

## Dual-track study or unwarranted delay Light-rail planners debate U alignment

By Jane McClure

Restoring \$70 million in state funding before the Minnesota Legislature adjourns on May 19 is not the only twist in the track for the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit project. A dispute has arisen among members of the Central Corridor Management Committee over how to run the train through the University of Minnesota's East Bank campus.

In February, the Metropolitan Council dropped plans for a tunnel beneath a portion of the East Bank campus in favor of an at-grade alignment that would close several blocks of Washington Avenue to automobile traffic. At the time, the Met Council and the Central Corridor Management Committee agreed that the U of M could continue to study an alternative alignment for the light-rail line that would loop around the north edge of the university's athletic facilities and pass through Dinkytown before crossing the Mississippi River via a railroad bridge upriver from the Washington Avenue bridge.

At a tense meeting on April 30, the Central Corridor Management Committee debated the so-called northern alignment and what effect further studies of that option would have on the application for federal funding for the light-rail line. Local officials are hoping the federal government will pay half of the Central Corridor's \$909.1 million construction costs.

The management committee, which is made up of local elected officials, state transportation officials and

CENTRAL CORRIDOR ►2



There were plenty of opening day smiles as the Highland Park Little League kicked off its season on May 4 with a parade through Highland Village followed by ceremonies at the Ford Fields on Montreal and Cleveland avenues. Pictured giving teammate Sam Gowan a ride is Carl Knetsch. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Ford on the verge of seeking offers for 135-acre plant

By Jane McClure

Ford Motor Company is expected to make an announcement as early as this week regarding the issuance of a request for proposals from prospective developers for its 135-acre assembly plant in Highland Park.

St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris confirmed that fact at the Highland District Council's meeting on May 1. According to him, Ford's process for selecting a developer needs to be watched closely by the city and the neighborhood. "This is a major decision for Ford; this is a major decision for the neighborhood," Harris said.

The request for proposals would be structured as a purchase option because of all the issues that must be resolved before the site is redeveloped, according to Ford Land marketing and communications manager Stefanie Denby.

The closing date of the assembly plant has yet to be negotiated with the United Auto Workers, but it will not be before 2009, according to Denby. Once the plant is closed, more extensive environmental testing can begin and any pollution that is found can be cleaned up.

Ford Land, the automaker's real estate subsidiary, notified St. Paul city officials last week that the 13 acres of riverside property just south of the hydroelectric plant and

FORD PLANT SALE ►3



Deltric Robertson works out at the Sibley Plaza Anytime Fitness.

## Fit to be tried? City debates no-frills health clubs

### Opponents fear 24-hour centers will open the door to massage parlors of old

By Jane McClure

Corporate officers at Anytime Fitness have some heavy lifting to do if they want their two St. Paul clubs to be able to provide the same 24-hour service offered at their 798 other workout facilities across the United States. They need to move at least four

members of the seven-member St. Paul City Council—a council majority that to date has been reluctant to amend an ordinance requiring all health clubs in the city to be staffed at all times by at least one employee trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

The proposed amendment has pitted Mayor Chris Coleman and the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce against Ward 2 City Council member Dave Thune, who believes the 16-year-old requirement is the key to keeping the city free of health clubs and massage parlors that are actually fronts for prostitution.

"I wouldn't want to do anything that would

open us up to the problems we faced 20 and 30 years ago," Thune said.

Since the amendment was first proposed this spring, Thune said he has received many calls from citizens reminding him of the havoc storefront prostitution caused prior to the adoption of the requirement in 1992. Thune did not need a reminder. As a member of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation in the 1980s, he worked to drive out such operations.

"I just don't see the political will to change this," Thune said. "What's to stop someone who

24-HOUR FITNESS CENTERS ►2

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## 1◀ 24-HOUR FITNESS CENTERS

wants to operate a sex business from bringing in an exercise bike and a treadmill and calling their place a fitness club?"

City Council president Kathy Lantry is concerned that removing the requirement could jeopardize the health of health club members. "What happens if they have a heart attack on the treadmill and no one is there to help them?" she asked.

"I think there's a way to allow these clubs to operate while addressing the concerns of the community," said Coleman, who lived in Frogtown in the 1980s and served as president of the Thomas-Dale Community Council in the waning days of storefront prostitution in that neighborhood.

The push to change the ordinance began after city inspectors discovered the two Anytime Fitnesses in St. Paul to be open without CPR-trained staff on the premises. An administrative law judge recommended on April 18 that the clubs on West 7th Street and White Bear Avenue be fined \$500 each. The St. Paul City Council is expected to vote on whether to impose the fines at its meeting on May 21.

Anytime Fitness representatives said at the April 18 hearing that its staff members are available to members by phone around the clock. The St. Paul clubs also have security cameras that monitor the premises at all times and panic buttons that offer members quick access to emergency care.

According to Mark Daly, national media director for Anytime Fitness, St. Paul is the only city in the U.S. with the 24-hour staffing regulation. Bill Rodriguez, vice president of marketing for Snap Fitness, a Chanhassen-based corporation that has 130 clubs in Minnesota and more than 700 nationwide, concurred.

"We're hopeful that we can come to some kind of resolution and allow our clubs to operate in St. Paul as they do in other cities," Daly said. Anytime has 100 clubs in Minnesota, and it would like to open other clubs in St. Paul, Daly said, but until the staffing requirement is



Personal trainer Peter Everett spots for Deltric Robertson as the Highland Park man works out on the free weights at Anytime Fitness in Sibley Plaza. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

changed the economics don't work.

Snap Fitness is also interested in entering the St. Paul market. One Snap franchisee has the rights to open three locations in the city, but that isn't likely if the regulations do not change, according to Rodriguez. "We won't go into St. Paul unless there's a reasonable way for us to operate," he said.

Members of Anytime and Snap use electronic devices to let themselves into the clubs. The facilities are equipped with free weights, weightlifting apparatuses, cardio workout equipment and private restrooms with showers. New members are offered a free personal

fitness orientation and recommended exercise program. Tanning and personal training services are also available at many clubs.

According to Daly, Anytime Fitness clubs have been welcomed by their retail neighbors as safe, clean, well-lit establishments that draw more customers to an area. "You're safer working out in one of our clubs than you are working out at your own home," he said.

"We obviously think St. Paul is a terrific market for our clubs," Rodriguez said. "It has great neighborhoods and business areas where we should be welcomed."

Daly and Rodriguez are aware of the his-

tory of storefront prostitution in St. Paul, but said their clubs should not be cast in the same light. "These are very straightforward businesses," Rodriguez said.

All other fitness clubs in St. Paul are staffed at all times with CPR-certified personnel. However, Life Time Fitness in Highland Park is the only club in the city that is currently open 24 hours a day. Bally Fitness at 1166 University Ave. is open daily from 5:00 a.m. to midnight.

Minneapolis and Mendota Heights have fitness clubs that operate 24 hours a day without trained staff around the clock. A partial survey of those clubs indicates that they haven't experienced the kind of problems feared by St. Paul officials.

"All of the feedback we've had has been good," said Mendota Heights city administrator Jim Danielson about the Anytime Fitness at Dodd Road and Highway 110.

Coleman and his staff in the city's Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) have explored a range of alternative health club regulations, from requiring better surveillance systems to requiring staff on premises a minimum of eight hours a day to offering free CPR classes to fitness club members. However, as of last week only Ward 3 City Council member Pat Harris was in support of allowing health clubs to operate at times without trained staff on hand.

"I have constituents who use these clubs and want to be able to use them on a 24-hour basis," Harris said. He believes an ordinance can be crafted that will allow such clubs to operate while protecting neighborhoods and club members.

"If there are problems, we can shut a business down," said DSI director Bob Kessler, who was the director of licensing in 1992 when the CPR requirement was adopted. Though the health club staffing ordinance was a factor in ridding the city of illicit businesses, Kessler and Coleman said, a change in state nuisance laws also helped.

## 1◀ CENTRAL CORRIDOR

representatives of the U of M, will meet again on May 21. By then they hope to have more complete information on ridership, travel time and construction costs for the two alternative alignments.

"We believe the northern alignment is a worthy alternative," said U of M vice president Kathleen O'Brien. Preliminary estimates indicate that it would save about \$15 million in construction costs and perhaps several times that much in mitigation costs to address the problems that would arise from running the trains at-grade on Washington Avenue and diverting the 25,000 vehicles that currently travel on it each day.

The northern alignment is not a new plan, O'Brien noted. It was considered as long ago as 2001 when the U of M's Board of Regents passed a resolution recommending the northern alignment if the tunnel beneath Washington Avenue could not be built. The tunnel was scrapped in February to trim \$147 million in light-rail construction costs.

However, Central Corridor project director Mark Fuhrman cited several problems with the northern alignment, including the diffi-

culties of obtaining railroad right-of-way and the possibility of having to replace the railroad bridge over the Mississippi.

If construction of the 11-mile transit route between the downtowns of Minneapolis and St. Paul is to begin in 2010 as planned, the Met Council must sign off on the project and forward it to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) by early September.

Project planners would need a "very compelling reason" to shift from Washington Avenue to the northern alignment, according to Met Council chair Peter Bell. The additional preliminary engineering it may require could delay the project for at least a year, he noted, thereby adding \$40 million in inflationary costs.

"Delay is our enemy," agreed Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin. For the line-rail line, he added, it is "a lethal moment."

St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman said that he too is concerned about anything that would "delay or threaten the future of this project."

"I'm not going to support anything that delays the project," said Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak. He pushed for an objective examination of both alignments and for greater

cooperation between the Met Council and U of M.

According to Bell, the Met Council and the U have been working together on the northern alignment study, so much so that it may be taking too much time away from the rest of the Central Corridor project.

What roiled members of the Corridor Management Committee is the U of M's high-profile lobbying for the northern alignment, which included meetings with Minnesota's congressional delegation. In March, U of M officials sent the FTA a 23-page legal memorandum claiming that the Met Council forced the university to support the at-grade alignment on Washington Avenue. The letter, signed by U of M general counsel Mark Rotenberg, stated that the university has not modified its opposition to the at-grade alignment.

U of M officials are concerned about costs related to the light-rail line not covered in the \$909.1 million project budget. The budget includes \$39 million for mitigating any traffic problems that arise from running the train through the two downtowns and down the middle of University and Washington avenues. University Avenue businesses that are

likely to lose on-street parking to the light-rail line are eyeing the mitigation budget, as is the St. Paul Fire Department, which has three fire stations along the route that could be affected by the light-rail line.

When the light-rail plans were approved on February 27, it was with the understanding that any money left over from the mitigation budget would be used to build one of the three additional stations being sought on University Avenue between Victoria Street and Western Avenue. However, members of the Central Corridor Management Committee have since indicated that \$39 million may not be enough to meet the U of M's mitigation needs if the tracks are laid at-grade on Washington Avenue.

State legislators and Governor Tim Pawlenty have been following the debate over the northern alignment as they consider ways to restore the \$70 million allocation for the Central Corridor that Pawlenty vetoed in the 2008 bonding bill. Pawlenty has said he is amenable to providing that funding if several conditions are met, including a resolution of the dispute over the U of M alignment.

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## 1 ◀ FORD PLANT SALE

west of Mississippi River Boulevard should also be included in the ongoing planning process for redeveloping the Ford plant.

It has been two years since Ford announced plans to close the Highland Park plant. Since then, a St. Paul Planning Commission task force has studied various scenarios for redeveloping the property. However, at the request of Ford, the task force did not take into consideration the acreage between the Mississippi River and Mississippi River Boulevard. "We wanted a better understanding of the site conditions and the implications for that prop-

erty," Denby said.

The 13 acres of riverside property does not include the hydroelectric plant, which was sold last year to the Canadian company Brookfield Power. However, it does include an adjacent steam plant, a wastewater treatment plant and an area that was capped with concrete years ago to contain pollution.

The extent of pollution on the 13 acres of riverside property and how it will affect redevelopment are unknown. For many years, that area was used for loading new Ford vehicles onto barges. The land lies within the Mississippi River Critical Area, which gives the city, state and federal agencies a say in how the

property is redeveloped.

City officials are now preparing a computer model to determine the fiscal impact of each of the five Ford plant's redevelopment scenarios that have been proposed to date. They are also preparing a request for proposals for an Alternative Urban Areawide Review, which will also be used to evaluate the five scenarios developed by the Planning Commission's task force.

If money is available from the state, two other studies could also get under way soon. The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board, gave city staff the go-ahead on April 23 to ap-

ply for two grants from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

The first is a \$25,000 grant to create a Ford Site Sustainable Redevelopment Team to propose ways to make the site a national model of sustainable development of former industrial property. The second is a \$20,000 grant to hire the technical expertise for initial studies of stormwater management and filtration on the Ford site to prevent any pollution from spreading. Both of the studies would involve whichever firm or firms Ford chooses to redevelop the property.

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# Compromise eludes parties at odds over Life Time parking

## Highland neighbors shrink from size of parking variance

By JANE MCCLURE

Unless a compromise can be worked out beforehand, Life Time Fitness' application for a 116-space parking variance for its building at 2145 Ford Pkwy. will go to the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) for a vote on May 19.

As of late last week, a compromise had eluded representatives of Life Time and residents of the neighborhood to the north. However, the two sides had reached preliminary agreements on other concerns, such as lighting, security, alley improvements and truck deliveries.

Life Time, which operates a 24,000-square-foot health club in the basement of the Plaza on Parkway, purchased the 110,000-square-foot building and its adjacent 266-space parking ramp several months ago. The structures have long been a flash point for controversy in the neighborhood. Constructed in the late 1980s, they remained unfinished and empty for years due to the developer's financial travails. After they were purchased by another developer in the mid-1990s and finally partially occupied, they became the focus of a host of neighborhood complaints.

The BZA held a public hearing on the parking variance on April 7, but laid the matter over to give the two sides time to resolve their differences. At the BZA meeting on April 21, Life Time representatives agreed to an additional 30-day delay. Life Time vice president Eric Buss said he was "embarrassed" about the ongoing problems cited by neighbors and pledged that they would be solved.

The 116-space parking variance would allow Life Time to lease the remaining 12,000 square feet of vacant office space in its building, add a spa and salon to its basement health club, and create a cafe on the first floor. With the 10 parking spaces it leases in a surface lot at Ford Parkway and Cretin Avenue, Life Time has a total of 276 off-street parking spaces. The planned expansion would require 392.

BZA members had mixed feelings about the parking variance. Some questioned whether it was theirs to grant. BZA member Buzz Wilson recalled a City Council resolution in the 1980s that stated that any decisions on parking for 2145 Ford Pkwy. should be reserved for the City Council.

BZA staff recommended that the parking variance be approved on the condition that Life Time provide a bicycle rack or bike lockers on the premises and mail fitness club members a reminder that free ramp parking is available. The Highland District Council

also recommended approval of the parking variance with those two conditions.

The Plaza on Parkway was built before the city's current parking requirements were in place, the city staff report noted, and many years before Life Time bought it. Granting the variance and thereby allowing the building to be fully occupied is seen by city staff as making the property more economically viable.

Buss said he is aware of the acrimony between the neighbors and past building owners. However, he does not believe the expansion project and variance will cause more parking problems in the neighborhood. He said he was "ashamed" to hear complaints from neighbors that Life Time has not been responsive to their concerns and he said that would change. Buss conceded that the parking ramp is not being fully used. However, he added, Life Time recently sent letters to 4,000 of its members in and around Highland Park reminding them that parking in the ramp is free to club members for up to three hours.

According to neighbors, restrictive covenants and other legal agreements tied to the Plaza on Parkway have not been followed. They range from security cameras and better alley lighting to snow and graffiti removal. One restriction prohibits truck loading and unloading in the alley behind the building. Pinehurst resident Bob Spangenberg showed

the BZA photographs of eight different trucks being unloaded in the alley. Other Pinehurst residents complained about being unable to back out of their garages or even drive down the one-way alley because of delivery trucks blocking the way.

"The building was built on compromises," complained Pinehurst resident Henry Waldenberger, referring to the concessions that the neighbors have made over the past 20 years on the design, use and parking for the building.

Parking on the residential streets just north of Life Time is limited to two hours between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. without a permit, and permits may only be purchased by local residents. However, residents say the restrictions are rarely enforced.

Life Time's neighbors are holding out little hope for a compromise on the parking issue, and they expect that an appeal will be made to the City Council regardless of how the BZA votes.

"I think everyone has given it a good-faith effort," said Pinehurst Avenue resident Kevin Mencke of attempts to reach a compromise. "We appreciated Life Time hearing our concerns. But for a lot of neighbors, it's just too large a parking variance. People feel the parking issues need to be solved, but there just doesn't seem to be an easy way to do that."

