just south of the Wabasha Bridge. Call 651-224-8933.

A RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE will be held from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. today at Nativity Catholic Church, 1900 Stanford Ave. Call 1-800-448-3543.

Wednesday/April 30

ROBERT WERNER, a geography professor at the University of St. Thomas who will be publishing two books on Bolivia in 2009, will take the audience on a comprehensive tour of Bolivia during a photo-intensive talk at 7:15 this evening at Unity Church-Unitarian, 732 Holly Ave. Admission is free. Call 651-228-1456.

Thursday/May 1

THE FESTIVAL OF NATIONS will return to St. Paul RiverCentre today through Sunday, May 4. The 76th annual festival features cultural exhibits, ethnic food cafes, dance and musical groups, folk artisans and an international bazaar. Tickets are \$7.00-\$9.00 in advance or \$7.00-\$12 at the door. Call 651-647-0191 or visit www.festivalofnations.com.

WILLIAM QUANDT, a professor at the University of Virginia and former staff member on the National Security Council, will discuss the challenges of creating an Arab-Israeli peace at 4:30 this afternoon in Carnegie Hall at Macalester College. Admission is free. Call 651-696-6310.

THE TRACES MUSEUM at Landmark Center will present two programs today that explore censorship. At noon, a short documentary will be shown about recent



The St. Catherine Choral Society

GLORIA

Francis Poulenc

HEILIG (Holy Is God)

C.P.E. Bach

Sonata pian'e forte

Giovanni Gabrieli

Kristie Tigges, soprano
Patricia C. Connors, conductor

The Choral Society Orchestra

3 p.m., Sunday, April 27, 2008
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1079 Summit Ave., St. Paul

Admission \$10 adult/\$5 under 18



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UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

Ann Reed: *Song for Minnesota*

SATURDAY, MAY 3, 8 PM

In honor of the sesquicentennial, Ann has been crisscrossing the state, gathering ideas for a new *Song for Minnesota*. Join Ann, Dan Chouinard, Joan Griffith, Diane Jarvi, Leslie Ball and others for an evening of Minnesota history in word and music.




Cokie Roberts

THURSDAY, MAY 22, 7 PM

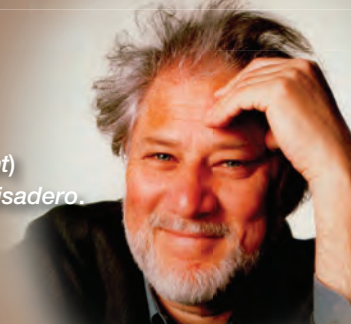
The National Public Radio and ABC News commentator talks about her new book, *Ladies of Liberty: The Women Who Shaped Our Nation* with host Kerri Miller.

Talking Volumes

Michael Ondaatje

TUESDAY, MAY 27, 7 PM

The Sri Lankan-Canadian novelist (*The English Patient*) joins host Kerri Miller to discuss his latest novel, *Divisadero*. With music from Dreamland Faces.



Talking Volumes is a partnership of Minnesota Public Radio, the *Star Tribune*, and the Loft Literary Center.



Dan Chouinard

Café Europa II

SATURDAY, MAY 31, 8 PM

In the second installment of his trilogy, Chouinard returns with his musical travelogue for bicycle and accordion. With guests the Rose Ensemble, Maria Jette, the Brass Messengers, Peter Ostroushko and John Munson.

Talking Volumes

Judy Blume

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 7 PM

One of America's most beloved but controversial authors due to the difficult themes she pursues, Judy Blume (*Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*, *Blubber*, *Summer Sisters*), joins host Kerri Miller.



Talking Volumes is a partnership of Minnesota Public Radio, the *Star Tribune*, and the Loft Literary Center.

Call the box office at 651-290-1221 or
WWW.FITZGERALDTHEATER.ORG for details.

31◀ THE KIOSK

attempts in Oklahoma City to ban the German film *The Tin Drum*. A discussion will follow. At 7:00 this evening, Brian Fogarty of the College of St. Catherine will speak on censorship and suppression of ideas. Call 651-292-8700.

CAFESJIAN'S CAROUSEL will open for its eighth season today at Como Park. Hours are from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday and 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are \$1.50. Volunteers are needed to help run the carousel. Call 651-489-4628.

Friday/May 2

PEACE ACTIVIST AND AUTHOR Marshall Rosenberg will lead a workshop, "Communicating Gracefully in the Face of Intensity," beginning at 9:00 this morning and continuing to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, May 4, in the Brady Educational Center at the University of St. Thomas. Visit www.stthomas.edu/justpeace/nvcevent to register.

Saturday/May 3

THE LIVING GREEN EXPO will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. today and tomorrow in the Grandstand Building at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. The expo will feature more than 200 exhibitors and 60 workshops on a variety of sustainability and green living topics. Expo attractions include music, art, food, demonstrations, and activities for children. Admission is free. Visit www.LivingGreen.org.

WILDER CENTER, 451 N. Lexington Pkwy., will hold its grand opening from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. today. There will be a building dedication with St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman at 1:00 p.m., food, children's activities, live entertainment and information on Wilder programs. Visit www.wilder.org.

A RUMMAGE SALE will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. today at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, 60 Kent St. A bag sale will be held from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Monday, May 5. Call 651-228-1172.

AN ARCHAEOLOGY FAIR and open house will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. today and noon to 5:00 p.m. tomorrow just outside the walls of historic Fort Snelling. Activities will include artifact identification, pottery-making, flint-knapping, videos and archeology lab tours. There is no cost. Admission to the fort is \$5.00-\$10. Call 612-726-1171.

A RUMMAGE SALE will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. today at St. Clement's Episcopal Church, 901 Portland Ave. Visit www.stclements-stp.org.

"HOW TO START YOUR OWN Kitchen Garden" will be offered from 10:00 a.m. to noon today at the Minnesota State Horticultural Society classroom, 1755 Prior Ave. The cost is \$20-\$25. To register, call 651-643-3601 or 800-676-6747, ext. 211.

FOOD WRITER ELEANOR OSTMAN will share anecdotes from her best-selling book, *Always on Sunday Revisited*, at 10:00 this morning at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 700 Wesley Lane, Mendota Heights. The book is based on 30 years of Ostman's food column in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. Samples of her recipes will be available and she will sign copies of her books. The program is free, but food shelf donations are welcome. Call 651-452-5683.

A BIRD-WATCHING HIKE will be held by Friends of the Mississippi River from 8:00 to 9:30 this morning at Crosby Farm

Regional Park. Participants will discover birding in the urban wilderness and learn more about volunteer opportunities to help restore the park. The hike is one of several scheduled as part of the Ramsey County Birding Festival on May 1-4. Visit www.fmr.org/participate/events.

A RUMMAGE SALE will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. today at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1895 Laurel Ave. Call 651-646-6175.

Sunday/May 4

JONATHAN SARNA of Brandeis University will speak on the importance of the Jewish vote in the 2008 presidential election during a program at 5:30 this evening at Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Ave. Sarna also will join a panel that will include Sarah Janacek of Politics in Minnesota Multimedia News Service and Scott Goldberg of KARE 11 News. The cost \$15, which includes a vegetarian dinner. To register, call 651-695-3180 or visit www.jewishminnesota.org.

A BENEFIT FOR AVERY GALLAGHER, the 6-year-old daughter of Tom and Diane Gallagher, will be held from 1:00 to 4:00 this afternoon at Mancini's Char House, 531 W. 7th St. Avery was diagnosed with brain cancer last May, has been through 10 months of treatment at both Children's Hospital and the Mayo Clinic, and is receiving treatment at the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. She is in remission. The benefit will include live and silent auctions and an Italian buffet. Admission is \$30. Contact Joe Gallagher at 651-269-7842.