# Permits pave way for remodeling former Church Home

By JANE MCCLURE

Real Estate Equities has been granted demolition and building permits to convert the former St. Paul's Church Home at 484 Ashland Ave. into a 44-unit senior housing cooperative. The St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission voted 6-1 on April 24 to approve the permits. The HPC was involved because the building is located in the Historic Hill District.

Called the Summit of Ramsey Hill, the housing project has already been through months of neighborhood and city reviews. Some neighbors support the senior co-op, while others are concerned about the size of the project. Neither the Ramsey Hill Association nor the Summit-University Planning Council took positions on the building and de-

molition permits.

Last year, the St. Paul City Council approved variances for the senior co-op as well as for five new market-rate townhouses that are planned for the Mackubin Street side of the property. At this point, the developers are only proceeding with the senior co-op and will return to the HPC with plans for the townhouses, according to Andrew Schaefer of Real Estate Equities. "We want to focus on getting the senior co-op project up and running first," he said.

HPC chair Paul Clifford Larson acknowledged that neighbors and commission members have raised an array of concerns over the past several months and that the project has had many revisions. However, he believes the concerns have been addressed and that the building



The proposed Summit of Ramsey Hill at 484 Ashland Ave.

addition will avoid having an "institutional look," a criticism leveled in the past regarding two previous additions to the former nursing home.

The permits are needed in order for Real Estate Equities to demolish

a wing of the existing building and construct a new four-story addition. The 112-year-old former Ashland Hotel portion of the property will be preserved, while the newer additions to the nursing home from the 1960s and '80s will be razed.

The HPC placed several conditions on the permits. One is that a rear porch on the old hotel be documented before it is torn down. Another is that the HPC subcommittee work with the developers on such details as windows, landscaping, fencing, retaining walls, construction materials and colors. The HPC also wants its staff to have the final say on building materials. Signage will be discussed at a later date.

It is not clear at this point when construction will start. After the old additions are leveled, the new addition will be built along with 56 underground and at-grade parking spaces. Architect Pete Keely said the developers will take pains to reduce the impact of construction on neighborhood streets and to protect a nearby brick alley.

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A rusty tank reminds passersby of what once was at the brewery. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

# Legislation would end deficiency payments to closed ethanol plant

By JANE MCCLURE

As the Minnesota Legislature moves toward adjournment on May 19, separate House and Senate bills contain language that would cease annual payments to the shuttered Gopher State Ethanol plant on West 7th Street and any other Minnesota ethanol plants that close in the future. The state is looking at cutting the payments as a step toward erasing a \$935 million state budget deficit.

Minnesota set up a system of producer payments in 1987 to encourage the manufacturing of ethanol. The payment was original 20 cents per gallon of ethanol produced, but it was temporarily cut to 13 cents in 2003 to balance the state budget. The 20-cent level was restored last year with the idea that the 7-cent difference would be made up by 2013.

GSE president David Kreitzer said the company and its creditors are asking for the remainder of the deficiency payments they are owed for 2003 and 2004 when the plant still produced ethanol. “We’re asking the state to pay us what was promised to us during those years,” he said.

GSE filed for bankruptcy in 2004 after four years of troubled operations at the former Schmidt Brewery. Ethanol plant odors and noise drew neighborhood complaints and sparked a federal Environmental Protection Agency study of ethanol plant emissions.

GSE received \$73,489 in deficiency payments last year and was in line to receive another \$2,000 in 2008, \$300,000 in 2009, \$557,000 in 2010, \$603,000 in 2011, \$603,000 in 2012 and \$30,000 in 2013. Kreitzer does not believe the amount is that much.

Representative Al Juhnke of Willmar, who chairs the House Agricultural Finance Committee, does not believe GSE and other ethanol plants that close should expect additional payments. He is confident that the legislation dropping the payments will pass this session.

“Excuse me, they don’t produce ethanol anymore,” Juhnke said. “If you no longer produce ethanol, you’re not entitled to participate in the producer program.”

On March 8, Brewtown LLC extended its purchase agreement for the brewery property until October. Brewtown, which is composed of father-son developers Craig and Jeff Cohen and the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, wants to turn the 15-acre site into a mixed-use urban village. The first phase of the estimated \$200 million project is expected to begin next spring.

Had he known that the state subsidies would not be paid, Kreitzer said it is doubtful that GSE would have agreed to the extension. That is because the property owners were

counting on the producer payments, along with the sale of the property and equipment, to cover their costs.

Still, Kreitzer said, the purchase agreement will not be canceled. “We want to sell the property and we want to see it redeveloped,” he said.

Kreitzer questioned whether the purchase agreement would be extended again, saying the property owners are bearing high costs to patrol the property and keep out graffiti vandals and other trespassers. Area police departments are now using the facility for training canine units.

Ward 2 St. Paul City Council member Dave Thune said he does not like seeing a state subsidy to a plant that is closed. “However, I’d be very concerned if losing the subsidy would in any way jeopardize the eventual sale and redevelopment of the brewery,” he said.

Dave Wickiser, a neighbor who protested the ethanol plant and is now involved in efforts to redevelop the property, also said he would hate to see anything happen that could affect redevelopment of the historic landmark. “I understand that Gopher State is not going to get a lot of sympathy, but this subsidy was promised when the plant was operating and state lawmakers need to consider that before yanking it away,” he said. “People forget the groundswell of support the ethanol plant had years ago and how it was seen as saving jobs and saving a landmark.”

What frustrates Kreitzer is that he had to learn about the pending payment cut from a reporter. “No one from the state has even contacted us,” he said. Kreitzer said he asked to testify before legislative committees to explain GSE’s situation, “but I was told there was no reason for us to come down.”

Juhnke noted that it would be the property owners who would be getting paid by the state subsidies, not the many vendors and suppliers who were owed money when the plant closed. He said he has heard from grain elevator operators and members of farm co-ops who were never paid for corn delivered to GSE. The city of St. Paul also was owed money for water supplied to the plant. A House researcher is currently looking into that issue.

“Why give the money to the people who hold the paper on the property?” Juhnke said.

Kreitzer argued that the pending payments were a factor in settling the GSE bankruptcy case. He said that while losing the payments will hurt the property owners financially, a bigger issue is the “dangerous precedent” the pending legislation could set.

“These subsidies are looked at as rock-solid payments,” said Kreitzer, adding that losing them “sends the wrong message to anyone wanting to invest in Minnesota.”

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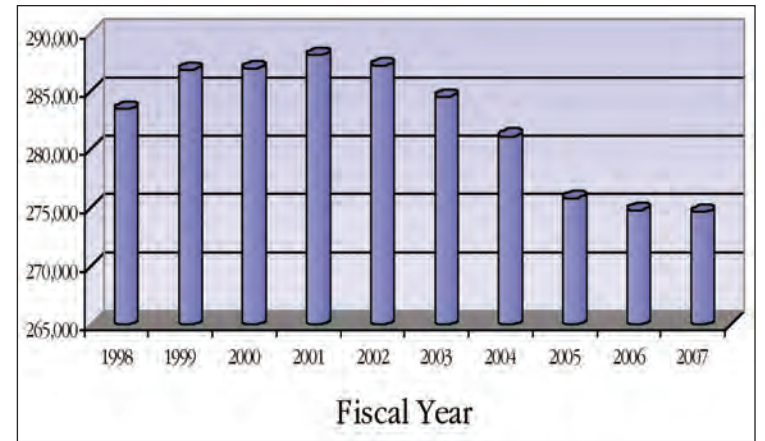
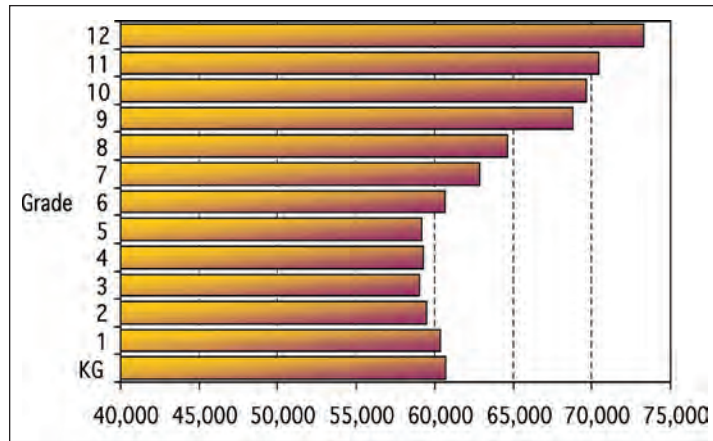
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# A shrinking student body has schools across state tightening their belts



The graph at left shows the varied number of students in kindergarten through grade 12 statewide in 2006-07. The graph at right illustrates the rise and fall of total K-12 enrollment for all metropolitan area school districts from 1998 through 2007.

## Downward trend in enrollment adds to woes of public schools in competition with charters

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

Much has been written about the havoc wrought in school districts across Minnesota since the budget crisis of 2003 and the subsequent tightening of state aid to public education. The past five years have been marked by continual school district budget deficits, rising property taxes and multiple requests for excess levies to address the budget shortfalls. What has been overlooked over those years is the steady decline in school enrollment.

Total enrollment in K-12 public, private and charter schools dropped almost 2 percent statewide and close to 5 percent in the

Twin Cities metropolitan area between 2001 and 2007 (see chart). Enrollment in the St. Paul Public Schools dropped from 43,923 in 2002-03 to 39,681 in 2007-08 and is expected to slide by another 1,100 in 2008-09. The resulting loss in state per-pupil aid accounts for \$7 million of the St. Paul school district's projected \$10 million deficit for the fiscal year beginning July 1, according to Lois Rockney, chief financial officer for the district.

The drop in enrollment has been even steeper in the Minneapolis Public Schools. The school district, which had 46,037 students five years ago, had only 34,999 students this year. That number is expected to drop to about 33,500 students in 2008-09, contribut-

ing to a projected budget shortfall of \$13 million for the coming fiscal year, according to Peggy Ingison, that district's chief financial officer.

The budget deficits arise "because districts can't shed expenses as fast as their revenue drops from the loss of students," said Steve Croonquist, executive director of the Association of Metropolitan School Districts. That is one reason voters are seeing excess levy requests on their ballots. "In recent years, districts have been asking for excess levies to pay for operating funds, not just new programs," Croonquist said. Though they may have fewer students and fewer teachers, he said, "they still have to heat their schools, provide student transportation and pay their support staff, and those costs are subject to inflation."

"There's no question that some parents are dissatisfied with the education their kids are

getting in their public school," said Charlie Kyte, executive director of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators. "But the biggest factor in declining enrollments, at least in rural areas right now, is lower birth rates across the state and, for that matter, the country."

A decline in overall population also may be playing a role in the Twin Cities. St. Paul's population, which increased from 272,235 in 1990 to 287,151 in 2000, had fallen back to an estimated 273,535 in 2006, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Meanwhile, Minneapolis' population, which increased from 368,383 in 1990 to 382,618 in 2000, dropped to an estimated 372,833 in 2006.

The state's open enrollment law, the proliferation of public charter schools and the growing popularity of home-schooling have also played a role in the enrollment declines in metropolitan area school districts, according to Croonquist.

"Charter schools are opening all the time now," said Joe Nathan, director of the Center for School Change at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs and a resident of Highland Park. In the 2001-02 school year, there were just over 10,000 charter school students in Minnesota, Nathan said. Now there are just under 26,000 students in 143 charter schools across the state, according to Christine Dufour, deputy director of communications in the Minnesota Department of Education. A majority of those students live in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

"Charter schools are by far the biggest reason for falling enrollment in Minneapolis Public Schools," said Jim Liston, the school district's manager of student accounting. As the result of a lawsuit by the NAACP, Minneapolis also has Choice Is Yours, a program

## Enrollment drop puts St. Paul schools in hole

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

This week the St. Paul School Board will get its first look at superintendent Meria Carstarphen's proposed budget for the 2008-09 school year. The school district is facing a \$10 million deficit for the coming year, according to Lois Rockney, the district's chief financial officer. The 2008-09 budget is expected to total \$625.8 million, up from \$621.9 million in 2007-08.

"About \$7 million of the shortfall is due to declining enrollment," Rockney said. The St. Paul Public Schools is projecting a loss of about 1,100 students next fall, resulting in a decrease in state aid, which is based on both the total number of students and the num-

ber of students from low-income households who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.

"We're actually losing the equivalent of 1,400 students," Rockney said, because the largest enrollment declines will be in high schools. The state's per-pupil funding formula weighs each high school student as 1.3 students, each kindergarten at 0.6 student and elementary and junior high students somewhere in between, she said.

Rising gasoline, heating and health care costs are also contributing to the deficit, Rockney said. According to her, teachers will be laid off and money will be cut from both individual school and districtwide budgets to address the shortfall.

Making cuts is always hard, Rockney said, but it is especially difficult when the enrollment declines are spread out across all grades in all 70 district schools.

The proposed budget was to be unveiled at a School Board meeting on May 6. A public hearing on the budget, with a brief presentation followed by facilitated small group discussions, will begin at 8:15 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, immediately following the School Board's regularly scheduled meeting at the school district's administration building, 360 Colborne St.

The School Board's budget deliberations will continue on June 10 and 17, when the board is expected to adopt a final budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT ► 7

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# News Briefs

## St. Paul seeks to change way it licenses drinking on patios

Just in time for the outdoor dining season, the St. Paul City Council is considering changes to an ordinance that governs bars and restaurants that serve alcohol on their patios. The changes will be introduced on May 7 and will be the subject of a public hearing at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 21, at City Hall.

The changes were brought forward by Ward 3 council member Pat Harris. "What we're hearing is that our current process is too cumbersome and makes it difficult for some businesses to get a license (to serve alcohol on patios)," he said.

Currently, 90 percent of property owners within 300 feet of a business must be in favor of the outdoor license before the city will grant an extension of service. Under the proposed changes, if the signatures of property owners in support are between 60 and 89 percent, the council could grant the license with conditions. Below 59 percent, the council could deny the request or approve it with additional conditions. A public hearing would still be required and the city would continue to ask district councils for their recommendations.

Harris believes the changes have enough checks and balances so that establishments that pose problems could not get the extension of liquor service. He said one of the problems with the current ordinance is that bar and restaurant owners sometimes can't get signatures from absentee property owners.

At this point it is not clear if Harris can garner enough votes to pass the ordinance. Most council members said they want to know more about the proposal and hear from the district councils in their wards first. No area district council has taken a position on the proposal yet.

## City considers additional steps to stem vacant building costs

Additional regulations for addressing the growing problem of vacant buildings in St. Paul will be heard by the City Council at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 21, at City Hall.

St. Paul is facing increasing costs of monitoring and, in some cases, cleaning up the more than 1,700 registered vacant buildings in the city. One proposal before the council sets a vacant building registration fee at a flat \$500 per year. The current fee is \$250 for the first year, \$375 for the second year and \$500 for the third and subsequent years. The fee is intended to recoup the city's cost of monitor-

ing vacant buildings.

The city's Department of Safety and Inspections also is recommending an increase in city's code compliance fees, which are assessed when a property is inspected. The current fees are \$138 for a single-family building and \$172 for a duplex. The proposed fees would gradually increase to as much as three times those amounts.

The council also will discuss a proposed regulation that calls for a city inspection after a vacant building is gutted, to make sure all of the work has been completed. At that time, inspectors would let the property owner know what is needed to bring the building back into compliance and remove it from the vacant building list.

## Transit-oriented zoning rules approved for University Ave.

Despite the uncertainty about the future of the Central Corridor light-rail project, the St. Paul City Council voted unanimously on April 23 to institute permanent zoning overlay regulations governing the areas around the proposed transit stations on University Avenue.

The new zoning regulations replace interim regulations that were adopted last June. They are meant to promote denser, transit-oriented development around the proposed stations at Rice, Dale, Lexington, Snelling, Fairview, Raymond and Westgate. The regulations would not affect existing businesses, but would apply to 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.

The zoning regulations are likely to be amended later this year after the Planning Commission and City Council adopt station area plans. The plans will be supplemented with specific zoning changes for each area, if the commission and council believe they are needed.

The interim zoning regulations were adopted to control development while the station area plans were being drafted. However, state law only allows interim measures to remain in place for one year. The station area plans will not be ready for public hearings until this summer and the specific zoning regulations for each area will not be considered until fall. City planner Donna Drummond said it may take up to two years before all of the studies and zoning specifics are in place.

*News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.*

## 6◀ SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

whereby the state pays the transportation costs of any Minneapolis child who wants to attend school in a neighboring district.

"Charter school competition and a big exodus to the suburbs in the late 1990s have been the biggest reasons for our enrollment declines," said Steve Schellenberg, assistant director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment in the St. Paul Public Schools.

The effects of declining enrollment vary from district to district. "In Minneapolis we haven't been able to downsize our infrastructure proportionate to the student enrollment decline, and because of that we have unused and under-used buildings that still cost to maintain," Ingison said.

"We have closed about 20 schools in Minneapolis over the past five years," Liston said, "and that's caused a big rift in the district's relationship with the community."

Although there is no talk about boarding up schools in St. Paul, according to Schellenberg, the district is replacing Homecroft Elementary School in Highland Park and Monroe Community School in the West End in the

fall with other school programs.

"School districts that have had to cut to the bone in recent years now have the dilemma of maintaining fiscal stability and the high educational standards mandated by state and federal laws," said Bob Lowe, associate deputy director of the Minnesota School Boards Association.

Many observers have attributed the declining enrollments to the failure of public schools to adequately prepare their students for the future, and they may be right in some cases. Those schools intent on reversing the decline, according to Nathan, "are creating newer, hopefully more interesting options for students to better compete with charter schools and home schooling."

"Districts have had to get creative and be more responsive to parents and the community," Liston said. "We have to become more competitive and operate more like a business to offer better options to students and parents."

"No question," Schellenberg said, "we have to better communicate our own story and create the kinds of programs that give incentive to use our schools."

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# Viewpoint

## Put light rail back on track

BY TONI CARTER

A few weeks ago, the Central Corridor was derailed when \$70 million in state funding for the light-rail transit line was vetoed by Governor Tim Pawlenty, even after being previously supported by him. Now, with less than two weeks before the legislative session ends, we must get the train back on track. An unprecedented coalition of legislators, city and county officials, and representatives of business, labor, faith, environmental, educational and nonprofit organizations has come together to deliver this simple message: Build the Central Corridor without delay.

For communities along the light-rail line, the need for the Central Corridor is clear. The neighborhoods north and south of University Avenue are among Minnesota's most diverse, with many young families, children, students and senior citizens. Many do not have cars, and with the price of gas headed toward \$4.00 per gallon, many who do have cars will welcome the choice of light-rail transit. We also need the commercial and residential development, employment and environmental benefits light-rail transit will bring.

The east metro area's first light-rail line will be the critical backbone of a comprehensive transit system for the Twin Cities. The Central Corridor line will connect us to neighbors, businesses, schools and nonprofit organizations. It will mean easier and more reliable routes to jobs, shopping and recreation. Downtown St. Paul, downtown Minneapolis, the Mall of America, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, the University of Minnesota and the state Capitol complex will all be a light-rail trip away.

The average Twin Cities driver now wastes more than \$1,000 and 35 hours per year in traffic jams, a costly problem that grows worse every year. And light rail's electric cars will help reverse the trend of increasing carbon emissions.

The Central Corridor project—at over \$900 million, the largest transportation investment in Minnesota since the construction of I-94—will serve as a catalyst for far greater economic development and job growth over time. And some areas along University Avenue that are particularly long in need of enhancement will be transformed with new gathering spaces, new biking and walking paths, and the new market-rate, affordable, supportive and mixed-use housing we will need for those who want to remain in these communities and those who wish to join us to live and do business.

Building the Central Corridor is a team effort. Ramsey and Hennepin counties have already invested \$5 million for environmental and engineering work. The state of Minnesota has already committed \$13.5 million toward its share of matching dollars. Hundreds of people have already spent countless hours in planning for the line. And the Metropolitan Council, which will operate the transit line, has declared the project its top priority.

Our application for federal funding—\$455 million to cover half the project costs—is to be submitted this fall. With the Central Corridor projected to be the No. 1 traveled light-rail line in the country at over 40,000 riders per day by 2030, we are well-positioned to garner that federal commitment. Ramsey and Hennepin counties have already committed their funds, and now we need the state to complete the local match by approving the \$70 million in funds.

Without that commitment from the state, we cannot secure the federal funding. Should we miss out on this year's application deadline, the Central Corridor will move to the back of the line in the competition for federal funds, and it will cost taxpayers a projected \$40 million in inflationary costs should we even get the chance to consider the project next year.

We must insist that the Legislature and governor agree on the funding before this session ends. To Governor Pawlenty and the Minnesota Legislature: Pull the train out of the shed and put it back on track. We can't afford to wait.

*Toni Carter serves on the Central Corridor Management Committee and is a member of the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners representing the Summit-University, Summit Hill, Lexington-Hamline, Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and St. Anthony Park and parts of the Highland Park, Macalester-Groveland and Hamline-Midway neighborhoods of St. Paul.*



## DUAL-TRACK PLANNING IN THE CENTRAL CORRIDOR

### Inbox

#### Reason for hope in Homecroft

To the editor:

Homecroft School has a new configuration for the 2008-09 school year, and there is reason to be optimistic about community involvement in future programming changes in the St. Paul Public Schools (*Villager*, April 23). On April 15, the School Board approved the school district's new use for Homecroft, but committed to reviewing it annually and remaining open to instituting a strong K-8 program.

School Board members Tom Conlon and Anne Carroll sponsored two motions that passed almost unanimously and give the public reason to believe the School Board is receptive to public input and cognizant of its oversight role. The first motion requires that the superintendent provide detailed information on past, present and future facility and programming changes. This motion clarifies the role of the School Board, helps ensure its members are well-informed about major decisions, and allows them to review changes that have been made at Homecroft and other schools. The second motion calls for the school district to work with the community over the summer to develop a "transparent, authentic and sustainable process" for community participation.

These two motions have the potential to dramatically improve the process and the outcome for future programming changes. This is a welcome about-face. Superintendent Meria Carstarphen did not welcome the motions, but she did acknowledge that the process for unveiling and implementing the new programming for Homecroft was imperfect. We remain hopeful that when it comes to the relationship between the community and the district, the following insight recently expressed by Superintendent Carstarphen in a *St. Paul Pioneer Press* article will be manifest: "What's happening in a school also affects the morale and energy in a community. Wherever a school is located, it should be a part of what's happening in the success of that community."

With respect to Homecroft, the potential remains for the return of an elementary school that would serve neighborhood children, attract new families and provide stability for the neighborhood. No doubt, the whole Highland community will remain involved, vigilant and committed to the potential return of an elementary school and all that it adds to our neighborhood. It is up to all of us to make sure the district understands that our advocacy did not end with the April 15 School Board action, and that we remain committed to monitoring other proposals as we enter a period of significant change in the St. Paul Public Schools.

We hope that as a result of working with and listening to the community, the district and School Board have come to believe that an interested community committed to nurturing public education in St. Paul is an asset rather than an inconvenience, that we are all on the same side, and that we all want the same thing: We want the St. Paul Public Schools to be an institution that provides an outstanding education to our young people, whatever their needs or circumstances, and that makes us proud to live in St. Paul.

*Lisa Morley, Robert Brandtjen, Margo Fox, Fred Haeusler, Brian Portzen, Terese Weitzel, Rick Hugley, Charrie Willis, Bill Rosenbloom  
Highland Park*

*Editor's Note: All but one of the signors were members of the school district's ad hoc Homecroft Advisory Committee.*

#### The rest of the story

To the editor:

Mary-Helen Mische's guest editorial, "Lighting a Candle in the Darkness" (*Villager Viewpoint*, April 23) was insulting to low-income parents and, furthermore, her facts are wrong.

She states that through her "many hours researching the



## 8◀ INBOX

importance of parent-child bonding," she and other Junior League of St. Paul members can "educate families about the importance of building strong bonds and reading with children." With this information, she writes, these low-income parents can "begin to replace darkness with light."

Low-income parents, like all parents, know how important reading is. The difference is that most low-income parents work two jobs and many do not even own a car to be able to go to a library.

Bonding has nothing to do with income. Mische only needs to volunteer at a homeless shelter, as I have, to see the real love and concern a parent has. I have taught English for 30 years, and many middle-class children today do not read. It has nothing to do with income. It has to do with cell phones, iPods, TVs with 100 channels to choose from, camps, practices, games and on and on. It has to do with this insane, fast-paced culture children are living in.

If 52 percent of "those children," as Mische states, cannot read at grade level by 3rd grade, the answer does not lie with a bag of books donated by the Junior League with suggestions on how to be a better parent. The answer lies with volunteers going to the schools and shelters every day to help the children learn. The answer comes with smaller class sizes so that teachers have the time and energy to help each student.

Low-income parents, you deserve an apology.

*Mamie Fabel  
Mendota Heights*

## A clear choice

To the editor:

"The paradox of IRV" (*Villager Viewpoint*, April 23) purports to show a problem with instant runoff voting. In reality, the given examples show that runoff elections—traditional or instant—ensure that the winning candidate enjoys the support of a majority of voters rather than a mere plurality.

*Julian and Barbara Sellers  
Macalester-Groveland*

## The illusion of majority

To the editor:

The idea that instant runoff voting (IRV) produces a majority winner is a red herring (*Villager Viewpoint*, April 23). An election goes to a runoff only when nobody gets 51 percent of the first-choice votes. Therefore, if IRV goes to a second round of counting, it means that the voters chose a plurality winner.

A plurality winner—electing the one with the most votes—is perfectly acceptable in the constitutional government that our founders gave us because they knew that pure majority rule often leads to tyranny. An electoral majority doesn't give a representative the right to violate the rights of the minority. They represent all the people, not just the ones who voted for them. So the whole majority-winner issue is irrelevant.

Second, IRV fails to ensure an accurate measure of voter intent because all ballots are not counted equally. Some voters have second-choice votes counted while others do not. And voters cast ballots not knowing who the runoff candidates will be or how their votes will be affected by other voters. Thus, any claims of a true majority victory have to be considered false and misleading.

Any type of runoff is questionable at best because it gives the illusion of a majority electoral victory. But what makes IRV even worse than a traditional runoff is that voters can't know what effect their choice order will have. With IRV, you have the worst of both worlds: a false majority and blindfolded voters.

All of this calls into question the true intent of the pro-IRV faction. Do they really believe in the will of the voters, or is their true intent to gain the power to take votes for one candidate and transfer them to the candidate they prefer regardless of the will of the voters? It should be clear to anyone who looks at this issue with an open mind that the whole majority-winner argument is just a ruse.

We believe a plurality system better reflects the will of the voters than the fabricated majority likely created by IRV. This is not to say we prefer representatives who agree with only a minority of voters, merely that a plurality winner is perfectly acceptable in an election with three or more candidates, especially with a representative republican form of government.

*Andy Cilek, Executive Director  
Minnesota Voters Alliance*

## Double standard

To the editor:

On April 1, Mississippi Market announced a new store location at West 7th Street and Otto Avenue, a few blocks from the future Trader Joe's location at Randolph Avenue and Lexington Parkway. Amazingly, there has been no public outcry in opposition to Mississippi Market squeezing out nearby ma and pa groceries, no indie coffeeshop petitions against a new neighborhood grocer that also sells coffee (I wonder if it's because of the fair trade thingymabob?), no neighborhood block club protests.

What gives? Did Mississippi Market promise to include a rain garden? Or is it because Mississippi Market is a natural food co-op and thereby exempt from opposition for those inclined to oppose anything perceived to be unnatural? Did you know that Trader Joe's also carries a large selection of organic foods, and that its private-label products have no artificial flavors, colors, preservatives or genetically modified ingredients? They probably have fair trade coffee, too!

Unfortunately, Trader Joe's does not carry sorghum. You'll have to travel a few more blocks for that staple.

*Jon Wiersma  
Highland Park*

## No WMDs, but plenty of oil

To the editor:

Governor Tim Pawlenty's veto of Central Corridor funding mirrors the Bush administration's focus on cars and oil to the detriment of energy-efficient rail transport. We can spend a trillion dollars making sure of our position in oil-rich Iraq, but we don't have much left for Amtrak or commuter rail.

Little noticed during the recent battles in Basra and Baghdad was the announcement from Baghdad that 35 oil companies had qualified for future oil field contracts. The U.S. led the list with seven, including ExxonMobil, Chevron and ConocoPhillips. The Iraqi Oil Ministry could soon announce the five companies that will receive negotiated contracts for services covering some of Iraq's major fields.

Shell should receive deals for the Kirkuk and Missan fields.

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## VILLAGER

Volume 56, Number 5

*Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991*

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## 9◀ INBOX

Shell believes it can greatly increase Missan's current daily output of 120,000 barrels. British Petroleum is likely to get both Rumaila fields. The others should go to ExxonMobil, Chevron and French giant Total.

Iraq is one big sedimentary oil-bearing basin that is only about 25 percent explored with modern seismology. Estimates suggest Iraq's proven oil reserves of 115 billion barrels could double or even triple with new technology, making it a rival to Saudi Arabia and Russia as the world's top producer of the dwindling resource. Iraq's easy-to-reach, high-quality oil looks good compared to recent expensive finds in deep ocean water like Chevron's Jack 2 in the Gulf of Mexico.

Our State Department recently announced a Strategic Framework for economic relations with Iraq with a reference to "facilitating the flow of foreign investments to Iraq, especially American investments, to contribute to the rebuilding of Iraq." This puts us on the shoulder of Iraq's government for a long time. Note our new giant Baghdad embassy and the huge Balad Air Base.

The war in Iraq was not about mythical WMDs, elusive Middle East democracy or the war on terror. It's about oil, and a lot of it.

*Rolf E. Westgard  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Light-rail reverberations

Dear editor:

For the past five years, our Sierra Club team has been working to bring light rail to Minnesota and, in particular, Dakota County. The economic, social and environmental benefits of light rail are resounding. We need this mode of transportation, and people want it.

What has happened at the state Capitol with regard to the funding of the Central Corridor light-rail line is discouraging. Without this vital project, a light-rail line in Dakota County cannot be built. Light rail needs to be promoted, not hamstrung.

Please, folks, call or write your state representative or Dakota County commissioner. Ask them to support light rail in the Central Corridor and Dakota County.

*Pat O'Regan  
Inver Grove Heights*

## Viva la veto

To the editor:

I too was shocked by Governor Tim Pawlenty's veto of the \$70 million for the Central Corridor light-rail transit line (*Villager*, April 23). As someone who supported and campaigned for the governor in 2002 and 2006, I had been so disappointed when he said that he would support this wasteful expenditure that would destroy University Avenue.

At a news conference the day after the veto, Congresswoman Betty McCollum angrily asked, "What will the governor tell the Republicans when they come to town?"

He did the right thing, Betty.

*Robert Bushard  
Merriam Park*

## Keep your poor, we have our own

To the editor:

The administration of George W. Bush has come up with a brilliant plan for stemming illegal immigration. Forget the wall. Never mind the fines against employers or church do-gooders. Merely cripple the economy and the dollar to the point that no one sees any point in coming here.

*Paul Alper  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Push for cleaner energy now

Dear editors,

This year is a big year for Minnesota. We came out in record numbers for the precinct caucuses on February 5 to support our causes. Now we've got work to do. This fall, we have the opportunity to let our policymakers know that it's time to move toward a clean energy future. While securing a healthy planet for future generations, we can create green jobs, save money and heal global warming. We are free to leave behind the risky, expensive, polluting policies of our past. We have the power and the technology to move to a brighter, cleaner energy—to move past oil and coal to renewable energy from the wind, sun and other sources that we have yet to imagine.

Renewable energy can be the economic stimulus we need. According to a Blue Green Alliance study, a 20 percent renewable electricity standard by 2020 would create more than 820,000 jobs. New energy standards and goals like this

have made a huge impact in cities such as Munich, Germany. Germany's goal is to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 40 percent within 13 years.

Renewable energy is already generating profits, saving money, creating and keeping jobs in our country, and cutting carbon emissions that cause global warming. We need to let our elected officials and our future elected officials know that they have the power to provide the leadership we need for a clean energy economy. Ask your elected officials to do just that at [www.sierraclub.com/power2change](http://www.sierraclub.com/power2change).

*Jeanette Middleton  
Summit Hill*

## Replaying the race card

To the editor:

U.S. Representative James Clyburn, a superdelegate from South Carolina and the third-ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives, has again criticized former President Bill Clinton about Clinton's equating Obama's victory in South Carolina's January primary to that of the Reverend Jesse Jackson's in South Carolina's 1988 primary. Clyburn remains infuriated over this and felt as did many in the black community that Clinton's comments were meant to diminish Obama's success in the South Carolina campaign.

Although Clinton's comments were unnecessarily glib and boorish, especially for an ex-president, they, like Obama's words about how Pennsylvanians in stress retreat to their guns and Bibles, were poorly chosen with cameras and microphones recording their every utterance. However, with all the blatant racial divisions this campaign has exposed, it isn't necessary to misuse poorly chosen words to invent new racial divisions.