A WORLD WAR II "Preservation Spectacular" for families will be held from 1:00 to 4:00 this afternoon at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. The event will feature a panel of veterans discussing their war experiences and drop-in workshops on how to preserve WWII-era family histories and heirlooms. Admission is free. Call 651-259-3015.

AN ISRAEL FESTIVAL will be held from 10:00 a.m. to noon today at the Temple of Aaron Synagogue, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. Among the attractions will be camels, llamas, an Israeli coffee house and Israeli food for sale (falafel, chumas, eggplant salad and other Israeli treats). Activities for all ages will include beading, Henna tattoos, sand and spin art, and Israeli dancing. Call 651-698-8874.

Tuesday/May 6

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE, 943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. David and Pam Nelson from Integrated Life Wellness and Coaching will talk about "healing energy" and how peace starts from within. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

AN ORIGINAL COPY of the Declaration of Independence will be on display at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd., from today through May 18 as part of Minnesota's sesquicentennial anniversary. The document is one of only 25 remaining original copies of the Declaration of Independence that were printed on July 4, 1776, at the shop of Philadelphia printer John Dunlap, and is the only one that travels for exhibition. Admission to view the Declaration of Independence is free, as is a display of two handwritten versions of Minnesota's Constitution. Regular admission fees apply to see other exhibits at the History Center. Call 651-259-3000.

On the Town

Dressed to the hilt

Costumers' Guild members revel in reaping benefits of what they sew

BY CAROLYN WILL

All dressed up and no place to go has been the lament of a small but talented group of Twin Cities residents who enjoy slipping into elaborate costumes created by their own hands.

"We all like to sew and we like to have places to wear our creations," said Elizabeth Merritt, a Macalester-Groveland resident and co-founder of the newly formed Twin Cities Costumers Guild.

Merritt and Gwen Kachemyer started the guild six months ago by offering sewing classes for those who wanted to learn the art of making costumes. Now 20 members strong, the guild is inviting the public to powder their wigs, fluff their bustles, iron their capes and trip the light fantastic at the group's inaugural Costumed Dance.

"We welcome everyone, from those who like to dress as obscure comic book characters to Jedi warriors to Queen Elizabeth. Wear whatever," Merritt said.

Period costumes are the outfits of choice for Merritt, 25. Her interest in sewing costumes was piqued a year-and-a-half ago when she sewed her own wedding dress. The Victorian-era gown featured rows and rows of ruffles, three-quarter-length sleeves and a bustle, all in shades of blue.

"In the Victorian era, there was no standard color for a wedding dress," Merritt said. "After the wedding, it was just thrown into rotation with the normal daily wear. I made my husband's (wedding attire) as

well—a frock coat in fine black wool with a silver brocade vest and blue tie. He says it's still one of his favorites."

However, opportunities to don such finery are limited. Merritt and Kachemyer started to indulge their love for creating and wearing historical outfits as members of the Northstar Chapter of the Victorian Society in America. But Merritt said they felt a need to branch out and embrace other time periods.

The Twin Cities Costumers Guild's first meeting took place last November at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. Meetings continue to be held there at 2:00 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month.

The guild also hosts sewing circles on the first Thursday of each month where members socialize, help one another solve design problems and share information on fabric sales.

Kachemyer, who works in administration for Xcel Energy, said she enjoys the bragging rights her hobby affords her. "I like the fact that not a lot of people can do this anymore," she said. "Not too many have sewing skills."

Her mother taught Kachemyer the basics, enough to make her own nightgown when she was a teen. The rest has been self-taught.

For the guild's Costumed Dance, Kachemyer will be making a re-creation of an 1868 ball gown taken from *Harper's Bazaar*.

Men are expected to be present in equal numbers at the Costumed Dance. "You'd be surprised at the number of men who enjoy costumes," Merritt said.

Merritt said her husband, Marc Schwartz, has been interested in costumes even longer than she has. "And he definitely enjoys participating in costume events," said Merritt, who runs an organic food consulting business, M&I Organic Consultants, with her husband. "I think you could call him a willing partner."

In addition to his 1870s frock suit, Schwartz is also fond of a 1500s-style suit he dons for the Minnesota



Elizabeth Merritt, left, and Christy Dent page through a source book in Merritt's Macalester-Groveland home while wearing gowns they've sewn.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

Renaissance Festival.

Aside from saying it is an Elizabethan style, Merritt has been keeping details of her own frock for the Costumed Dance under wraps.

The Twin Cities Costumers' Guild Costumed Dance will run from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Saturday, April 26, at the Oddfellow's Hall, 2380 Hampden St. A variety of music and dances will be featured, including ceili, English Country, ballroom and modern. Called dances will be taught and light refreshments will be provided. Admission is \$15 and is open to all. For more information, visit www.tccostumers.org.



Colleen Cotter clasps her hands beneath the decorative waistband of her kimono-style costume.



Guild member Keith Nelson of Minneapolis models 9th-century Viking attire he has created.

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On the Town *Briefly*

Theater

A befuddled professor, a magic wastebasket, a little cross-dressing and plenty of sword fights turn the tragedies of *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet* into comedies in *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)*. Ann-Marie MacDonald's rollicking revision of Shakespeare is being performed through April 27 by Theatre Unbound. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday at the Wellstone Center, 179 E. Robie St. Tickets are \$18, \$15 for students and seniors, \$12 for veterans and military. Call 612-721-1186.

Esperando La Carroza (*Waiting for the Hearse*), a comic portrait of spiritual and moral decay revolving around the matriarch of a Latino-American family who disappears and is mistaken for dead, is being performed through April 27 by Mixed Blood Theatre. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 3:00 p.m. Sunday at Stepping-Stone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. The drama is spoken in English and Spanish with translations projected above the stage. For tickets, call 612-338-6131.

Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St., will stage the musical *Once Upon a Mattress* April 25-27. The curtain will rise on this adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, "The Princess and the Pea," at 7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$8.00, \$6.00 for students. Call 651-696-3302.

The King and I, Rodgers and Hammerstein's uplifting tale about the love that develops between an English widow and a Siamese monarch, is being performed through May 3 by the Morris Park Players. The curtain will rise at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday at Folwell School, 3611 20th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$15, \$12 for seniors and students. Call 612-724-8373.

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill, Lanie Robertson's heartbreaking tribute to jazz singer Billie Holiday, is being performed through May 4 at Park Square Theatre, 50 W. 7th Place. Thomasina Petrus stars as the tragic singer who rose out of poverty to put her stamp on some of the era's most memorable music. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday. Call 651-291-7005.



Tracey Maloney and John Middleton star in Gremlin Theatre's production of *Everywhere Signs Fall*, a steamy thriller about a brother and sister who take to the road to investigate supposed accidents and meet up with a down-on-his-luck bartender in a seedy Phoenix motel. Alan Berks' drama about grief, love, fate and free is playing Thursdays through Sundays through May 11 at the Loading Dock Theatre, 509 Sibley St. Tickets are \$18, \$16 for seniors, half their years for those under age 30, and whatever you can pay on Monday, April 28. For reservations, call 651-228-7008. PHOTO BY TRAVIS ANDERSON

Barbra Streisand impersonator Steven Brinberg will perform *Simply Barbra* at 9:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, April 25 and 26, at Camp Bar, 490 N. Robert St. Tickets are \$25 and \$10. Call 651-292-1844.

"The Witness Project: Three Plays About Power and the State" will be presented April 25 through May 3 by the Macalester College Theater and Dance Department. *Press Conference*, Harold Pinter's five-minute drama about a chief of secret police turned minister of culture; *The Conduct of Life*, Cuban-American Maria Irene Fornes' play about the home life of a torturer; and *Far Away*, Caryl Churchill's eerie vision of the excesses of power, will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday on the Main Stage of Macalester's Fine Arts Center. Tickets are \$7.00, \$5.00 for seniors. Call 651-696-6359.

Eugene O'Neill's harrowing tragedy, *Long Day's Journey Into Night* will be staged at 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 25 through May 18, at Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$20. Call 612-333-3010.

St. Thomas Academy and Visitation students will stage the Stephen Sondheim musical *Into The Woods* from April 25 through May 4. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 4:00 p.m. Sunday in DeSales Auditorium, 2455 Visitation Drive in Mendota Heights. Tickets are \$10, \$5.00 for students and seniors. Call 651-683-1750.

Mom's the Word, a wildly funny, sometimes touching collection of monologues, skits and songs about motherhood, will be performed April 25 through June 8 by Actors Theater of Minnesota. Directed by Peter Moore, it stars Christine Karki, Dawn Brodey, Mo Perry, Elizabeth Hawes and Emily Fradenburgh. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays at the Lowry Theater, 16 W. 5th St. Tickets are \$25-33. Call 612-673-0404.

Former Public Enemy No. 1, Alvin "Creepy" Karpis will haunt the very halls in which

he was tried in *You Are There*, a drama that takes its direction from the 1970s television program by the same name. Karpis' 1936 trial for the kidnappings of St. Paul businessmen William Hamm and Edward Bremer Jr. will be reenacted at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, April 30 and May 1, in Courtroom 317 of Landmark Center. Emceed by former state Supreme Court Justice Esther Tomljanovich, the reenactment will feature a host of Minnesota jurists, legal practitioners and academicians in the roles of those who were there. Admission is free, and a reception will follow. Call 651-292-3276.

The decadence of 1930s Berlin comes to life in the Tony Award-winning musical *Cabaret*, which will play May 2-18 at the Ordway. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 2:00 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday and 2:00 and 7:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$48-\$65. Call 651-224-4222.

The Triangle Factory Fire Project, a searing drama about the 1911 blaze that killed 146 people and the trial and political upheaval that followed, will be performed May 3-25 by the Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company. Directed by Carolyn Levy, it stars Matt Rein, Adam King, Brian Columbus, M. Scott Taulman, David Coral, Elena Giannetti, Anna Olson, Kirby Bennett and Ellen Apel. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays, 8:00 p.m. Saturdays, 2:00 p.m. Sundays and 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 4, in the auditorium of the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Panel discussions will follow shows on May 4 and 18. Tickets are \$17 to \$24. Call 651-647-4315.

Music

Local lutenist Richard Griffith will perform a selection of pieces from 17th- and 18th-century Scotland at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 24, in the Village View Room of the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Admission is by donation and \$10 is suggested. Refreshments will be available.

The St. Paul Chamber Orchestra will present its upcoming Carnegie Hall program for local audiences at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday and Saturday, April 24 and 26, at the Ordway. Conductor Douglas Boyd and soprano Dawn Upshaw will join in the program, which includes the world premiere of Osvaldo

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Jazz guitarist Gene Bertoncini will perform along with bassist Ike Sturm and drummer Dane Richeson at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, April 27, at Central Presbyterian Church, 500 Cedar St.. The University of Minnesota Jazz Ensemble will open the show. Tickets are \$10, \$5.00 for students.

Michael Christie of the Brooklyn Philharmonic will conduct by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra in four concerts May 1-3. The program includes Tartini's Devil's Trill Sonata, Rameau's Suite from Zoroastre, Dvořák's Serenade in D Minor and Ligeti's Romanian Concerto. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Thursday at Temple Israel in Minneapolis; 10:30 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Friday at Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie; and 8:00 p.m. Saturday at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 900 Summit Ave. Tickets are \$10-\$25. Call 651-291-1144.

The a cappella ensemble InVocation will celebrate the season of love with a program of English and American music at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 2, at St. Anthony Park United Methodist Church, 2200 Hillside Ave., and at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, May 11, at Macalester-Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Ave. Admission is free, though a collection will be taken for the charity Feed My Starving Children.

The Wolfgang will perform a potpourri of classical music for fortepiano, flute and strings at 7:30 p.m. Friday May 2, at Central Baptist Church, 420 N. Roy St. Admission is by donation. Call 612-927-8766.

Gritty singer and lyrical songwriter Greg Brown will perform along with indie-folk duo The Pines at 8:00 p.m. Friday, May 2, at the Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E. Exchange St. Tickets are \$34.50, \$29.50 and \$28.50. Call 651-290-1221.

The 34-voice St. Paul Vocal Forum will perform "Fear and Love," a program of music by Lewis Allan, Pablo Casals, Bob Chilcott, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Giuseppe Verdi, and Eric Whitacre, at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 3, at St. Albert the Great Catholic Church, 2836 33rd Ave. S. in Minneapolis.



Romanian pianist Mihaela Ursuleasa will perform works by Rachmaninoff and Chopin along with the world premiere of "Ballad(e) Out of the Blues (Superstar Etude No. 3)" by Pulitzer Prize winner Jay Kernis on Sunday, May 4. The Chopin Society concert will begin at 3:00 p.m. in the Concert Hall of Macalester College's Fine Arts Center. Kernis will give a pre-concert talk at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are \$20, \$12 for students. Call 612-822-0123.

PHOTO BY JULIA WESELY

Spoken-word artist LaTisha Jones will also appear. Admission is free, though donations will be accepted.

Singer-songwriter Ann Reed will conclude her six-city "Song for Minnesota" tour at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, May 3, at the Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E. Exchange St. Joining the velvety-voiced guitarist will be pianist Dan Chouinard and others. Tickets are \$32. Call 651-290-1221.

Evensong for Eastertide will be performed by the St. John the Evangelist choir at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4, at the church, 60 N. Kent St. The program will include Mozart's Missa Brevis in F. Admission is by donation and a reception will follow. Call 651-228-1172 extension 38.

Cellist Gary Hoffman of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center will join the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota in concert at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. The program includes Strauss' Sextet in F major from Capriccio, Reger's Suite No. 1 in G major, and Brahms' Sextet in G major. Tickets are \$15-\$25. Call 651-450-0527.

Exhibits

"Climate Change," 20 pieces of fabric art that addresses the psychological dimensions of global warming, is being shown through May 31 at the Textile Center, 3000 University Ave. SE. in Minneapolis. Call 612-436-0464.

The St. Paul Art Crawl will open the doors to more than 250 artists studios and art galleries on April 25-27 in the city's downtown and South St. Anthony neighborhoods. A wide range of art, live music and other entertainment will be featured from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. Friday, 2:00 to 10:00 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5:00 p.m. Sunday. A free shuttle service will be available between the various locales. A silent auction will be held on Friday and Saturday in Golden's Deli at 275 E. 4th St. For more information, call 651-292-4373 or visit www.artcrawl.org.

Nature photography by Lou Lachter, former editor of *U.S. Camera*, will open with a reception at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 30, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The photos will remain on view through June 13. Call 651-698-0751.