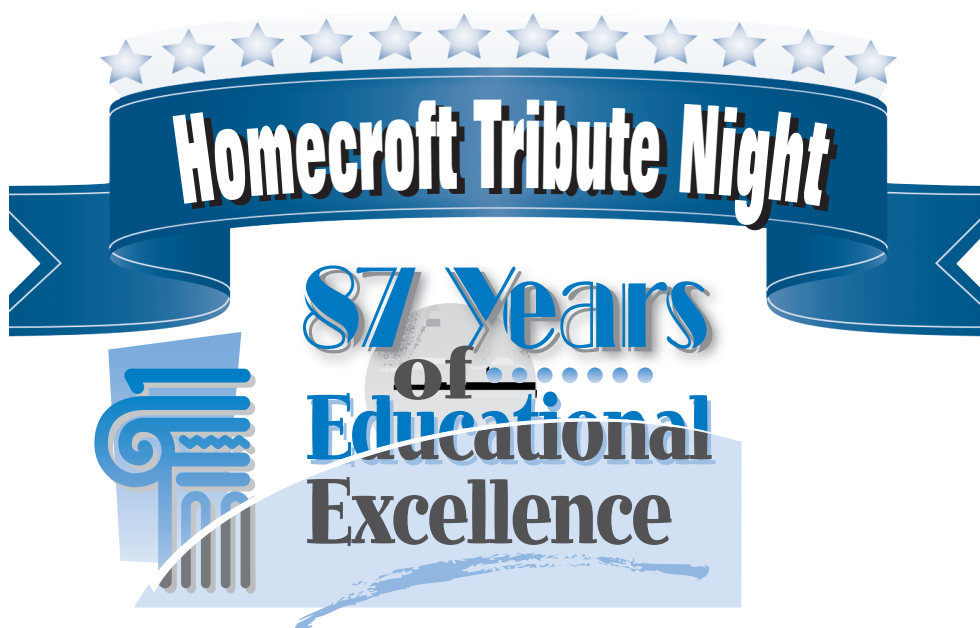
*Paul Peter Paulos  
Macalester-Groveland*

## An embarrassment to St. Paul

To the editor:

I was appalled when I read about City Council member Dave Thune's remarks about drunken Republicans puking in the streets of St. Paul (*Villager*, April 9). While I respectfully disagree with Mr. Thune's decision not to let St. Paul bars operate a couple of hours longer during the Republican National Convention, as a City Council member he has the

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# Minor surgery and the misery of the outpatient urology lab

BY BILL STIEGER

I had surgery last week and it proved to be quite an interesting ordeal. It was a plumbing problem typical of males in their mid-50s. Fortunately, it wasn't cancerous, but it was a problem that Flomax couldn't fix. (Don't you just love those drug names?) The urologist sent me a brochure that called the procedure "green light laser surgery."

I've had a few minor surgeries in my day, but the thought of having one in the area of my prostate rather unnerved me. Perhaps my trepidation was due to some primordial instinct that has roped through male DNA since the dawn of time, a visceral fear that hits a man when he realizes that he's on the way down, that he'll soon be abandoned with his favorite sled dog, drifting out onto Arctic waters on a block of ice.

That was the grim image that came to mind in the days leading up to the procedure. And the pre-op exam I'd taken the previous week—good taste dictates that I spare you the details—did nothing to improve my outlook.

Arriving at United Hospital, I had a lump in my throat and the old pumper was thumping in my thorax. The young woman who checked me in at registration wore a pink pullover with a pattern of charcoal-colored skulls. Her shirt didn't calm me down in the least.

Here's a tip for anyone about to set a date for surgery: Be the first patient your surgeon sees that day. Any other time and you're sure to get in much later than scheduled. I found the surgery wing of the hospital, wrapped myself in a smock, and donned sanitary stockings and a noisy paper bathrobe. My surgeon soon arrived at my room to announce that he had a patient with complications, and I'd have to wait at

least another two and a half hours. Swell.

Fortunately, my girlfriend was along. She had taken the day off to drive me home after the operation. She paced the halls with me, listened patiently to my griping (no food or water allowed) and bought me three newspapers that I read in four minutes without remembering a single story. I finally began to relax after my body had gotten past its scheduled time of invasion. In fact, I almost forgot why I was there. We returned to my room and chatted to pass the time.

After an hour back in the room, I began to grow frustrated. An expletive slipped from my lips just as the nurse and anesthesiologist arrived. They heard me, and I apologized.

The nurse hooked up the IV tube and I began to relax again. Then the anesthesiologist did her thing. Before I knew it, I was being wheeled out of my room. I gazed woozily down the hallway between my two stockinged feet sticking out from the bottom of the blanket.

"I've seen this before," I said to the nurses. The view was right out of "ER."

Suddenly I was wheeled around a corner and my gurney banged against two doors of burnished aluminum. There I was, in the inner sanctum.

The last thing I remember was rolling onto the surgery table. When I woke up I was in the recovery room with someone handing me a cup of ice chips.

I was back in the passenger seat of my Ford Ranger within two hours, drugged, sporting a catheter and babbling incoherently. But I was glad it was over. Two days later I was as good as new.

My point? Well, if I have to have one, I'd say, if you're about to go into routine surgery, don't sweat it. You won't even be there for the bad part.

## 10◀ INBOX

right to do what he thinks is best for the city. What I don't respect is the way he conducted himself in explaining why he doesn't support the proposal. I love our great city and feel blessed to live here. We are honest, good-hearted citizens who make this city great, and we expect our leaders to lead with dignity. Mr. Thune let us down and embarrassed the city with his ignorant remarks, and I want others to know that his words did not represent the good, hard-working people of St. Paul.

*Lonny Leitner  
Summit Hill*

## Loose lips in City Hall

To the editor:

Regarding a certain City Council member's response to the proposed 4:00 a.m. closing time for St. Paul bars during the Republican National Convention (*Villager*, April 9): My Italian mother had a saying that might apply here: *In bocca chiusa, non ci entra mosche*. Loosely translated, it means, "If you keep your mouth shut, you'll never get into trouble."

*Reno Rossini  
North End*

## 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*

## Support homeless vets

To the editor:

Where is our nation's conscience? One of the most depressing articles that I have read indicated that one out of every four homeless people is a veteran. These human beings were sent to fight for our freedom and way of life, facing possible injury or death in doing so. And our reaction is, "What have you done for us lately?"

Where is our nation's conscience? It lies with each and every one of us, and we should be deeply ashamed.

*Tom Birbilis  
Highland Park*

## Summer savings

Editor:

Over the past few years, I have been able to save some energy by turning my hot-water heater down. Right around May 1, I turn the water heater dial down one notch. Six months later (November 1), I move it back to its original setting. It's easy. Try it and see for yourself.

*Todd Seabury-Kolod  
Macalester-Groveland*

E-mail your letter to the editor of the *Villager* at [letters@myvillager.com](mailto:letters@myvillager.com), fax it to 651-699-6501 or mail it to the *Villager*, 757 S. Snelling Ave., St. Paul, MN 55116.

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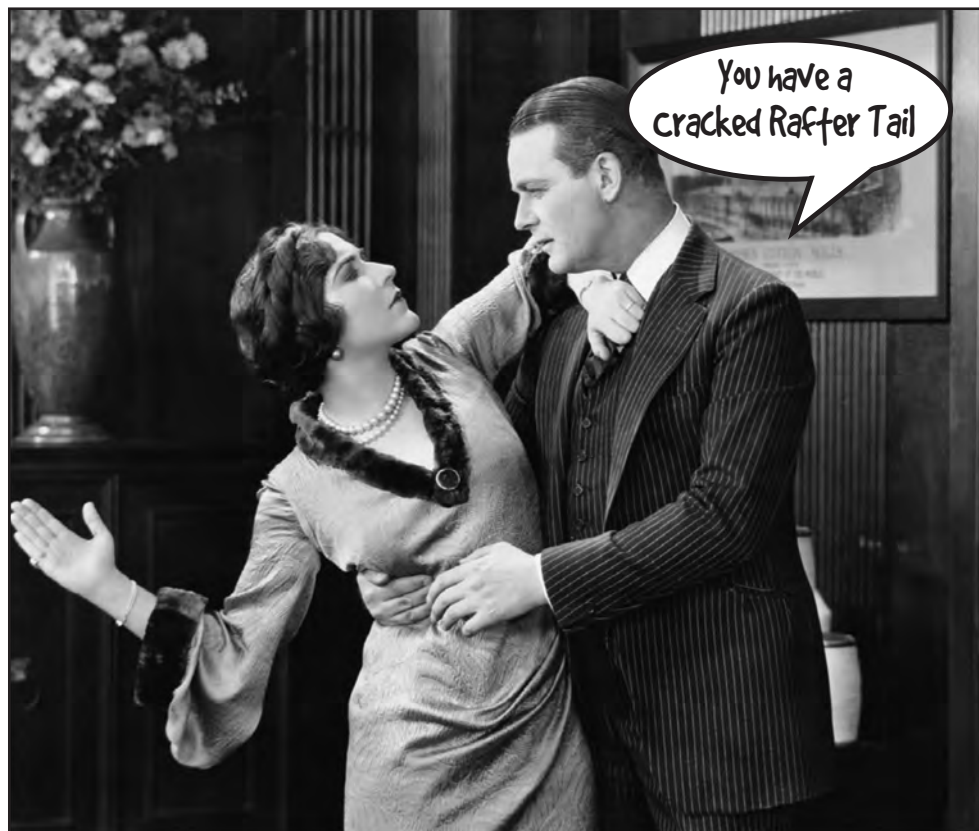
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# The way we were

## A look back at the Villager area on the cusp of Minnesota statehood

By JANE MCCLURE

The 150th anniversary of Minnesota's statehood will be marked on Sunday, May 11, with much fanfare, but May 11, 1858, was just another day for the denizens of the Gopher State. News traveled slowly in those days and the local newspapers did not report Minnesota's admittance into the union until May 14. But even then, "no demonstrations were made over the event," wrote historian J. Fletcher Williams in his 1876 book, *The History of the City of St. Paul*. "The state's first officers were quietly sworn in on May 24."

Minnesotans had waited several years for the territory to become the 32nd state, few as longingly as Henry Hastings Sibley, who was sworn in on May 24 as the state's first governor. Sibley had lived in what would become Minnesota since 1834 when he settled in Mendota to ply the fur trade. In 1838 he was appointed a justice of the peace by the governor of Iowa. Land west and south of the Mississippi River was then part of Iowa Territory. Land east and north of the river was Michigan Territory.

By 1848, Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin had been granted or were on the verge of being granted statehood, leaving Minnesota's status somewhat uncertain. So that August, Sibley was elected by the local populace to represent them in Congress with the primary goal of obtaining territorial status for Minnesota.

It wasn't easy. According to Williams' history, one member of Congress expressed his reservations by describing Minnesota as a "hyperborean region" whose climate had more in common with the Arctic than the U.S.

At the time, the threshold for becoming a U.S. territory was a population of 5,000, and Minnesota had about 4,500 residents in 1848, according to Minnesota Territorial Pioneers, an organization of descendants of those who settled in these parts prior to statehood. However, Sibley persevered, writing newspaper and magazine articles about the virtues of the region, and in March 1849 Minnesota Territory was created.

Apparently, Minnesota's elevation to statehood had been anticipated for some time, because Sibley was elected as the state's first governor in the fall of 1857. After taking office the

following year, he and his family moved from their stone home in Mendota to a new home in Lowertown, then one of the finer residential neighborhoods in St. Paul. Two years later, the city was a bustling river town of 10,401, according to the U.S. Census.

Western Avenue was St. Paul's western boundary in 1858. West of Western was a sparsely populated countryside occupied by farmers and large-scale gardeners. The southwestern portion of what is now St. Paul had not been opened for settlement until 1848. Before that it was part of the Fort Snelling military reserve.

Fort Snelling, the site for which was selected in 1805 by Lieutenant Zebulon Pike, finally began to take shape in 1819. In due time, it attracted settlers to the land around it. Some were from the failed Selkirk Colony along the Red River to the northwest. Others were former soldiers and their families.

The settlers, or squatters as they were called, created problems for commanders of the fort. One complaint, according to Williams, was the sale of alcohol to the fort's soldiers by the residents of a hamlet known as Old Rum Town in present-day Highland Park. The most notorious of their number was Pig's Eye Parrant. In May 1840, the Army forcibly removed him and the rest of the residents of Old Rum Town and burned their homes. Some of the families moved north of the military reserve to what is now South Minneapolis. Others moved down river to what is now downtown St. Paul, where they established a tiny village known as Pig's Eye Landing until its rechristening in 1841 as St. Paul.

In 1843, Stephen Desnoyer settled north of the Fort Snelling military reserve near what is now Desnoyer Park and built a farmhouse and inn. Father Joseph Corrigan's *History of St. Mark's and the Midway District* described Desnoyer as a "short, rotund, jovial French Canadian." Much of what was his farm is now the Town and Country Club golf course. In May 1858, that area north of present-day Marshall Avenue and extending into what is now the city of Roseville was organized as Rose Township or Rosetown. By 1860, it had a population of 488.

William Finn was the first permanent resident of what was to be called Reserve Town-



Three views of St. Paul circa 1858-59: A Red River ox-cart train at 3rd and Washington streets (top); a Fort Garry dog-sled team near West 7th and Walnut streets (middle); and four steamboats docked at the lower levee on the Mississippi River.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ship, after the former military reservation. In 1848 Finn established a claim in the area bounded by the Mississippi River and present-day Marshall, Fairview and St. Clair avenues, according to Donald Empson's history, *On the Street Where You Live*.

Reserve Township—which was bounded by Marshall Avenue on the north, the Mis-

issippi River on the west and south and Dale Street on the east—was established in May 1858 by the men who lived in the area. Mostly farmers, they met at the farmhouse of William Nevin near the present-day intersection of Ford Parkway and Cleveland Avenue

STATEHOOD DAY ► 13

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# Sesquicentennial celebration will peak over two weekends

Minnesota became the 32nd state in the union on May 11, 1858. The 150th anniversary of that occasion will be commemorated on Sunday, May 11, and the weekend of May 17-18 with a host of events on the state Capitol grounds. The schedule includes:

## Sunday, May 11

1:00 to 4:00 p.m.—Open house at the Capitol, a rare lighting of the magnificent chandelier in the Capitol rotunda and a demonstration of period dances to popular music of the 1850s and 1860s.

3:00 p.m.—Group picture of former state officials and their descendants.

3:30 p.m.—Sesquicentennial Wagon Train, which departs from Fort Snelling at 11:00 a.m. with eight wagons, two buggies and 26 mounted riders, arrives at the Capitol after following a route along Minnehaha Avenue and 46th Street in South Minneapolis and Ford Parkway, Cleveland and Summit avenues in St. Paul.

3:45-4:30 p.m.—Presentation of the colors by the First Minnesota Regiment, the playing of the national anthem and the state song, brief remarks by Governor Tim Pawlenty and U.S. Senators Norm Coleman and Amy Klobuchar, and a reading by the three winners of a grade-school essay contest on "What Statehood Means Today and Into the Future."

4:30 p.m.—Church bells ring.

## Saturday, May 17

11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.—Exhibits, refreshments and music and other entertainment by the Hayer Bibimma Dance Group, the Fat Cats, Cyril Paul and the Calypso Monarchs, the Black Story Tellers Alliance, Josiah Wordsworth, the Westside Band and Kid Power with Rachel Kroog. Donations will be accepted for the local emergency food shelf network.

12:30 p.m.—Flyover by 44 vintage aircraft.

1:00 p.m.—Issuance of the Minnesota's Sesquicentennial Commemorative U.S. Postage Stamp. The artist whose image appears on the stamp, Richard Hamilton Smith of Park Rapids, will sign autographs on poster-size reproductions of the stamp.

1:00-5:00 p.m.—Free guided tours of the Capitol by actors portraying characters from Minnesota history.

## Sunday, May 18

1:00-5:00 p.m.—Free guided tours of the Capitol by actors portraying characters from Minnesota history.

4:00 to 9:00 p.m.—Exhibits, refreshments and music and other entertainment by Salsa del Soul, Young Dance, poet and storyteller Rose McGee, the Theatre of Fools, Tales with Tails, the Teddy Bear Band, the Jack Brass Band and the Chris Koza Band. Donations will be accepted for the local emergency food



Minnesota's soon-to-be Governor Henry Hastings Sibley (center) with cronies Joe Rolette (right) and possibly Franklin Steele in 1957. MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

shelf network.

6:58 p.m.—National Guard flyover.

7:00-8:30 p.m.—Ceremony honoring public servants, citizen volunteers and members of the U.S. armed forces; performances by an all-state choir under the direction of Philip Brunelle, the University of Minnesota Jazz Ensemble, the Minnesota Sinfonia and the National Guard Band; speeches by Governor Tim Pawlenty and other dignitaries; the showing of slides from across the state; and a satellite linkup to troops stationed in Iraq.