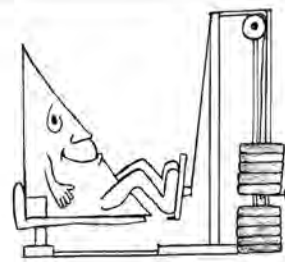
"The Figure and the Landscape," highlighting the interplay between sculpture and black-and-white landscape photography, will open with a reception from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. Friday, May 2, at the Vine Arts Center, 2637 27th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Featured is the work of Will Agar, Doug Beasley, Chris Faust, Roger Junk, Brant Kingman, Jeff Korte, and Nick Legeros. It will remain on view through June 14. A related panel discussion will be held at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 22. Call 612-728-5745.

"Thank God and FDR," 50 prints, watercolors, oils and woodcarvings from the former Ah-Gwah-Ching state medical facility in Walker, will be shown May 3 through November 2 at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. Admission to the exhibit only is \$2.00; admission to the exhibit with a mansion tour is \$8.00 for adults, \$6.00 for seniors and students, and \$5.00 for children ages 6-17. A related gallery talk by curator Brian Szott will be offered free of charge at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 13. Call 651-297-2555

"We Couldn't Live at Home," the life stories of children who resided in the North Minneapolis building that once housed the Jewish Sheltering Home for Children and now houses Avenues for Homeless Youth, will be displayed May 3 through October 6 at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission is \$10, \$8.00 for seniors and students, \$5.00 for children ages 6-17. A free family day with live music,

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Books

Common Good Books will present the following free programs: a reading by Hmong-American writer Kao Kalia Yang from her memoir, *The Latehomecomer*, 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 27, at the Swedenborgian Church, 170 Virginia St.; a discussion with *The Compassionate Carnivore* author Catherine Friend, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 30, at the Swedenborgian Church; a Book Club discussion of *Beware of Cat* by Vincent Wyckoff, 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 6, in Nina's Coffee Cafe, 165 N. Western Ave.; and readings by poets Margaret Hasse, Richard Solly and Lightsey Darst, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, at Nina's. For information, call 651-225-8989.

Barnes & Noble, 2080 Ford Pkwy., will present free readings by Laurie Capole from her book about Minnesota treasures, *North Star Numbers*, at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 29; and Nancy Crocker from her young-adult novel, *Billie Standish Was Here*, at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 29. Call 651-690-9443.

Wang Ping and James Lenfestey, poets who address the traditions of Chinese poetry from different perspective, will read at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 29, at the Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. Admission is free.

An architectural walking tour of downtown St. Paul will step out at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4, from the St. Paul Public Library, 90 W. 4th St. It will be led by Paul D. Nelson, co-author of *Rocky Roots*, a geological guide to downtown's most distinctive buildings. Refreshments and a book signing will follow in Landmark Center. The program is free, but reservations are required by calling 651-222-0701.

The top eight performance poets in the Twin Cities will battle on Monday, May 5, for a berth in the National Poetry Slam in Madison, Wisconsin, in August. The competition begins at 8:00 p.m. at the Artists' Quarter, 408 St. Peter St. Poet, musician and humorist Matt

Riehle will take the stage prior to the slam. Admission, open to those age 18 and older, is \$5.00. Call 612-207-7991

Hmong-American author Kao Kalia Yang will read from her new memoir, *The Latehomecomer*, in a free program at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 6, at the Rondo Library, 461 N. Dale St. Call 651-222-3242.

Family

Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand Ave., will present the following free programs: a Maud Hart Lovelace Book Awards Celebration at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 25; Melanie Watt and her new picture book, *Scaredy Squirrel at the Beach*, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 26; Mo Willems and the latest book in his "Pigeon" series, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 30; stories for babies about counting, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, May 3; young poets read their winning entries in a *Community Reporter* contest, 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4. Call 651-224-8320.

Honk!, a zany musical based on Hans Christian Andersen's "The Ugly Duckling," will be performed April 30 through May 18 by the Youth Performance Company. The curtain rises on this heartwarming tale about finding your place in the world at 10:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Fridays, 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2:00 p.m. Sundays at the Howard Conn Fine Arts Center, 1900 Nicollet Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$12, \$10 for seniors and children age 14 and under. Call 612-623-9080.

Leap on imaginary lily pads, create a colorful pond scene and learn about pond life during Nature Tots, a program for preschoolers and parents, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Thursday, May 1, at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. Admission is \$5.00, \$3.00 for seniors and children ages age 3 and older. To register, call 612-624-9050.

The Sibley House Historic Site in Mendota will hold its season opener from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday, May 3, with new exhibits, the dedication of a staircase, a play about

Minnesota's territorial days and live music by the Century Brass. Admission is \$6.00, \$5.00 for seniors and students, and \$4.00 for children ages 6-17. For \$2.00 more, children may help staff find and identify the artifacts they dig up between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. May 3 and 4. Budding archaeologists can expect to get dirty and should bring a pail, shovel and gloves. Call 651-452-1596.

Et cetera

A pinch of history, heaping spoonfuls of humor and a dash of chutzpah all flavor the Yiddish stories and music that will be presented on April 26 and 27 by storyteller Carla Vogel and traditional musicians Judith Eisner and Stu Janis. The eclectic program will begin at 8:00 p.m. Saturday and 3:00 p.m. Sunday at Dreamland Arts, 677 N. Hamline Ave. Tickets are \$10. The Sunday matinee is suitable for children age 6 and older, who will be admitted free with the purchase of an adult ticket. Call 651-645-5506.

Six blocks of ethnic food, five stages for live music, open dancing, children's activities, a low-rider car show, parade and salsa-tasting contest will be among the attractions when St. Paul's Hispanic and Latino community rolls out its 26th annual Cinco de Mayo Fiesta on May 2 and 3. The free event runs from 4:00 to 9:00 p.m. Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturday along Cesar Chavez Street across the Mississippi River from downtown. Call 651-222-6347.

The Festival of Nations will turn St. Paul's RiverCentre into an international bazaar May 2-4. Ethnic foods, music, dance, exhibits, folk art and folk art demonstrations will be presented by more than 90 organizations. Among the highlights are a giant Earth balloon, a giant map of Africa, and performances by Malian kora player Mamadou Diabate and Chinese instrumentalist Ying Zhang. The event runs from 4:00 to 10:00 p.m. Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Saturday and 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$9.00 for adults and \$7.00 for children in advance (call 651-647-0191), \$12 and \$7.00 at the door.

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Sports



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Lay down the code for college athletes

By anybody's yard marker, 2007 was a rough inaugural year for University of Minnesota football coach Tim Brewster. The Gophers didn't win a single Big Ten Conference game and managed to lose to Division II North Dakota State at home. But to his credit, Brewster refused to be downcast and has cheerfully taken on the task of finding better football players for this fall.

Even his harshest critics concede Brewster this point: His players worked hard and represented the school honorably.

Which brings us to Dominic Jones, who was supposed to play for Brewster last year but didn't. A holdover from the Glen Mason era, Jones was expected to be one of the Gophers' top defensive backs in 2007. However, he ran afoul of the law a year ago and wound up in court facing a pair of charges stemming from a sordid incident in a dorm room. He was ultimately acquitted of rape last week, but was convicted of fourth-degree criminal sexual contact. The details have received considerable play in the local media and need not be repeated here.

Earl Gray, Jones' attorney, said in his summation to the jury: "You're not here to set standards of conduct for college kids." The jurors may have bought that line, but Brewster didn't. He booted Jones and four other players who were involved in the incident off the team last summer. For that action, Gopher fans should be giving the coach a standing ovation.

Dan O'Brien, who recently joined Brewster's staff as director of football operations and high school relations, came to the job with an interesting pedigree. In addition to serving as a head college football coach, he was the athletic director at Division II (Concordia) and Division III (Hamline) universities. In his AD days, he dealt with various types of miscreants, though he never faced the fallout from anything like what happened in the Jones case.