8:45 p.m.—Fireworks over the Capitol.

## Other sesquicentennial highlights

The Minnesota History Center at 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. will hold an open house from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 11. One of only 25 remaining original copies of the Declaration of Independence, printed on July 4, 1776, in John Dunlap's shop in Philadelphia, is on view there through May 18. From 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on May 17 and 18, free transportation will be provided between the History Center and the state Capitol compliments of the Minnesota State Bar Association. Admission to view the Declaration of Independence and a host of historical Minnesota documents, including two handwritten versions of the state Constitution, is free. Call 651-259-3000.

Former state officials or their descendants who are interested in being in the photograph that will be taken on the Capitol steps on May 11 are invited to contact the sesquicentennial offices at [info@mn150years.org](mailto:info@mn150years.org) or 651-296-1870. Participants will begin lining up at 2:30 p.m. on May 11 on the south steps.

Singers of any age interested in performing with the all-state Sesquicentennial Chorus on May 18 are invited to contact choir coordinator Anna Johnson at [mn150choir@gmail.com](mailto:mn150choir@gmail.com) or visit [www.mn150years.org](http://www.mn150years.org) and click on the choral link under "Get Involved."

## 12◀ STATEHOOD DAY

to elect officers and begin planning roads and schools. The township's first east-west road, St. Clair Avenue, was surveyed that same year, according to Empson.

Reserve Township had a population of 249 in 1860. Much of the land had been purchased in 1854 at an auction in Stillwater. Those who had already settled on the land attended the auction clad in red shirts for identification. Armed with clubs, they stood in a circle to prevent outsiders from bidding on any of the 5,000 acres that were on the block, according to *The History of Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul*.

Although there are several pre-Civil War and Civil War-era homes still standing in St. Paul's Irvine Park and Uppertown neighborhoods, few of the original farmhouses in Re-

serve Township remain. One is the 1857 house at 2064 Randolph Ave. known as the Knapheide house. *The American Institute of Architects Guide to the Twin Cities* by Larry Millett identifies the Knapheide house as the oldest house still standing in Highland Park, although it was moved a short distance in 1890 to make way for the extension of Randolph Avenue.

Like Reserve Township, parts of Mendota and what is now South Minneapolis were also once part of the Fort Snelling military reservation. Mendota, a former fur trading post, had grown by 1858 into a town of several hundred people. The small farms that dotted the countryside around it and what is now South Minneapolis, Highland Park, Macalester-Groveland and Merriam Park produced grain, livestock, fruits and vegetables for residents of the growing communities of St. Paul, St. Anthony and Minneapolis.

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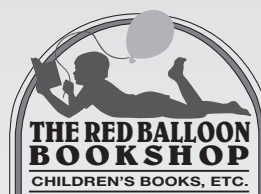


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# School Notes

**Cretin-Derham Hall**, 550 S. Albert St., will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its merger with a "A Toast to Cretin-Derham Hall" from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, in the school's field house. Alumni, faculty, parents and friends are invited. The toast will be celebrated at 8:30 p.m., followed by dancing to the George Hottinger Blues Band. There will be hors d'oeuvres, a dessert buffet and a cash bar (guests must be 21 or older). Admission is \$25. Call Terri Minni at 651-696-3318 or visit [www.cretin-derhamhall.org](http://www.cretin-derhamhall.org) to register.

A **wellness relay walk** will be held on Tuesday, May 20 by six elementary schools in Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland. A baton and wellness banner will be exchanged at each school participating in the relay. Walkers will start at Expo School at 9:30 a.m. and travel to Randolph Heights at 9:45, Groveland at 10:25, Mann at 10:45, Highland at 11:05, Homecroft at 11:30 and then back to Highland to finish around noon.

**St. Thomas Academy** recently won the Minnesota Economics Challenge. Team members included seniors Jason Davis, Cody Evans, Eric Harms and Charlie Nocker. The competition tests students' economic understanding and reasoning abilities in both individual and team categories. STA will compete in a regional competition against 11 other states, with the winner advancing to the national competition in New York. Visit [www.mcee.umn.edu/programs/econchallenge.html](http://www.mcee.umn.edu/programs/econchallenge.html).

A **fundraiser** for the Jamaican Special Scholarship Fund will be held from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Thursday, May 22, in the Klas Center at Hamline University. The evening will feature jerk chicken, wine, rice and beans, music and a silent auction. Proceeds will be used to help Jamaican students attend college. Tax-deductible donations also may be sent to Dan Loritz, at Hamline University, 1536 Hewitt Ave., St. Paul, MN 55101. For details, call Dr. Bob Ellison at 651-335-8077.

**St. Paul NEAT** (Network of Education Action Teams) will hold a conversation with St. Paul School Board members on the district budget and achievement gap from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday May 17, at the American Indian Education Center, 579 Wells St. Call Roxy Foster at 651-442-8914 or



Highland Catholic School's team, the MAN-iacs, won first place in the "Hit or Myth" category at the state Destination Imagination competition on April 19 at Chaska High School. The team now advances to the global competition at the University of Tennessee on May 23-24. The MAN-iacs, from left, include (back row) Fred Werner, Coleman Kramer, Andy Broadnax, Mikey Hagen and Justin Pariana; and (front row) Will Harens and Chase Mullarky. Team managers are Cathy Kramer, Jane Mullarky and Carol Broadnax.

Jacquie Thomas at 651-285-7185. Visit [stpaulneat.org](http://stpaulneat.org).

**The Experimental College** of the Twin Cities (EXCO) based at Macalester College will offer free summer classes beginning June 16. Applications are due by May 16. Teachers also are needed. For information on teaching or taking a class this summer, visit [www.EXCOtc.org](http://www.EXCOtc.org).

**St. Paul College's** Continuing Education Department will present a class on Minnesota workers' compensation from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, May 14, at the college, 317 Marshall Ave. The fee is \$65. To register, call 651-846-1800.

**Rebecca Gibson**, a junior at Highland Park Senior High School, took first place in extemporaneous reading at last month's Class AA state speech tournament.



Megan, left, and Natalie Kramer of Macalester-Groveland pose with Archbishop Desmond Tutu at the youthrive PeaceJam conference on April 12-13 in St. Paul. The two sisters studied about the Nobel Peace Prize winner and chose to raise awareness about the lack of water in South Africa and to raise money for Playpumps International, which provides wells that are activated by children playing on merry-go-rounds. Megan is a sophomore at Cretin-Derham Hall and Natalie attends Highland Junior High School.

**Convent of the Visitation School**, 2455 Visitation Drive, Mendota Heights, will hold an informational program at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 13. Families will be able to learn about Montessori preschool through grade 8 and summer school. Visitation is coed through grade 6 and college-preparatory, girls only in grades 7-12. Call 651-683-1700.

St. Thomas Academy seniors **Robert Kelly**, **Gabe Kleinschmidt** and **Matt Miley** were chosen for the 2008 Salute to Youth awards in recognition of their achievements in volunteer projects, academia, sports, spiritual development and family. The annual awards are hosted by Degree of Honor, a St. Paul fraternal insurance society.

## HRA grants \$1 million loan to rehab three Selby Ave. buildings

By JANE McCLURE

The St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority unanimously approved a \$1 million loan on April 23 for Project for Pride in Living (PPL) to repair its buildings at 700, 710 and 716 Selby Ave. The total cost of rehabilitating the buildings is expected to top \$2.7 million.

The two-story building at 700 Selby Ave. was built in 1980 and has 13 apartments. The three-story buildings at 710 and 716 Selby Ave.

date from 1902 and contain 12 units apiece.

City planning director Cecile Bedor said the buildings will provides supportive housing, which is a priority for the city. "We think this is a great way to reinvest in the community," she said.

The city money is coming from St. Paul's HOME Program. PPL was also awarded \$184,920 in Housing and Urban Development funds and \$800,000 in funds from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA).

After inspecting the buildings, MHFA of-

ficials determined that all three were in need of substantial rehabilitation. The MHFA will likely contribute additional money to the project. The buildings will get new roofs, boilers and windows. The kitchens and bathrooms will be remodeled, property code issues will be corrected, common spaces will be refurbished, and bedrooms will be added to efficiency units. Other improvements will make the buildings more energy-efficient.

No one appeared before the HRA to speak against PPL's request. However, some Sum-

mit-University Planning Council members had questions about turning 700 Selby into housing for the chronically homeless. The district council briefly discussed the proposal on April 22, but did not make a recommendation to the city.

Tenants of the three buildings will have access to PPL's supportive housing services, which include job training, skills workshops and financial and welfare-to-work counseling. Rents will be kept affordable to households at or below the region's median income.

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# Religious Notes

**Temple of Aaron Synagogue**, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd., will host the following programs: the temple's 98th annual meeting and election of new board members at 10:00 a.m. Sunday, May 18; and a "Soup Kitchen Banquet" to benefit projects for the homeless and affordable housing at 5:15 p.m. Sunday, May 18 (\$10-\$15). Call 651-698-8874.

A **healing Mass** will be celebrated at 7:30 p.m. Monday, May 19, at Lumen Christi Catholic Church, 2055 Bohland Ave. The Reverend Terry Rasmussen will preside.

**Archbishop Harry Flynn** was presented with a reproduction of the St. John's Bible on April 24 at the Cathedral of St. Paul in honor of his retirement. St. John's University and the Frey family of Minneapolis presented Flynn with the first completed volume of the Heritage Edition of the Bible. The full-size reproduction is approximately 2-feet tall, 3-feet wide when open and weighs 20 pounds.

**Groveland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**, 1671 Summit Ave., will offer the following lectures at 10:15 a.m. on Sundays: "Is God the Stone in Stone Soup?" by Abby Struck on May 11, and "Are You Excited by the Work You Do Every Day?" by Virginia Bergman on May 18. Call 651-731-0266.

**Pilgrim Lutheran Church**, 1935 St. Clair Ave., will play host to guest preacher the Reverend Richard A. Jensen on Sunday, May 18. A homiletics professor, author and longtime preacher on the national radio program "Lutheran Vespers," Jensen will preach at the 8:30

## Macalester Plymouth turns 150

**Macalester Plymouth United Church**, 1658 Lincoln Ave., will celebrate its 150th anniversary with a special service at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, May 18, followed by a birthday party with cake and ice cream. All current and former members of the congregation, friends and neighbors are welcome to attend. Macalester Plymouth's choir and bell choir will perform and an original drama will be presented. The congregation's 2008 high school graduates will also be honored.

"Our congregation is a testament to the ability of God's people to embrace change and opportunity," said the Reverend Heidi Vardemen, senior minister. "We're a congregation that welcomes all, no matter where they might be on their spiritual journey."

Macalester Plymouth United Church traces its roots to Plymouth Congregational Church, which held its first service on May 16, 1858, in downtown St. Paul. It moved to the corner of Mackubin Street and Holly Avenue and then to the corner of Princeton and Prior avenues before becoming part of Macalester Plymouth United Church in 1968.

Macalester Plymouth United Church also incorporates the congregations of First Presbyterian Church of Merriam Park, organized in 1884 and later known as Merriam-Lexington Presbyterian Church; Macalester Presbyterian Church, established in 1887 on the campus of Macalester College; Park Congregational Church, organized in 1883 on St. Anthony Hill; Lexington Parkway Presbyterian Church, organized in 1911 at Dayton Avenue and Lexington Parkway; and Grace Community Church, organized in 1921 at Prior and Princeton avenues.

Macalester Plymouth, which is affiliated with both the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (USA), has nearly 550 members today. For more information about the church and its 150th anniversary, call 651-698-8871 or visit [www.macalester-plymouth.org](http://www.macalester-plymouth.org).

and 11:00 a.m. services and lead a discussion of the Christian themes in the music of Bono and U2 at 9:45 a.m. Call 651-699-6886.

**Holy Spirit Catholic Church**, 515 S. Albert St., is now celebrating Eucharistic Adoration from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and Mass at 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Other Masses are celebrated at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday and 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. on Sunday.

**Slovak Sokol Minnesota**. An awards dinner honoring McCormick and Landsberger will be held on Thursday, May 15, at Mancini's Char House. Tickets are \$25 and are available by visiting the West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St., calling 651-298-5493 or e-mailing [dward@west7th.org](mailto:dward@west7th.org).

**Iris Shiraishi**, a Macalester-Groveland resident and Japanese taiko drumming artist, recently received the inaugural Award for Achievement in Asian American Performing Arts from Mu Performing Arts and Ellerbe Becket. The award, conceived by Mu artistic director Rick Shiomi, will honor one local and one national Asian American artist each year. Also receiving the award was Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang.

**Air National Guard Airman Dominic Tinson** has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. He is a 2007 graduate of St. Thomas Academy and the son of Linda Jungers of Lincoln Avenue.

**The Schubert Club's** 85th annual scholarship competition attracted more 200 participants in 13 categories. Finals were held on April 19 at Macalester College. Local winners included first place in Junior High School Strings—cellist **Aaron Wolff**, grade 8, St. Paul Academy & Summit School; second place in Senior High School Brass & Woodwinds—flutist **Hannah Peterson**, grade 11, Central High School; and second place in Senior High School Piano **Teresa Yang**, grade 11, Central.



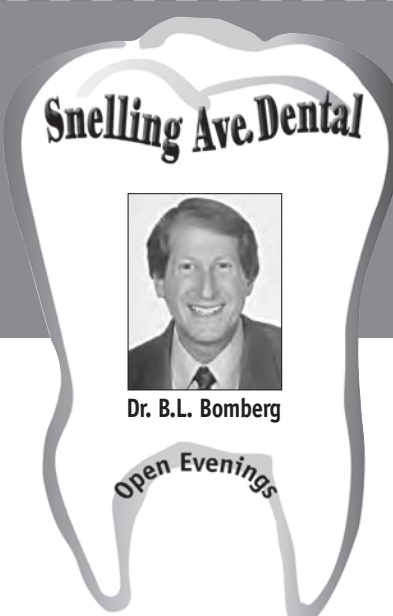
Scheller



Masanz

**Anne Scheller** of Macalester-Groveland and **Jeanne Masanz** of the West End have been named the Minnesota Licensed Family Child Care Association's Providers of the Year. Scheller has been a licensed early childhood professional for 19 years and is the owner of Anne's Adventures. Masanz became a provider after her infant son's heart surgery gave her an interest in helping other families dealing with similar issues. She has been a licensed early childhood professional for 20 years. The award is part of a celebration of Family Child Care Provider Week on May 4-10. Visit [www.mlfcca.org](http://www.mlfcca.org)

**Maxine McCormick** and **Joseph Landsberger**, two longtime West End residents and volunteers, were selected by the West 7th Community Center board as winners of the 2008 David L. Sons Community Service Awards. McCormick is editor of the *Community Reporter* newspaper and has been active in the preservation and restoration of the Irvine Park neighborhood. Landsberger helped create Upper Landing Park on the north end of the High Bridge, is a longtime volunteer for the West 7th/Fort Road Federation and Czech



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# Mystic cords of memory

**Riding Shotgun: 21 daughters variously express their common bond with Mom**

BY JUDY WOODWARD

We begin life so closely attached that we're not sure where our person ends and hers begins. As adults we spend decades trying to detach ourselves from her. We love her and we fear her. We need her and we need her to leave us alone. We owe her everything and we repay her with sentimental cards and flowers on one Sunday each year. She's our biggest supporter and our most devastating critic. We vow that we will never be like her—right up to the moment we first see her reflected in our aging face or hear her tone in our voice.

What may be the most complex of human relationships, that between a mother and daughter, is addressed in a new collection of essays by mostly Minnesota authors. *Riding Shotgun: Women Write About Their Mothers* was edited by Macalester-Groveland poet Kathryn Kysar. She and several of the essayists, including Shannon Olson, Susan Power and Ka Vang, will take part in a free Mother's Day reading beginning at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 11, at the Virginia Street Swedenborgian Church, 170 N. Virginia St.

The book takes its title from Morgan Grace Willow's essay, "Riding Shotgun for Stanley Home Products," which describes how as a child Willow accompanied her mother on her rounds as a traveling saleswoman. For Kysar, it is a metaphor of the changing nature of the mother-daughter relationship. "Initially the mother is the driver and the daughter is the passenger," she said. "Often as we go through life, though, there's a flip."

Despite its Mother's Day release, the book is no bouquet for dear old Mom. Tough, clear-eyed and unnervingly honest, the essays by the 21 daughter-writers range from Shannon Olson's hilarious picture of a mother who communicates love by mailing off newspaper clippings, to Ka Vang's harrowing account of a polygamous Laotian community where her newly married mother was attacked by her

husband's first wife with a bucket of hand grenades.