Which led to this question: How can a college program avoid recruiting players who may be inclined to perform in an unsavory manner off the field? His answer: "You can't."

"Anytime you recruit a kid, you do a background check," O'Brien said, "but you can't really know a person's character until he gets to your school. At its very best, whatever checking you do is just a snapshot of what you're actually getting."

Although he has only been on the job a couple of weeks, O'Brien has already noticed this: "He (Brewster) has high expectations for his kids. He won't tolerate bad behavior."

It's obviously a lot harder to keep track of football players on a 50,000-student campus than it is at smaller schools like Concordia and Hamline. And coaches today need to go further than just making phone calls to see who's in for curfew. "You have to have a code of conduct," O'Brien said. "If a player violates it, you have to deal with it swiftly and appropriately."

For those of us who weren't in the courtroom, there's little choice but to believe the jury issued the correct verdict. However, there's a difference between being found guilty in a court of law and doing something that brings shame to your school, employer or family.

Part of O'Brien's job description is working on the U of M's relationships with high school coaches across the state. During the Mason era, those relationships appeared to fray. The primary evidence was the plethora of Minnesota high school talent that left to play football elsewhere. Brewster is determined to stem that exodus. Fairness dictates waiting a few years before making any judgment on that score.

Gray was quoted in the papers as saying that the guilty verdict was a "victory" for Jones. Perhaps. But the Gophers have other victories in mind—both on and off the field—

WRIGHT CALL ► 38

Prep baseball preview

Local coaches find leaders who play out of a crouch

BY BRIAN JOHNSON

To would-be base stealers, catchers are the long arm of the law. But a good prep baseball backstop doesn't live on a strong arm alone. Leadership skills come in handy, too.

"You look for someone to run the team," said Cretin-Derham Hall coach Jim O'Neill, when asked what he looks for in a catcher. "He has the ball in his hand almost every play. He gives the signs and runs the defense. Having a catcher with a lot of energy is a plus. We get on our catchers to keep a good pace on the game. We don't want him slowing the pitcher down."

Roosevelt coach Joe Protzmann wants his catchers to be steady, dependable and tough. Toiling in a physically demanding position, the catcher has to "be able to stay positive and help keep the pitcher up when he's starting to slide," he said.

St. Thomas Academy coach Tony Cicalello said catchers have to be mentally tough. "They take a beating back there," he said. "We look for a guy who has great leadership skills, can handle adversity and can lead by example."

Central coach Adam Hunkins said his catchers have to be able to "throw well, block well and challenge people with their arms."

SPA coach Mike Brown looks for kids who have no fear of getting down to block a ball. "I don't call pitches," he said, "so we work with our catchers on what to look for behind the plate. They need to tell everyone where the ball's going. And they have to be able to throw."

Here's a chance to catch up on area teams as they start the 2008 season:

CENTRAL

League: St. Paul City Conference

Last year's record: 10-6 (9-3 in conference)

Coach: Adam Hunkins

Key players and their strengths:

- Willie Moore, senior first baseman. A solid defensive player.
- Ben Nelson, junior center fielder. Hit over .400 last year and is expected to produce similarly again.
- Laurence Ducker, senior shortstop/second baseman. Handles the bat well and has some power. The team's best all-around player.
- Drew Gunderson, senior outfielder/



Highland Park catcher Sam Bisciglia keeps his eye on the ball behind the plate.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

first baseman. Batted over .400 last year and should produce a lot of runs this spring.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Central plays a tight defense and has some experience with 13 seniors taking the field this spring. However, offense is a question mark for the Minutemen, who graduated some good hitters. "It's up in the air how many runs we'll score," Hunkins said.

Outlook: It looks to be a four-way race in the St. Paul City Conference among Como, Highland, Johnson and Central. "We should be very, very competitive," Hunkins said.

CRETIN-DERHAM HALL

League: Suburban East Conference

Last year's record: 26-4 (13-3)

Coach: Jim O'Neill

Key players and their strengths:

- Jacob Esch, senior pitcher/shortstop. An all-state selection and metro player of the year last year.
- Nate Swanson, senior pitcher. Appeared in 11 games last year and will be a key starter this spring.
- Max Gregory, junior pitcher. Went

6-2 on the mound last year and tossed a shutout in the state tournament semifinals.

- Dan Slagle, senior third baseman. Has good all-around talent.
- Tim Tysk-Bell, senior outfielder. A terrific outfielder and hitter.
- Curt Swanson, senior catcher. Had some big hits for the '07 state championship team.
- Ryan Bohrer, senior infielder. A versatile player.

Team strengths/weaknesses: CDH should have good depth at the key position—pitching. Three of the six letter-winners back from last year's team are pitchers. The Raiders also have some good young athletes, including players from a state champion VFW team. However, CDH graduated 14 players, including some key contributors on last year's squad, so there are holes to plug.

Outlook: Top to bottom, the Suburban East is a tough league. Favorites include Park, Roseville, Mounds View, Stillwater and Forest Lake. CDH, the defending Class AAA state champs, expects to be

BASEBALL PREVIEW ► 41

Sibley's Carl among state's top girls' golfers

BY BILL WAGNER

Playing competitive golf can result in some feisty behavior between players. However, you won't see any of that attitude from Henry Sibley senior Lizzy Carl, who is currently ranked among the top high school girls' golfers in the state. It isn't that Carl isn't ultra-competitive. It's just that she wants the people she is competing against to play well, too. That's because the better they do, the better she does.

"When your competition plays well, it helps you play up to that level," she said.

"Lizzy roots for her opponents," said Sibley coach Tony Kienitz. "She's played against the top golfers in the state during her career and she's constantly looking to improve. It really motivates her if others do well."

Carl may like to see others excel, but few have excelled as she has in the past couple of years. The Mendota Heights resident has made four straight trips to the state Class AA golf tournament,

finishing 61st as an 8th-grader, 44th as a freshman, 11th as a sophomore, and second last year as a junior when she shot rounds of 77 and 78 over two days at Bunker Hills.

The logical progression would be for Carl to win this year's state tournament, especially since three-time defending champion Samantha Sommers of St. Cloud Apollo has graduated. But neither Carl nor her coach will predict it since

SIBLEY GOLFER ► 38

37◀ SIBLEY GOLFER

the field changes so much from year to year. (This year's tournament will also move from two classes to three.) Still, they both like the way she has improved.

"I can certainly see her being a state champion," Kienitz said.

"I feel really good about my chances of winning state," Carl said.

Carl carries a 78-stroke average and likely will be the medalist in most of the matches she competes in this season. She is also a team captain and takes her leadership role seriously.

There isn't a single weak part of Carl's game, Kienitz said. "It's really something to see how steadily she's improved," he said. "She has gained 40-50 yards off the tee since her sophomore year. Her irons are accurate and her putting is sound. She has the least amount of putts per round on the team."

However, the thing Kienitz likes most about Carl is not a physical attribute, but a mental one—how she plans her shots and makes adjustments. "She's very steady," he said. "If she has a bad hole, she doesn't let it get her down. She knows that there are times when you have to make a good bogey."

Carl's excellence has been noticed by Division I scouts and she has decided to play golf for Rutgers University next season. "I really like the East Coast," said Carl, adding that she



Senior Lizzy Carl walks softly and carries a big stick for the Warriors. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

also has a good rapport with Scarlet Knights coach Maura Ballard. "I knew that I'd have a better chance to play there right away. They're bringing in four freshmen. They have a developing team."

Carl played softball until the 6th grade when her father John, a 4-handicap golfer at Mendakota Country Club, convinced her to drop the bat and pick up the clubs. She learned a lot about the game from her father and two older brothers—John Jr., who played

golf for Sibley, and Mike, who played for St. Thomas Academy.

All four of them get together every once in a while and compete in rotating pairs in what Lizzy terms the Carl Cup. "It's cutthroat," she said.

Carl said she doesn't get any special treatment from family members on the links, despite her status as the youngest sibling. From her sophomore year on, she said, her father and brothers wouldn't play with her unless

she shot from the men's tees. "Now, when the four of us play, we're pretty even," she said.

Mom Nicky, who works as a speech pathologist for the St. Paul Public Schools, has never played much golf, but Carl said she may start this year.

Carl has two professional golfers that she really admires. One is 2003 U.S. Women's Open champion Hilary Lunke of Edina. "It was nice to see a Minnesotan win it," she said.

The other is Phil Mickelson. "He's outstanding, but it seems like he's always second behind Tiger," she said.

While her college career looms in her future, Carl said her immediate goal is to help the Warriors, who were second in the Classic Suburban Conference last year, win the conference title and perhaps go beyond that.

She likes her role as team mentor. Carl also likes the potential of the Warriors' No. 2 player, sophomore Annie Leuman, who also plays at Mendakota, and thinks she can help her along.

"I've watched her game grow," Carl said. "She'll give me some competition."

Sibley won the Classic Suburban nine-hole meet at Inver Wood Golf Course on April 15. Carl and Leuman both shot 35s as co-medalists. Carl also was the medalist with a 35 and helped lead Sibley to a one-stroke victory over Hill-Murray in a conference meet on April 17 at Crystal Lake.

37◀ WRIGHT CALL

for 2008 and beyond.

The winter game

St. Paul Academy baseball coach Mike Brown is normally a glass-half-full kind of guy. But when his Spartans took the field for their season opener at Blake on April 14, he admitted to being apprehensive. "We had just two outside practices before that game," he said. "And one of them was in our parking lot. It makes it hard to get ready for a real game."

It may have shown. The Spartans coughed up six runs in the first inning en route to a 9-7 loss in a game that Brown described as painful to watch. "I don't blame our guys though," he said. "There's only so much you can do when you practice in a gym."

Like most high school teams, the Spartans were kept inside for weeks this spring by rotten weather. They had already postponed six games before playing at Blake. And now that spring has apparently arrived, there will be lots of baseball played in a short period, requiring lots of bodies. "Normally, we dress 14 for games," Brown said. "We're dressing 19 now because we need so many pitchers. They just can't go more than three or four innings because their arms aren't ready."

Cretin-Derham Hall coach Jim O'Neill also frets about the arms race. The defending Class AAA champion Raiders had

been outside just once before suffering a 5-2 loss at Hastings in their opener on April 9. "Normally, we'd have a few scrimmages in before a regular-season game," O'Neill said. "The pitchers would get their work on a real mound and would be comfortable. The biggest problem for us at Hastings was the pitchers adjusting to strike zone again. We walked eight guys in the first four innings. Funny, our pitchers all looked like Cy Young when they were inside."

For guys like Brown and O'Neill, practicing in a gym is more than monotonous. "There's a limit to what you can do," O'Neill said. "Outfielders can't chase fly balls, for example. We'll be fine once we get outside for a couple of days, but it's like we're still in spring training."

At the University of St. Thomas, coach Dennis Denning had a bit of an advantage in that his team practiced in a big field house where they could work on double plays, cutoffs and the other little things that make his teams so good year in and year out. "There are 10,000 things we could do," Denning said. "When you're inside, the key is to use your time well and keep the players from getting bored."

For three days last week, Denning waited by the phone for word from Concordia that the Tommies could head north to play a doubleheader in Moorhead. The word never came, the games were cancelled, and under MIAC rules they can't be made up. The Tommies finally got outside on April 14 and swept archrival St. John's.

When you've been coaching baseball for 31 years like

Denning (17 at Cretin-Derham Hall and 14 at the University of St. Thomas), you learn to go with the Minnesota flow. "You just have to be ready to play ball when the opportunity presents itself" he said.

Overdue honor for Maggie

One thing that hockey seems to do better than any other sport is honor its brethren. On April 22, Rod Magnuson was scheduled to be toasted and roasted at the annual Old Timers dinner.

At an age when most people tend to sit back and relax, Magnuson still spends his winter as an assistant boys' hockey coach at Como Park. For years, however, he was a successful St. Paul City Conference head coach, making a pair of notable state tournament appearances with Johnson in the 1980s. He is a member of the Minnesota Coaches Hockey Hall of Fame and won the Cliff Thompson Award a few years back.

Many other accomplishments could be listed, but let's cut to the chase: Magnuson is one of the nicest, most decent people you will ever find in coaching. Hockey could use more like him.

I know I could use more of his talent on the links. Though he's a decade older than me, Magnuson is still nearly a scratch golfer. The only scratch some of us will ever see on the golf course is to our heads.

(Dave Wright can be reached at dwright53@msn.com.)

Spring

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Jacob Esch is threat at the plate and in the field for the Raiders

BY BILL WAGNER

Cretin-Derham Hall senior Jacob Esch does just about everything a baseball player can do—and he does them well. The 6-foot-3, 185-pound pitcher and shortstop batted .495 last year with six home runs and 46 RBIs. He was 8-0 on the mound, with a sparkling 1.77 earned run average and is equally comfortable as a starter or reliever. And in the field, he has few peers in the state.

“He’s our best all-around player,” said CDH coach Jim O’Neill, who has coached Esch since his sophomore year.

And Esch does it best when it matters most. He led the Raiders to a record 11th state baseball championship last year by pitching two scoreless innings of relief in a 4-3 victory over Eden Prairie in the title game.

Esch is also a formidable weapon on offense. Last year against Park of Cottage Grove, he hit homers on two consecutive at-bats—one a three-run shot and the other a grand slam.

He’ll do whatever it takes for his team. “I love to win,” he said.

The all-state pick and last year’s metro player of the year is back to his winning ways this spring, going four for five at the plate and pitching one scoreless inning in relief in a victory over Forest Lake on April 14.

The Raiders graduated 14 players from last year’s state championship squad and Esch, one of the team captains, will be called on as a leader more than ever this year. It’s a role he relishes.

“I’m not a yeller,” he said. “I try to be more of a leader by example. But if something needs to be said, I’ll come forward. You have to do what you can to help your team.”

Most gifted high school pitchers are effective because of their fastballs—they just rear back and let ‘em rip. Though Esch’s heater is certainly good enough, he can also throw baffling breaking balls and change speeds. And he keeps the ball in the strike zone.

“My teammates say my best pitch is my changeup,” said the lanky right-hander. “But for me, it isn’t so much about what pitch I throw as where I put it. You just have to have confidence and challenge hitters.”

Esch can’t stress enough how important O’Neill has been to his game. “He knows how to out-coach other coaches,” he said. “He knows how to handle his players, how to handle different situations, how to get a team to play with confidence.”

Esch’s admiration for O’Neill made it easy for him to decide to play Division I ball next year on a scholarship from Georgia Tech University. Yellow Jackets coach Danny Hall took a shine to Esch after watching him play in the Area Code games, an interstate competition of all-star players from around the nation. Esch found a strong resemblance between Hall and O’Neill.