"I wanted a balance in terms of culture, ethnicity and relations with the mother," said Kysar. And as for age, she said, "the youngest contributors are in their 30s. You have to grow past the anger of the early 20s to understand the complexity of the relationship."

Sometimes the mother is most clearly defined by her absence. Essayist Jan Zita Grover of St. Paul's Lowertown neighborhood writes of her clinically depressed mother whose greatest gift to her daughter was her mastery of a kind of German immigrant cooking that clashed with the Wonder Bread cuisine of the postwar California of Grover's youth. Grover went on to become an accomplished cook in her own right, but it was only after she moved to Minnesota that she grasped the significance of her mother's hasenpfeffer and rosette cookies.

"If you're lucky, when you're older you can see family as subjects of history," Grover said. "The food I found in Minnesota explained something about my mother."

For essayist Susan Steger Welsh of Macalester-Groveland, the problem wasn't finding common ground with her mother but acknowledging the life-threatening illness they shared. Welsh's mother died of a rare cancer when Welsh was in her early 20s. Years later, when Welsh herself developed breast cancer, the uneasy comparisons with her mother's life were inevitable.

"Many women are blind-sided by a cancer diagnosis," Welsh said. "Not me. I knew from a young age that you can die."

Welsh survived her cancer and at 53 is older than her mother was when she died. "My mother's early death made me vigilant and psychologically armed," she said. "They say that the thing you can see is not the one that's going to get you."

Death was also a presence in essayist Carrie Pomeroy's childhood. The Hamline-Midway resident lost her father in a freak accident



Kathryn Kysar of Macalester-Groveland, editor of the new mother-daughter anthology *Riding Shotgun*, with her children, Cole, 9, and Ada, 7. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

when she was 12. Her widowed mother was transformed overnight from her daughter's ideal of glamorous womanhood into the tough-minded mainstay of her grieving family. It wasn't an easy passage for the teenage Pomeroy, who clashed with her mother as she strived to liberate herself from her strictures.

Like many daughters, Pomeroy did not grasp the virtue of her mother's newfound strength and perseverance until she too became a mother. "Writing this essay helped me make peace with the past, to become closer to my mother," she said. "There was the inevitable shock of recognition: There's a strong resemblance between our faces, and her joys and struggles have shaped me. I remember her

singing off-key to Cher. She danced and sang with (my sister and me). I see that coming through when I'm with my kids. And when I lose my temper, that's my mother, too."

In one respect, Pomeroy's mother is probably not unlike many women profiled in the book. "She has mixed feelings (about my inclusion in the book)," Pomeroy said. "She's very proud of me, but she's a private person. A big part of her wishes I didn't have the urge to air family feelings."

*Riding Shotgun* will also be read by the writers at 3:00 p.m. Saturday, May 31, at Barnes and Noble, 2080 Ford Pkwy., and at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, June 19, at Micawber's Books, 2238 Carter Ave.

## INVITATION TO BID

**Minnesota Building**  
46 E. 4th Street – St. Paul, MN  
Bid Date: May 27, 2008  
at 4:00 p.m.

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# Business Briefs

**Sarah Kane** of Macalester-Groveland has come up with something new to give mom this Mother's Day. She has created Sugarcoat, designer vinyl decals for the minivan or car. The designs include flowers, vines and butterflies, are sold in long sheets of more than 20 decals and are packaged in a gift-ready box. According to Kane, the vinyl is a 3M product that is as easy to apply as a temporary tattoo and can withstand car washes and Minnesota weather. The decals cost \$60-\$65 per sheet and are removable, but not reusable. The idea for Sugarcoat was born five years ago when Kane, a mother of two, began searching for cool designs to make her minivan less "beige." Disappointed with flames and lightning bolts, she realized that there was a market for different kinds of designs aimed at hip moms. For information, visit [sugarcoatdecals.com](http://sugarcoatdecals.com).



Sugarcoating the minivan for mom.

Ave. Owned and operated by Krista and Don Schwartz of Highland Park, the 5-year-old business recently added two employees. Krista has been working in the field of interior design for more than 15 years and was recently appointed to the board of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers.

A "Morning Coffee Break" will be held by the Highland Business Association from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. Thursday, May 29, at Pinehurst Bank, 757 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite 100. There is no fee to attend. Call the HBA office at 651-699-9042 for information.

An "I Do Art" exhibit featuring the best works of area youngsters will be on display from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, at Peapods on Snelling and St. Clair avenues. Call 651-228-0385.

The Cosmo Club, a men's biweekly luncheon service club, will meet from noon to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, at Axel's Restaurant, 1318 Highway 13, Mendota. Longtime member Mike Fish, owner of the Hat Trick Lounge in downtown St. Paul, will be honored for his outstanding fundraising achievements for the club. Call Charles Claude at 952-932-4215.

The Highland Business Association has elected the following board officers for 2008: president Chad Curran of Highland Bank, vice president Anne Langford of Langford Chiropractic, secretary Terry Cullen of Terrance M. Cullen Law Firm and treasurer Tom Schramer of Sevenich, Butler, Gerlach & Brazil. The HBA provides monthly membership events, business-to-business discounts and special promotions. Call 651-699-9042 or visit [www.highlandba.com](http://www.highlandba.com).

The Highland Area GarageFest will be held by the Highland Business Association and Highland District Council on Friday and Saturday, May 16-17. Highland residents are being encouraged to conduct their own garage sales while businesses hold sidewalk sales and specials. Those who missed the registration deadline are invited to still put out a sign and participate. Call 651-259-1204.

BodyMind Chiropractic Center, 1650 Iglehart Ave., will offer the following free presentations: "Inflammation and Understanding the Fire Within" at 7:45 p.m. Monday, May 12; and "How to Bring Variety into Your Diet and Have Fun" at 7:45 p.m. Monday, May 19. Call 651-293-1497 to register.

Jeffrey J. Fenske of Macalester-Groveland has opened Fenske Law Office, 461 University Ave. Fenske, who earned his J.D. from William Mitchell College of Law in 1983, practices in the areas of business and real estate transactions and litigation, estate planning and probate and family law.

Indicia Interior Design and Furnishings has opened a new studio at 1279 St. Clair

## Senior News

Elder Care Expo 2008 will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, May 9-10, in the Education Building at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. The expo was started by Macalester-Groveland resident Julie Groshens after experiencing the elder care maze while looking for care for her mother. Experts will provide information on home care and housing options, adult protection, mental health issues, elder law, reverse mortgages and more. Admission is \$8.00. Visit [www.choosingeldercare.com](http://www.choosingeldercare.com) or call 651-204-0266.

The Metro Paint-A-Thon is celebrating its 25th year of rallying volunteers to scrape, prime and paint the homes of low-income seniors and people with physical disabilities. More than 2,000 volunteers will paint around 130 homes the weekend of August 2-3. For information on volunteering or applying to have a house painted, call 612-721-8687, ext 321 or visit [www.gmcc.org/paint-a-thon](http://www.gmcc.org/paint-a-thon). The deadline to apply is May 9.

A senior driver refresher class will be offered from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The course is for those who have already taken the eight-hour class and qualify to take a refresher course every three years. The fee is \$10. Call 651-698-0751.

St. Paul Community Education's Senior Program is offering a trip to New Ulm and Walnut Grove to take in the Bavarian Blast

& Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant on Friday through Sunday, July 18-20. Tour includes coffee & roll stop, six meals, all admissions, two nights lodging at Seven Gables Inn, motorcoach transportation and guide. The cost is \$325-\$425. Registration and payment are due by May 16. Pickup will be at 7:00 a.m. at Bridge View School, 360 Colborne St. Call 651-293-8811.

A Seniors in Mind program on "Minnesota Music and Memories" will be presented at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 13, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Emcee Stan Turner will take seniors on a musical journey through Minnesota history. He will be joined by the Percy Hughes quartet and The Velvet Tones choral group. The program is free. Senior admission to the museum is \$6.00. Call 651-259-3000.

The Thompson Park Activity Center in West St. Paul is offering the following activities: a pre-mother's day tea at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, May 10 (\$6.00); hoagie sandwiches and penny bingo from noon to 3:00 p.m. Thursday, May 29 (\$3.00); and an AARP driver safety refresher course from noon to 4:00 p.m. Thursday, July 17. The center also is offering special trips throughout the summer, including a river cruise on June 17, the Medicine Show Music Company on July 10, an artists' cruise on August 5, Yankee Doodle Dandy at the Ordway on August 10 and 42nd Street at Chanhassen on August 23. Call 651-450-8291.

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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](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/sheriff/communitywatch.htm).

## Highland Park

**Robbery**—TCF Bank, 2163 Ford Pkwy., was robbed at about 1:30 p.m. Friday, April 4.

**Theft**—A 22-inch television was stolen from Radio Shack, 2026 Ford Pkwy., at about 9:00 p.m. Monday, April 14. Four suspects were seen fleeing westbound on Ford Parkway in a Dodge Charger.

## Lexington-Hamline

**Robbery**—Three men robbed another man of his cell phone and wallet on the 1100 block of Selby Avenue at about 1:30 a.m. Thursday, April 10. The victim was taken to Regions Hospital with minor head injuries.

**Miscellaneous**—A SWAT team assisted Minneapolis Police and Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents in executing a search warrant on the 1100 block of Selby Avenue at about 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 15.

—Police took an informational report for the FORCE Unit regarding possible drug dealing on the 1200 block of Portland Avenue on Wednesday, April 16.

## Merriam Park

**Burglary**—The Avanti convenience store at Marshall and Cleveland avenues was broken into between 11:00 p.m. Wednesday and 12:30 a.m. Thursday, April 9-10.

—An apartment unit on the 1900 block of Marshall Avenue was burglarized between 10:00 p.m. Thursday and 8:00 a.m. Friday, April 10-11.

—An attempted burglary occurred on the 2100 block of Marshall Avenue between 11:00 and 11:30 a.m. Monday, April 14, while the residents were home.

**Theft**—The passenger window of an automobile was smashed and the faceplate of a stereo was taken from the vehicle at the University of St. Thomas between 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. Friday, April 4. Electronic equipment also was reported stolen at St. Thomas the previous day.

—A car was stolen at Auto Technical Inc., 461 N. Wilder St., between 3:00 p.m. Friday and 9:00 a.m. Monday, April

4-7. The dealer said the car was not drivable and must have been stolen by someone with a tow truck.

—A theft from auto occurred at St. Thomas between noon and 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 11. The steering column was also damaged in an unsuccessful attempt to steal the vehicle.

**Weapons**—Two 20-year-old St. Paul men were arrested for possession of an assault weapon after a loaded handgun was found in a car that police stopped for a traffic violation at Concordia and Snelling avenues at about 4:00 a.m. Monday, April 14.

## Macalester-Groveland

**Burglary**—A home on the 1900 block of Princeton Avenue was broken into at about 9:00 p.m. Saturday, April 5.

—Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave., was broken into at about 10:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 15.

**Robbery**—Two men robbed two women of a purse on the 1400 block of Osceola Avenue at about 9:30 p.m. Friday, April 4.

**Theft**—A suspect stole eight cartons of cigarettes valued at \$357 from Walgreens on Snelling and Randolph avenues at 8:00 p.m. Sunday, April 13.

**Assault**—A 31-year-old woman was arrested for domestic assault on the 2100 block of Goodrich Avenue after she hit her boyfriend with a candlestick stand and a clothes iron just before midnight Saturday, April 12. The man was taken to the hospital with severe lacerations.

## Snelling-Hamline

**Burglary**—A home on the 1400 block of Ashland Avenue was broken into between 6:30 and 10:30 p.m. Saturday, April 5. A witness saw a male carry a dark-colored duffel bag out the back door. The suspect was described as about 5-foot-10, 150-160 pounds and was wearing a dark hooded sweatshirt.

—Money was stolen from the upstairs of a home that was broken into on the 1300 block of Ashland Avenue between noon and 4:00 p.m. Monday, April 14. There was forced entry through the back door.

## Summit Hill

**Burglary**—A home on the 900 block of St. Clair Avenue was burglarized between 2:30 and 5:00 p.m. Thursday, April 10. Several items were moved, but

nothing appeared missing.

**Theft**—Money was stolen from the safe at the Wild Onion, 788 Grand Ave., between 3:30 and 9:00 a.m. Monday, April 14.

## Summit-University

**Burglary**—A vacant, condemned house on the 700 block of Dayton Avenue was broken into between March 26 and April 3.

## West End

**Burglary**—A home on the 600 block of Jefferson Avenue was burglarized before 4:00 a.m. Saturday, April 5. Numerous electronic items were found broken inside the house.

—An ATM was broken into and money was taken in a burglary at Mancini's Char House, 531 W. 7th St., between 1:00 and 4:00 a.m. Thursday, April 3.

—The old Schmidt Brewery on West 7th Street was broken into between 6:00 p.m. Thursday and 6:00 a.m. Friday, April 3-4.

—Liquor Barrel, 665 W. 7th St., was burglarized at about 8:00 a.m. Sunday, April 6. A window was broken and bottles of alcohol were taken.

—A home on the 400 block of Michigan Street was broken into between 10:00 p.m. Thursday and 2:30 p.m. Friday, April 10-11. The front windows and back door were broken. The house was ransacked and several items were stolen.

**Theft**—A fire ring was stolen from a backyard on the 900 block of James Avenue between 8:00 p.m. Wednesday and 8:00 a.m. Thursday, April 9-10.

—DVD players were stolen from the W. 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St., between 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 15.

**Assault**—En route to a call at Adams Elementary School, 615 S. Chatsworth St., police saw a Chevy Blazer turn in front of another car and take off speeding at Bay Street and Randolph Avenue at about 11:30 p.m. Friday, April 11. Police then realized that the driver of the Blazer was chasing another vehicle. Neither car would stop for police. The Blazer rammed the second vehicle several times. The chase ended when the Blazer again hit the other car at Jefferson and Osceola avenues. Both female drivers, ages 20 and 26, were arrested for aggravated assault.

## “What’s great about St. Paul?”

The Villager reader asks: Any unusual facts?”

**Jim:** The first Minnesota Centennial Showboat was built in 1899 but first served as a maritime courthouse visited by four U.S. Presidents. It was anchored on the U of M's East Bank for many years, and was the venue for theater productions until destroyed by fire from a welder's spark on Jan. 27th, 2000. A new Centennial Showboat was built and arrived at its current docking site at Harriet Island Regional Park on April 17, 2002. U of M Showboat Players are presenting starting June 13, “The Count of Monte Cristo.” For tickets, (dinner shows are Fri and Sat eves.), call 651-227-1100.



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# District Council News

## Highland Park

[www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org](http://www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org) • 651-695-4005

**Spring cleanup**—The Highland and Macalester-Groveland district 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 Ford Motor Company's Twin Cities Assembly Plant (enter off Mississippi River Boulevard). Items that will be accepted include fluorescent bulbs, anything containing mercury, tires, children's items, reusable household goods, electronic products, cell phones, bicycles, metals, lawn mowers, snow blowers, construction debris, concrete and rock. The cost is \$15 per car; \$20 per pickup truck, station wagon, minivan, trailer or SUV; and \$30 for larger loads. Additional charges include \$2.00 to \$30 for tires, and \$10 per mattress or box spring. Those who volunteer to work a morning or afternoon shift during the cleanup will receive a pizza lunch and an opportunity to drop off one load of items for free. To lend a hand, call the HDC office or e-mail Kathy Carruth at [hdc@visi.com](mailto:hdc@visi.com).

**Highland Area GarageFest**—The HDC and Highland Business Association are teaming up this year to hold a neighborhood garage sale and business sidewalk sale on Friday and Saturday, May 16-17. Those 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. A list of sale participants may be found in this issue of the *Villager*. Updated lists also may be picked up at Pinehurst Bank, 757 S. Cleveland Ave., before the sale, or check the HDC website.

**Plant share**—The sixth annual Highland Park plant share will take place from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18, at 1749 Pinehurst Ave. Plants may be dropped off on Saturday, May 17. More than 150 local gardeners benefited from last year's exchange. Gardeners without extra potted plants to exchange are welcome to purchase most plants for a donation of \$1.00 to \$3.00. Proceeds will go to purchase plants for Highland's public gardens. Volunteers are needed to help out at the plant share. For information, call Sue at 651-699-7672 between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m.

**Wipe out graffiti**—The St. Paul Police Department has been increasingly aggressive in identifying and arresting graffiti vandals. To report graffiti in the Highland Park neighborhood, call 651-266-8989.

**Meeting dates**—Community Development Committee with guest Mark Daly of Anytime Fitness, 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 19; Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 20; and Community Services Committee, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 20. The committees are looking for two to four citizen representatives. Those who are interested in participating are invited to attend the meetings, which will be held at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.