“Coach Hall and coach O’Neill go about their business in much the same way,” said Esch, who plans to major in math or science in college. “They’re both quiet, but they’ll get on you if they have to. It should be an easy



CDH senior Jacob Esch gets set to bat during a win over visiting White Bear Lake on April 16. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

transition.”

The Yellow Jackets weren’t the only folks looking at Esch, who is also a talented football and basketball player. But the draw was strong to Georgia Tech, which has produced such major leaguers as Mark Teixeira, Nomar Garciaparra, Jason Varitek and Kevin Brown.

Esch expects no problem when he starts his college career this fall, except for adjusting to the climate. “It’s hard,” he said, about the weather in Atlanta. “The humidity knocks the life out of you.”

Esch said he is not sure yet if he’s going to be more of a pitcher or a position player at Georgia Tech. However, he does know that Hall will be giving him playing time as a freshman. “He expects every freshman to be able to come in and play,” Esch said about Hall, whose program has prospered in the tough Atlantic Coast Conference.

Georgia Tech will be gaining an astute student of the game. Esch, an avid Twins fan, fondly recalls his first major league hero. “It was Kirby Puckett,” he said. “He retired when I was 5, but I remember him well. He could do everything so well on the ballfield, and he had such fun playing the game.”

As a pitcher, Esch has another player who’s a hero—former Twin Johan Santana. “I just love watching him pitch,” Esch said. “Maybe it’s because I throw a changeup, and that’s his best pitch. Other people like to watch power pitchers, guys like Roger Clemens and Randy Johnson. I’m more of a finesse pitcher.”

CDH, which was 2-1 as of press time, has three games scheduled in the next four days, including at home against Roseville at 4:15 p.m. April 23, at Stillwater at 4:15 p.m. April 25 and against St. Thomas Academy at 7:00 p.m. April 26 at Midway Stadium.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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Interested persons are invited to comment on the wireless telecommunications facility proposed to be constructed at Groveland Park Elementary School, 2045 St. Clair Ave. St. Paul, MN, with respect to impacts on historic properties located at or near this facility, if any. The facility will consist of installing six cellular antennas on the chimney and placing the associated equipment shelter on the north side of the school. Comments regarding potential effects to historic properties should be submitted by mail to Regulatory Compliance Manager at 8550 W. Bryn Mawr, First Floor, Chicago, IL 60631, or by calling (773) 444-5429. Questions about this facility or this notice may also be directed to that address or phone number. This notice is provided in accordance with the regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, 47 C.F.R. Part 1, Subpart I and Appendices B and C.

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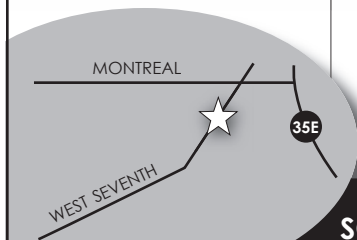
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The second annual Cinco de Mayo 5K Run/Walk will be held at 9:00 a.m. Sunday, May 4, beginning at the Highland Pool, 1840 Edgumbe Road. The race will proceed along Edgumbe to the Edgumbe Playground, before looping back to the start. A quarter-mile children's walk will begin at 8:45 a.m. Proceeds will benefit Minnesota Friends of the Orphans, 2052 Marshall Ave. The cost is \$15-\$20 in advance for the 5K run/walk (\$20-\$25 on race day) and \$8.00 for the children's walk (\$10 on race day). Prizes will be awarded to the top finishers and fundraisers, and T-shirts will be given to all 5K participants. For a registration form, visit www.friendsoftheorphans.org/mn.

Former Central High School baseball players and their families are invited to come out for an alumni game against the current varsity team at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, May 17, at Dunning Stadium. Alumni are welcome to play or just enjoy the cookout. For information, e-mail robin.selim@comcast.net or call 651-270-7410.

The Minnesota Thunder will open their home season against the Rochester Rhinos at 5:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4, at James Griffin Stadium at Central High School. Tickets range from \$10-\$17. Visit www.mnthunder.com or call 651-917-8326.

Sailing classes will once again be offered at Lake Phalen this summer by the St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation. Students from age 13 and through adult will learn essential skills in basic sailing during evening classes held twice a week starting in June, July and August. The cost is \$125. Register on-line at www.stpaul.gov/parks or call 651-772-7652.

Emily DePalma, a senior at Cretin-Derham Hall, has been selected for the U.S. Junior National Team that will be competing in the 2008 World Ultimate and Guts Championship in Vancouver, Canada, on August 2-9. More than 100 teams from 30 countries will compete in the flying disc sport sponsored by the World Flying Disc Federation.

Juniors Meghan Weiss from Visitation School and Lauren Weis from Cretin-Derham Hall were honored as the state's Class A and AA female swimmers of the year during the Minnesota all-state swimming and diving banquet on April 11. Weiss set state records in the 200- (1:52.33) and 100-yard (51.38) freestyle events, and anchored both of the winning relay teams for the Blazers, who won their third straight Class A state title this year. Weis, who has verbally committed to swim for the Gophers, set state Class AA records in the 200- (1:49.20) and 500-yard (4:52.85) freestyle events, and was on the winning 400 freestyle relay team for the Raiders, who finished third in the Class AA state meet.

The St. Paul Midway Lions beep baseball team, which is composed of sight-impaired players, will play a blindfolded "celebrity team" in an exhibition game at 12:45 p.m. Sunday, May 4, at Midway Stadium. The half-hour contest will precede a St. Paul Saints exhibition game. Among the celebrities will be a Saints player, Gene Marsh of Park Midway Bank, Sam Holl of TCF Bank in Lexington Park, Joe McKenzie of Highgrove Community Federal Credit Union and Bruce Larson of Klub Haus. Proceeds will benefit the beep ball team and Campaign SightFirst II to prevent blindness. Donations may be made by



Highland Park Gymnastics sent two teams to the Midwest Amateur Gymnastic Association state meet in Glencoe, Minnesota, last month. The Dragons took first place in Division 6 and the Dragonflies finished second in Division 5. The Dragons (top photo), from right to left, are Emily Kampa, Brett Schneider, Tavi Selim, Annalisa Dietz, Kinsey Bury, Elizabeth Carruth and Natalie Klutho. The Dragonflies (bottom photo), from left to right, are Leslie Fenske, Liz Schneeman, Claire Johnston, Mary Kampa, Emma Jaschke, Katie Sabo, Mae Hougo and Maggie Olson (not pictured is Anna Rose Schneider). Coaches are Kathy Baltzart, Katy Kieffer, Shannon Pates, Gina Daily, Elly Casper and Abe Garcia.

calling Jeff Fenske, program chairman for the Lions, at 651-222-6700. For information on beep ball, visit www.nbba.org.

A Walk For Diabetes will be hosted by the Diabetes Awareness Club of the University of St. Thomas from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Friday, May 9, in O'Shaughnessy Stadium on Cretin Avenue. Walkers are asked to gather pledges, with all donations going to the American Diabetes Association. There will be food and fun activities for all age groups. Contact Diabetes Awareness Club president Justin Conlin at 651-983-3066 or jconlin@stthomas.edu or visit <http://main.diabetes.org/goto/UST>.

Lucy Meyer, a Highland Park resident and St. Paul Academy and Summit School student, and her teammates from Twin City Twisters took first place in Level 10 competition at the Minnesota State Gymnastics Meet this spring at Champlin Park High School. Meyer is a former regional champion and one of 28 from Twisters who were scheduled to compete at the Region 4 meet in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, on April 18-20. Twisters teams took first place in all four USAG women's levels 7-10 at the state meet.