## Macalester-Groveland

[www.macgrove.org](http://www.macgrove.org) • 651-695-4000

**Rock-Tenn meeting**—A neighborhood discussion on proposals to meet Rock-Tenn's future energy needs will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, at Groveland Park Elementary School, 2045 St. Clair Ave. Rock-Tenn and St. Paul city officials are considering building an energy plant for the company's

paper recycling operations at University Avenue and Vandalia Street. The Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel is currently monitoring a study of fuel and technology options for the plant. The study is expected to be completed this summer.

**MacGrove Moves**—The third annual Mac-Grove Moves has begun. Participants who walk or bike around the neighborhood at least 15 times this summer will be eligible to enter a drawing for prizes from local businesses. For a registration form, stop by the Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St., or download one from the district council's website.

**Help seniors during cleanup**—Drivers are needed to help pick up items from area senior citizens for the Highland and Macalester-Groveland neighborhood cleanup that will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, in the parking lot of Ford plant. Drivers will receive \$20 per load of materials brought to the cleanup site that day. A maximum of two loads will be allowed per person. To sign up, call Marie Nelson at the council office or e-mail her at [marie@macgrove.org](mailto:marie@macgrove.org) by May 9.

**Grand Old Day changes**—A few changes are in store for this summer's Grand Old Day on Sunday, June 1, that will affect streets in the Macalester-Groveland area. The Grand Old Day Parade will start at Fairview Avenue and travel east to Dale Street this year. Parade units will line up on Grand between Cleveland and Fairview avenues and on Prior Avenue and Howell Street near Grand. Those streets will be closed to traffic from 8:00 a.m. to noon and there will be no parking between 6:00 a.m. and noon. In addition, the On the Go 8K run will start and end at St. Albans Street, with a loop at Fairview Avenue. There will be no parking on the north side of Lincoln Avenue between Fairview and Wheeler Street and both sides of Wheeler between Grand and Lincoln from 6:00 to 9:00 a.m. No-parking signs will be posted two days prior to Grand Old Day. For information, call 651-699-0029.

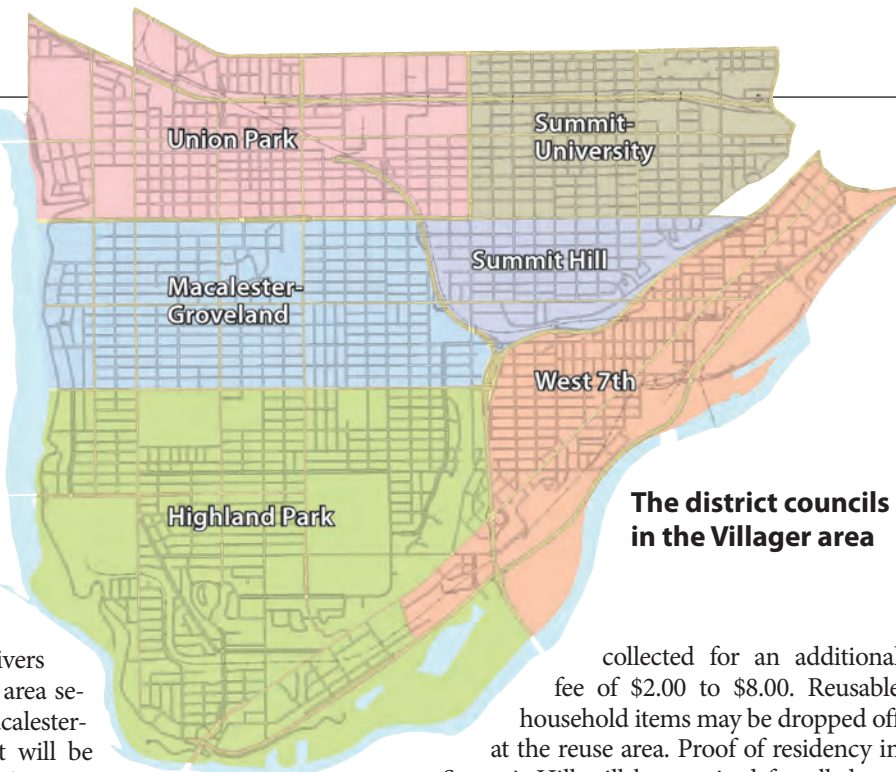
**Battle of the Bands**—Bands of all kinds are invited to apply for the Battle of the Bands at Grand Old Day on June 1. Band members must be 18 or older as of June 1. The application deadline is 4:00 p.m. Friday, May 9. For an application or information, contact Marie Nelson at [marie@macgrove.org](mailto:marie@macgrove.org).

**Date to remember**—Macalester-Groveland board of directors meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 8, Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St.

## Summit Hill

[www.summithillassociation.org](http://www.summithillassociation.org) • 651-222-1222

**Neighborhood cleanup**—The Summit Hill Association's 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. Admission is \$5.00 to \$15, depending on the size of the vehicle. Unwanted household items such as small electronic products and tires will be



The district councils in the Villager area

collected for an additional fee of \$2.00 to \$8.00. Reusable household items may be dropped off at the reuse area. Proof of residency in Summit Hill 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 material. Call the SHA office or visit its website for more information.

**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 September 14. Gift cards are available with ticket purchases.


**History of Summit Hill**—A crew of volunteer writers, researchers and editors are currently working on a Summit Hill history booklet, which is expected to be published in time for the Summit Hill House Tour. Funding has been provided in part by a generous donor, but additional donations are being sought to help defray the printing cost. Anyone with a story to tell or a historic photograph to share, or writers who would like to donate their time to the project, are asked to call the SHA office or e-mail [summithill@visi.com](mailto:summithill@visi.com).

**Grand Old Day parade**—The Summit Hill Association will once again have a unit in the Grand Old Day parade on Sunday, June 1. This year's festival carries the theme "Flashback to the '70s" and has been designed to be more family-friendly. Residents are encouraged to dig out their old leisure suits and platform shoes, decorate their kids' bikes, wagons and pets, and join in the fun by parading behind the SHA's banner. Contact the SHA office for more information.

**Block and building clubs**—Summit Hill's block and building club leaders will hold their spring meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 22, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave. The topic for the evening will be "Supporting Each Other: Sharing Resources and Ideas for Summit Hill Block and Building Clubs." There will be lots of ideas for National Night Out on August 5 and a door prize drawing. The public is invited to attend.

**Volunteers needed**—The SHA's Environment Committee still needs volunteers to help water, mulch and maintain the

DISTRICT COUNCILS ► 22



**2008 Distinguished Preacher Series**  
**Sunday, May 18**  
**Worship – 8:30 & 11 am**  
**Preacher – The Rev. Dr. Richard A. Jensen**  
 Homiletics Professor, Author, Preacher  
**Forum – 9:45 am**  
 "An Introduction to the Christian Themes in the Music of Bono and U2" – Dr. Jensen  
 Rev. Carol Tomer, Lead Pastor  
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# GOT JUNK?

## Highland and Macalester-Groveland District Councils

### Saturday, May 17, 2008, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

St. Paul Ford Assembly Plant Parking Lot,  
Enter off Mississippi River Boulevard

## SPRING CLEAN-UP

The Spring & Fall Cleanups are one-day events to allow residents to discard items, sitting around their house. Furniture, electronics, lawn mowers, toys, tires-bring almost anything you would like to get rid of. We bring together haulers and vendors in one central location and make efforts to reuse or recycle your old stuff for less cost than you would pay a garbage hauler to take it away. This event is only open to Macalester-Groveland and Highland residents, so bring your driver's license or a bill with your name and address. Please enter the cleanup site from Mississippi River Boulevard.

### ITEMS ACCEPTED

The following items should be packed in this order, as this is the order in which the stations will appear, starting with items that should be placed on top, to be dropped off first:

- Fluorescent bulbs and mercury-containing devices (thermometers, liquid mercury, etc.)
- Tires of all sizes.
- Children's items, such as books, toys and clothes.
- Reusable household goods, furniture. Almost anything that is in good shape may be left at the reuse area.
- Electronics including computers and computer-related equipment, televisions, phones, fax and copier machines.
- Cell phones.
- Bicycles, functional or non-functional.
- Metals—these items will be stripped down, so anything you have that includes a significant amount of metal should be left here. Even better, strip it down before you bring it!
- Lawn mowers and snow blowers.
- Construction debris and architectural salvage (anything that comes off your house) other than concrete and rock.
- Mattresses, carpets and other materials not accepted at other stations.
- Concrete and rock, including patio blocks and other items that are not pure concrete must go to construction debris.

### ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED!

- Appliances - call J.R. Appliance for a discounted curbside pick-up 651-454-9215.
- Recyclables - paper, plastic, glass, cardboard, etc. can be set out for Friday regular recycling pick-ups.
- Household refuse - will be picked up by your trash hauler.
- Hazardous Waste - antifreeze, car batteries, propane tanks, oil, or oil-based paint need special handling for disposal. Call 651-633-EASY to find the nearest household hazardous waste drop-off facility.
- Brush & Compost - Call 651-633-3279 for a drop-off site nearest you.

### FEES

The cost will be \$15 for a car, \$20 for a pick-up truck, station wagon, minivan, trailer or SUV, and \$30 for larger loads and vehicles. Additional charges include \$2 per car tire, \$3 per truck tire, \$7 per semi tire, and \$30 and up per tractor tire. There will also be a charge of \$10 per mattress and \$10 per box spring.

### WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

This event runs on volunteers. If you help us out, you may also bring a FREE load of stuff and we'll feed you lunch. Call 651-695-4005 or email [hdc@visi.com](mailto:hdc@visi.com) to volunteer.

Kathy Carruth, Program Coordinator:  
Community Organizer  
Highland District Council  
1978 Ford Parkway, St. Paul, MN 55116  
[www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org](http://www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org)

### 21 ◀ DISTRICT COUNCILS

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 of the Capitol Region Watershed District.

**Dates to remember**—SHA board meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 8, Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave.; Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Calming Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 12, Linwood; Communications Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 19, Linwood.

### Union Park

[www.unionparkdc.org](http://www.unionparkdc.org) • 651-645-6887

**Central Corridor parking**—A public meeting on how the proposed Central Corridor light-rail line may affect neighborhood parking will be held from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, May 8, at the Central Corridor Project Center, 540 N. Fairview Ave., Suite 200. Representatives from the Metropolitan Council, Union Park District Council, St. Paul City Council and St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development will be available to provide information and answer questions. For information, call the Union Park office.

**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 attend, 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. For details, contact Nina@sapcc.org or 612-788-4151.

**Union Park benches**—The district council's Neighborhood Issues Committee has teamed up with Active Living Ramsey County to place 14 benches along a walking path in the neighborhood. The project is part of an effort to place 1,000 benches in the county by

the end of 2010 in order to promote walking. The St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission will hold a public hearing on the Union Park proposal at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 22, in St. Paul City Hall, Room 40. The HPC is involved since some of the benches may be located with the Summit Avenue West historic district. For information, visit [www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ALRC/projects.htm](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ALRC/projects.htm). To find out more about Union Park's participation, call the council office.

**Steppin' Out**—Lex-Ham Community Arts' annual gala event, Steppin' Out with Lex-Ham, will be held from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, at the Commodore, 79 N. Western Ave. The evening will include music, food, a silent auction and a reading of Jeanine Coulombe's play *Beakers*. For information, visit [www.LexHamArts.org/theater](http://www.LexHamArts.org/theater).

**Recycling bins**—The district council is no longer handing out recycle bins at the Dunning Recreation Center. They are now being distributed from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at the Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. The next pickup day is May 7. For information, call Julie Oney at the Union Park office at 651-645-6887 or e-mail [julie@unionparkdc.org](mailto:julie@unionparkdc.org).

**Farm in the City**—"Harvesting the Imagination," Farm in the City's summer program for children ages 7-12, will run from June 16 to July 25, with specialty sessions for children ages 10-12 from July 28 to August 8. All of the sessions are held at Concordia University-St. Paul. For information, visit [www.farminthecity.org](http://www.farminthecity.org).

**Stay connected**—Union Park residents may sign up to receive monthly electronic newsletters and local crime statistics by e-mailing [theresa@unionparkdc.org](mailto:theresa@unionparkdc.org).

**Upcoming meetings**—Board of directors, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.; Neighborhood Issues Committee, 7:00 p.m. Monday, June 2 (call for location); Parks and Recreation Committee, 7:00 p.m. Monday, June 2, Merriam Park Community Center.

## How Your Garden Grows

(Let your business bloom too with an ad in our special Gardening Section.)

Talk about being in the right place at the right time! This is the season 130,000-plus Villager readers in the neighborhoods listed below are busy planting and landscaping around their homes. As a result, our upcoming Gardening Section will be extremely well-read. As will your ad — unless you miss the deadline.



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## Volunteers

**Molly Nemer**, a 7th-grader at Friendly Hills Middle School in Mendota Heights, received a presidential award from George W. Bush for her volunteerism. Last year, she and her sister, Hannah (now a sophomore at Sibley High School), launched an event to help New Orleans artists in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. They recruited other teens and some artists to hold an event at the Neighborhood House called "Listening to New Orleans—their words, their music, our hearts."

**The Highland Friendship Club** is looking for volunteers to help with its summer program, which begins the week of June 9. Activities for young adults, ages 13-25, with or without disabilities include music classes, adventure days, game and movie nights, fitness classes and more. Those interested in a flexible volunteer job are asked to call 651-698-4096 or e-mail [info@highlandfriendshipclub.org](mailto:info@highlandfriendshipclub.org).

**The Summit Hill Association** is looking for volunteers to help with various office tasks, such as copying, data entry and mailings, from time to time as the workload dictates. A volunteer also is needed to coordinate ad sales for "The Summit" newsletter. For more information, call Diane Hilden or Jeff Roy at the SHA office at 651-222-1222.

**Lutheran Social Service** is seeking senior companions to help their peers remain in their own homes by providing visits, friendship, help with errands and transportation to appointments. Call 651-642-5990.

**The Minnesota Literacy Council** is seeking volunteers to tutor immigrants, refugees and life-long Minnesotans in reading, writing and English. Volunteers may tutor one-to-one, in a small group or as a classroom assistant. Training and ongoing support are provided. Call 651-645-2277, ext. 219.

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# Local plants sales and swaps are popping up all over

Whether you're partial to petunias, tempted by tomatoes or just planning to pick up something colorful for Mother's Day, you'll find the following area plant sales, plant swaps and other gardening events in full bloom during the next few weeks:

**Friends School** will hold its 19th annual plant sale from May 9-11 at the Minnesota State Fair Grandstand. More than 2,000 varieties of plants will be sold, including heirlooms, climbers, lilies, fruit trees, perennials, wildflowers, herbs, roses, trees and shrubs. Sale hours are 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday (half-price sale). Admission is free. Volunteers get to shop early. Visit [www.FriendsSchoolPlantSale.com](http://www.FriendsSchoolPlantSale.com).

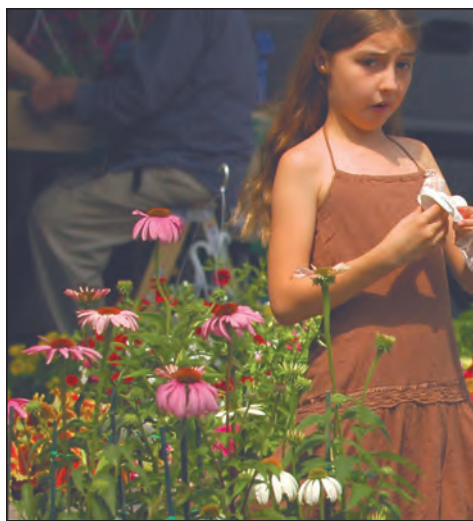
**The Dowling Community Garden** will feature more than 200 varieties of vegetables, flowers and herbs during its annual plant sale from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, May 10, at the garden, 39th Street and 46th Avenue South in Minneapolis. The sale will include heirloom and hybrid tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and old-fashioned annuals and perennials. Visit [dowlingcommunitygarden.org](http://dowlingcommunitygarden.org).

**A Spring Fest flower sale** will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturday, May 10, in the parking lot at Immanuel Lutheran Church on Snelling and Goodrich avenues. Entertainment will be provided by the Splatter Sisters beginning at noon. There will also be concessions, art, children's games and a master gardener to answer questions. Call 651-699-5560.

**The Mendota Heights Garden Club** will hold its annual plant sale from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday, May 10, at 1422 Delaware Ave. Perennials, herbs, house plants and more will be sold. Call 651-450-9779.