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37 ◀ BASEBALL PREVIEW

in that mix. "There are no days off in this conference," O'Neill said. "Every team can swing the bat."

HENRY SIBLEY

League: Classic Suburban Conference

Last year's record: 8-15 (5-11)

Coach: Greg Fehrman

Key players and their strengths:

- Nat Friberg, senior first baseman. Good all-around player.
- P.J. Zwach, senior catcher/third baseman. Hopes to come back strong after being sidelined by an injury in 2007.
- Doug Jones, senior pitcher. An experienced hurler who should pile up the innings.
- Santiago Morales, junior outfielder. An all-conference player who covers a lot of ground.
- Kyle Pick, junior infielder. Another solid player who started half the games in '07.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Sibley has a lot of youthful enthusiasm, but a lack of experience means it may take some time for the Warriors to settle in and hit their stride.

Outlook: Sibley hopes to improve with each game and be in a position to do some damage by the playoffs. The team opened the season with a 2-1 loss to conference rival Mahtomedi. Tartan, North St. Paul and Hill-Murray are other teams to beat in the conference.

HIGHLAND PARK

League: St. Paul City Conference

Last year's record: 10-11 (8-4)

Coach: Peter Brown

Key players and their strengths:

- David Steele, senior first baseman. A big, strong kid who hits for power.
- Travis Zenda, senior shortstop. The Scots look for him to be a big contributor on offense as the lead-off hitter.
- Teddy VanRanst, junior pitcher. A workhorse in the starting rotation who batted .354 last season.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Highland is a very athletic team that works hard and can swing the bat. Still, the Scots are young and growing pains are inevitable. The players will have to gain experience quickly to compete in the conference, Brown said.

Outlook: Como Park and Central will likely lead the pack this year, but Highland hopes to be in the mix. The team's goals are to win the conference and get a good seed in the section playoffs.

MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

League: Tri-Metro Conference

Last year's record: 21-4 (11-0)

Coach: David Glenn

Key players and their strengths:

- Mark Halstensgard, senior pitcher. Won nine games, hit .400 and was an all-state selection last year.
- Peter Winter, senior first baseman. An all-conference honoree and one of the top hitters in the metro area last year with a .500 average. Set school records in hits, RBIs and doubles.
- Jake Scholl, senior center fielder. A decent hitter and standout center fielder.
- Kyle Johnson, senior pitcher/infielder. Is 100 percent again after a knee injury.
- Alex Bruneau, junior pitcher/outfielder. A fast lefty with good movement on his pitches.
- Alec Johnson, sophomore catcher. A good hitter and solid behind the plate.
- Jack Johnson, sophomore left fielder. Has stellar defensive skills. The team's best hitter during a preseason tournament in Florida.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Minnehaha has good team defense, promising young talent (the junior varsity was 17-1 last year) and a handful of key seniors who return from last year's 21-win campaign. Hitting should not be a problem and the Redhawks return a couple of solid pitchers. Overall, the team is quite young, with seven sophomores on a varsity squad that lost seven seniors from 2007.

Outlook: Breck, Blake, St. Anthony, and Concordia are among the teams to beat in a balanced conference. Minnehaha expects to be with them if the young talent comes through.

ROOSEVELT

League: Minneapolis City Conference

Last year's record: 6-17 (3-9)

Coach: Joe Protzmann

Key players and their strengths:

- Brian Snow, junior center fielder. A team leader and the only returning starter from last season. Also fills in on the mound.
- Krystal Kersten, senior first baseman/pitcher. Roosevelt's lone senior will see double duty as a spot relief pitcher and will hold down the fort at first.
- Colburn Kersten, freshman shortstop/pitcher. Has a bright future. Arguably the team's best player.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Roosevelt has some good young athletes who are eager to play and grow together as a team. The Teddies lack varsity experience, with eight of last year's starters having graduated.

Outlook: Washburn and South are at the top of the heap in the Mill City conference. Roosevelt may be two years from contending.

ST. PAUL ACADEMY

League: Tri-Metro Conference

Last year's record: 9-13 (7-4)

Coach: Mike Brown

Key players and their strengths:

- Travis Churchward, senior pitcher/infielder. A control pitcher who is adept at changing speeds.
- Peter Schwartz, senior pitcher/outfielder. A lefty who will pitch and play center field. Swings the bat well.
- Terry Schwartz, senior pitcher/outfielder. A righty who's Peter's mirror image. Has good speed and plays a good all-around game.
- Austin Lilly, senior shortstop/second baseman. Has good range and good hands.
- Chris Kradle, senior first baseman/outfielder. A very good defensive player who may also pitch.
- Mike Falvey, junior catcher. A solid defensive catcher who calls a good game.
- Jonah Finkelstein, senior catcher. One of the most dedicated kids on the team. May see time at designated hitter.

Team strengths/weaknesses: SPA has experience and is strong defensively, especially in the outfield. The team has good speed and should be able to score runs. The Spartans have solid pitching, but nobody who dominates.

Outlook: SPA hopes to move up in the conference standings and get to the double elimination round of the section playoffs. "We want to have a chance to win in the fifth inning," Brown said. Blake, Minnehaha Academy and St. Anthony will test SPA's mettle in the tough Tri-Metro.

ST. THOMAS ACADEMY

League: Classic Suburban Conference

Last year's record: 18-9 (10-6)

Coach: Tony Cicalello

Key players and their strengths:

- Robbie Vannelli, pitcher/outfielder. A team leader with a great work ethic. One of the Cadets' top pitchers.
- Max Casper, senior shortstop/pitcher. A three-year starter with a great glove.
- Dan Brennan, senior third baseman. Solid defensively and swings a mean stick.

Team strengths/weaknesses: STA has a strong work ethic, senior leadership and team chemistry. The players seem to push each other in a positive way. However, the Cadets are young in several positions.

Outlook: Tartan and North St. Paul are among the elite teams in the competitive Classic Suburban. "But everyone is pretty solid," Cicalello said. "We should be in a very competitive conference this year. Our goal is to be in every game and to be playing our best ball at the end of the year."

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SUMMIT HILL NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE GARAGE SALE. Sat., May 3, 9-5. Big as ever! Get "sales location maps" after May 1 online at www.summithillassociation.org or pick up at Linwood Rec Center, 860 St. Clair Ave. or on day of event at each sale location. Look for "Neighborhood Garage Sale" yellow & black signs. Questions? 651-222-1222.

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GARAGE & BAKE Sale. Fri., May 2, 10-2 and Sat., May 3, 9-1. Central Presbyterian Church, Cedar at Exchange. Household items, clothing, etc. Proceeds go to local mission causes.

ST. MARY'S Annual Rummage Sale! Sat., May 3, 9-4. Great deals on toys, clothing, books and large selection of household items. 1895 Laurel Ave. 651-646-6175; www.saintmarysepiscopal.org.

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Book club members need shelf space. Fiction, non-fiction and more. Many multiple copies. All proceeds to literacy groups. Sat., May 3, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., 1713 Lincoln Ave., St. Paul.

YARD SALE. May 2-3, 9-5. 60 years of household goods. Everything must go! No early birds. No checks. 948 Linwood Ave.

MOVING SALE, 2000 Carroll Ave. Lots of stuff cheap. April 25-26, 10-3.

NON-PROFIT SALE for Girl Scout Troup. Sat., May 3, 8-2:30, 423 Saratoga St. So. at Palace. Great stuff for a great cause!

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Continued page 44

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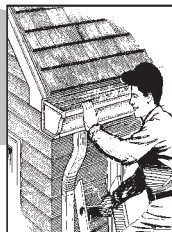
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