**The Longfellow Garden Club** will hold its annual plant swap at 7:15 p.m. Wednesday, May 14, outside Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 S. 37th Ave., Minneapolis. Participants should bring perennials, bulbs and extra seedlings to share. A small donation will be requested from those who do not bring plants and are not club members.

**The Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota** will hold its 25th annual plant and garage sale from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Thursday and



Spring has sprung, the grass is riz—do you know where your local plant sale is?

PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

Friday, May 15-16, at 1647 Laurel Ave. This year's sale will feature 13 varieties of heirloom tomatoes, along with an assortment of perennials for sun and shade. Call 651-646-3005.

**The Garden Club of Ramsey County** will

hold its annual plant consignment sale from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 17, at Highland Catholic School, 2017 Bohland Ave. Garden favorites, quick fillers, hostas and more will be sold. Visit [www.ramseygardeners.org](http://www.ramseygardeners.org) or call Margo Johnson at 651-698-4669.

**The Marjorie McNeely Conservatory** will conduct its annual bulb sale from 8:00 a.m. to noon Sunday, May 18, at Como Park. Thousands of tulip, hydrangea, hyacinth, daffodil and lily bulbs that were used for the spring flower show will be sold. Call 651-487-8201.

**The Highland Plant Share** will be conducted from noon to 3:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18, in the alley behind 1749 Pinehurst Ave. Gardeners may exchange their potted plants with their neighbors or purchase plants if they have nothing to exchange. Call Sue Knapton at 651-696-7672.

**The St. Paul Farmers' Market** will sell flowers and vegetables from 1:15 to 5:00 p.m. on Fridays, beginning May 9, in the parking lot of St. Thomas Moore Catholic Church, 1079 Summit Ave. The downtown St. Paul market at 5th and Wall streets is now open from 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturdays and from 8:00 a.m.

## Friends offer nine easy steps to building a beautiful rain garden

Many people may not realize that rain carries pollutants from where it falls—roofs, yards, sidewalks and streets—into lakes, rivers and streams. One of the ways to help prevent pollutants from being carried into the water system is building a rain garden.

According to the Friends of the Mississippi River, rain gardens not only help filter runoff pollution, but remove standing water from the yard and reduce places for mosquitoes to breed. The Friends offer the following steps to building a beautiful rain garden:

1. Choose your location. Make sure it is at least 10 feet from your house to prevent water from seeping into the foundation. It should gently slope downward.
2. Create a design. Crescent, teardrop and kidney shapes all work well.
3. Choose your plants. Native plants are best because of their long root systems. Try to mix heights, shapes, textures and blooming times so that your garden has a long flowering season.
4. Lay out your garden. Take into account the type of soil, amount of sunlight each plant

needs, and place plants that need more water at the lower end of the garden.

5. Enlist a few friends and start digging. Make sure you mark the perimeter with a string or hose, and measure the depth from the uphill end of the garden.

6. Level the area. If the rain garden is inclined, use the excess soil to create a berm around the downhill end to prevent excess water from flowing out. The berm should be shaped into a smooth ridge about a foot across and be well-compacted to prevent erosion.

7. Plant. It is best to use flowers and grasses

with a well-established root system rather than seeds.

8. Mulch. This will help minimize the loss of moisture and provide a barrier to weed growth.

9. Water. A new rain garden will need roughly one inch of water per week until it is well-established. Then you can arrange your downspouts so that they flow into your rain garden.

The Friends of the Mississippi River offers free native garden and rain garden workshops. For more information visit [www.fmr.org](http://www.fmr.org)

## Restless to go native? Give these low-maintenance plants a try

Are you thinking of making some changes in your garden this year, but are worried about the time and effort it will require? Native plants are a great low-maintenance, easy-to-grow solution, according to the Friends of the Mississippi River.

Some of the options for small trees and shrubs native to Minnesota are blue beech, chokecherry, hawthorn, ironwood, service berry, American hazelnut and red-osier dog-

wood. Native plants with colorful blooms include purple coneflowers, meadow blazing star, blue false indigo, butterfly milkweed, brown-eyed Susans and grey-headed coneflowers. The long root systems of prairie grasses also can help prevent runoff and erosion. Check out big bluestem, little bluestem, sideoats grama and Indian grass.

Though there's a vast number of benefits to native landscaping, people often worry that it

may cause tension with neighbors. The best way to avoid that is to tell your neighbors what you are planning on doing, why and what they can expect. After that, consider the following:

- Start with small changes to your yard. It is more cost-effective and will allow your neighbors time to adjust.
- Create a border around planting edges, be it a fence, strip of lawn or a path. Messiness is often a major concern of neighbors opposed to native landscaping.

• Humanize the landscape with places to sit, pathways if the area is large enough and birdhouses to attract feathered friends. This will make your new garden more enjoyable for everyone.

The Friends of the Mississippi River offers free native garden and rain garden workshops. For information, visit [www.fmr.org](http://www.fmr.org).

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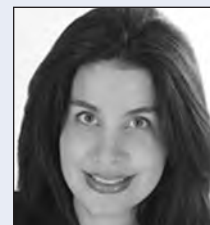
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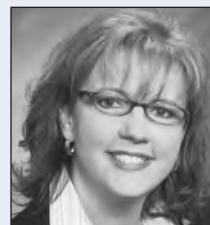
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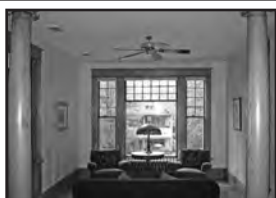


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# Health and Fitness

## Grabbing life by the reins

Healing power of horses is not lost on We Can Ride volunteer Patty Hanson

By KATJA ROWELL

Patty Hanson lost her husband, father and mother five years ago. "In six months, my whole world as I knew it was gone," she said. Since then, the Macalester-Groveland resident has been on a path of healing through yoga, meditation, travel and keeping a journal. However, it is with horses that she feels an even deeper sense of serenity and solace.

"There is magic there," said Hanson, who volunteers with We Can Ride, a therapeutic horseback riding program for people with disabilities. "Horses are the most incredible animals, and the experience with them can be truly therapeutic."

Working with horses was not a natural fit for Hanson, who described her first horseback experience in 1999 as terrifying. Five years later, in an effort to conquer her fear, she signed up for a trail ride in Alaska. She then volunteered as an assistant trail guide at the Minnesota Harvest Apple Orchard and took a working vacation at a horse therapy ranch in Montana.

Hanson is now one of 70 volunteers at We Can Ride's site at the new Leatherdale Equine Center on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus. We Can Ride (WCR) was founded in 1982 and now operates four centers—in St. Paul, Minnetonka, Delano and Marine on the St. Croix. All of the sites are accredited by North American Riding for the Handicapped Inc. Statewide, WCR manages 35 horses and has 400 volunteers.

According to program development director Judi French, what makes the St. Paul center unique is its close relationship with the University of Minnesota School of Veterinary Medicine. The \$14 million facility was built on land donated by the U of M near the intersection of Larpenteur and Cleveland avenues. The facility includes a hospital, research center and indoor riding arena, making it the only WCR site that operates year-round.

"Our ties with the university mean we can educate people on equine therapy and de-

velop expertise," French said. WCR partners with students in occupational, physical and recreational therapy as well as kinesiology and special education.

Equine-assisted therapy is used to treat physical, cognitive, behavioral and emotional disabilities in humans. The horses, chosen for their calm disposition and reliability, help clients with autism, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome and brain injuries. "Horses can be used as tools in the manner of traditional therapies to stimulate and strengthen core muscles and balance," French said. "They also provide unique motivation and connections that are not possible in standard medical settings."

The university has applied for research grants that French believes will prove what she and her colleagues already know—that equine therapy is a unique treatment that offers great benefits. And as those clinical benefits are verified, she said, insurers will likely cover more of the treatments, leading to even greater availability.

The St. Paul center offers several levels of treatment. Hippotherapy, from the Greek word for horse, is the most intensive and requires a team of one physical or occupational therapist and two trained volunteers per client. It costs \$180 a session, with insurers covering roughly 40 percent. The center uses a hydraulic wheelchair ramp to aid in mounting and dismounting the horses.

Many clients begin hippotherapy unable to walk or lacking full head control and cannot ride unassisted. Eighty percent transition within a year to less intensive group therapy riding sessions.

WCR also offers early childhood classes that focus on specific therapeutic goals to help get kids ages 2-5 ready for school. Teens and adults who are unable to ride may participate in carriage driving classes.

Most clients attend group therapy sessions, which are less intensive and cost about \$35. A certified volunteer guides them in improving social skills, impulse control and verbal communication. Every year, a handful of these clients go on to train and compete in the



Patty Hanson poses with one of her four-legged friends at the Equine Center on the U of M's St. Paul campus, where she serves as a We Can Ride volunteer. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Special Olympics.

WCR tries to ease the financial burden on families by extending some partial scholarships. In order to provide its services, WCR relies on volunteers, grants, donations and several fundraisers throughout the year. (For information, visit [www.wecanride.org](http://www.wecanride.org).)

There are currently more than 100 clients on WCR's waiting list. French said she would love to help more people, but that means raising more money and training more volunteers. She said there are plans to add two more horses and several evening sessions this summer.

Hanson described horses as highly intuitive communicators and said her time spent with them is almost meditative. "I don't know if it's the physical repetition or the fact that you're caring for another animal, but it's the ultimate biofeedback," she said.

Hanson is exhausted after caring for the horses, but would welcome more work. And in spite of everything she has been through, she considers herself fortunate.

"I feel like the world is opening up for me in ways I never would've imagined," she said, "and I know the clients and their parents at We Can Ride feel the same way."

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# Something to talk about

## Speech therapy adds to adoptive couple's happy ending

BY LARRY ENGLUND

Ridley Nelson is a 4-year-old cutie. As he interacts with adoptive parents Kelly and Andrew Nelson, answering their questions and chatting with a visitor in their West End home, it's hard to believe that just a short time ago Ridley could barely speak at all. Also surprising is that he was born in Korea, given his white hair and blue eyes.

When he was adopted by the Nelsons two years ago, Ridley didn't seem to be developing any language skills. "When we were in Korea, we were told that he only knew two words," Kelly said.

Once back in St. Paul, the Nelsons had an evaluation done through the St. Paul Public Schools using a Korean translator. "We discovered that he was understanding Korean, but not speaking," Andrew said.

The Nelsons had first seen Ridley's photo on a website when he was a few months old. Because Kelly was pregnant at the time, they didn't fit the adoption criteria. A year later, they saw that he was still waiting for a home and contacted Children's Home Society.

"We sent an application letter and basically sold ourselves," said Kelly, who works as an occupational therapist with developmentally disabled children at Bridgeview School on St. Paul's West End.

Andrew is a stay-at-home dad who has also worked with people with special needs. They have two other children: Marete, who will be 4 in June; and Quinn, who will soon turn 3.

After working with the school district, the Nelsons turned to Associated Speech and Language Specialists, 561 W. 7th St., for further evaluation. "With a child Ridley's age, it feels more like a play date," said speech therapist and clinic co-owner Shelly Montelibano in explaining the evaluation process. "We use toys, visuals, bubbles and other stimuli to create a playful atmosphere. We observe and use evaluation tools to help us understand the child's response."

Montelibano and the staff at Associated Speech have spent the last 14 years working primarily with children like Ridley who have communication issues. "We see children with a vast array of disorders, from cleft palates to kids with difficulty processing language or interpreting words," she said.



Ridley Nelson kicks back with dad Andrew and a good book. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Montelibano said parents might first recognize a speech and language problem due to a child's lack of vocabulary. "Also, if a child isn't understanding information, a parent may begin to use shorter sentences and gestures to reinforce what's being said," she said, "and then realize that they're doing so more than other parents."

With an older child there are many indications, including academic performance and lack of social skills.

Evaluations of younger children are often done with parents in the room. "With Ridley, it was an obvious benefit to have his dad present," Montelibano said. "The first thing to consider with a child like Ridley is that English is a second language. We often have to interpret our observations with caution, since the children are acquiring a new language."

Still, it was easy for all to agree that Ridley was lagging behind his peers. "It was evident that he needed to build his verbal skills, and that he understood more than he was able to communicate," Montelibano said.

Ridley's treatment sessions also included lots of play, using toys and other

objects to increase the sounds he used, labeling objects and actions and helping him pair words to form sentences.

At the end of each session, parents are told what has been done and discuss what might be done at home. Montelibano stressed that when the parents are engaged in the process, their kids progress much more quickly.

With Ridley, "we used flash cards, signing, identified colors and worked with him to use longer sentences," Kelly said. "At first he would identify 10 or 12 cards out of 50. Now he does 45 out of 50."

The visit with the Nelsons affirmed Ridley's progress. He behaved in a typical 4-year-old fashion. Ridley actually looks more Minnesotan than Korean, and his parents elicited an explanation from him. "I have albinism," he said, as he sat in his father's lap.

Albinism, which is marked by a lack of pigment in the hair and eyes, often impairs vision, which Andrew said may have contributed to Ridley's language difficulties. "We realized after the fact

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## Get Fit Twin Cities is hit for second year in a row

Thousands of St. Paul and Minneapolis residents crossed the finish line on April 24 for Get Fit Twin Cities 2008, a team-based fitness challenge designed to get people to exercise more and eat better.

The second annual event was promoted by the mayors of both cities. They challenged friends, families and co-workers to make the Twin Cities the healthiest metropolitan area in the nation by forming teams of from two to 10 people to motivate and support one another in becoming more fit.

The inaugural Get Fit Twin Cities attracted nearly 8,000 participants. During this year's challenge, 7,409 participants in 1,331 teams racked up more than 295,185 hours of total physical activity from January 16 to April 24.

The program offered camaraderie, incentives and weekly tips on how to lead a healthier life.

"The team structure can really motivate people who have been sedentary to dip their toe into the fitness experience," said St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman. "It's always a little easier to walk those three miles when you have a friend by your side. A team-based program also promotes friendly competition among teams and teammates, which can provide that extra incentive that people need to stick with it. They feel more accountable."

For many participants, the efforts to get and stay fit did not end on April 24. Blake Hambrick lost a total of 35 pounds and four inches off his waist since the beginning of Get Fit Twin Cit-

ies. He wants to lose another 20 pounds and plans to continue following the health tips he received from Get Fit.

"Get Fit has been a hit for two years in a row," said Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak. "Whether people made significant lifestyle changes or minor workout adjustments, Get Fit got people motivated and moving."

"There are literally hundreds of success stories out there," Rybak said. "We've proven once again that this is a community that prides itself on being fit and active."

Get Fit Twin Cities is a program of Steps to a Healthier Minneapolis, Steps to a Healthier St. Paul and their many partners. For more information, visit [www.getfittwincities.org](http://www.getfittwincities.org) or [www.steps-to-a-healthier-mn.org](http://www.steps-to-a-healthier-mn.org).




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# Friends spread the word about wellness

Highland Park residents and long-time friends Wendy Lutter and Stephanie Ross have launched Empoword, a new product-based business that is built on the premise that focusing on the right mantra can lead to changes in a person's life.

Their products include such everyday items as T-shirts, water bottles and vinyl decals that are emblazoned with a single word and graphic image to promote positive thinking.

Ross grew up in Mendota Heights and graduated from St. Paul Academy. Lutter grew up on Summit Avenue and graduated from Central High School. They both attended Smith College as art history majors and have been friends since they moved back to St. Paul and met in a college book club.

They worked on special events and fundraisers around the Twin Cities together while raising their children. When Ross, a holistic wellness coach, came up with the idea for Empoword, she turned to Lutter, who along with being a close friend is a marathoner with an MBA in marketing.

Once the partnership was formed, both women marveled at how they had been independently testing the Empoword concept for years to attain personal and professional goals.



Empoword creators Stephanie Ross, left, and Wendy Lutter with samples of their products at the SweatShop. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Empoword products are now being sold in shops, fitness studios and wellness centers in four states and are expected to expand to three more states by July, Lutter said. Locally, they are being

carried at the SweatShop on Snelling, the Bibelot Shop on Grand and Inner Strength Fitness in Minneapolis. They also may be ordered on-line by visiting [www.thinkempoword.com](http://www.thinkempoword.com).

## 27◀ ASSOCIATED SPEECH

that his glasses were donated and that he wasn't seeing things well," Andrew said. "With proper glasses, he was better able to identify things correctly."

Treatment for Ridley lasted about eight months. He is now in special education

preschool at Expo Elementary School, where his teacher is a speech specialist. "He's doing so well that he'll be able to go to a regular classroom when he enrolls in kindergarten next year," Andrew said.

The Nelsons said they realize that Ridley will have "a lot of little hurdles to

overcome" as he grows up. And though Ridley still plays by himself a lot, he is learning from his brother and sister. "He does just fine communicating with them," Kelly said. "Marete has a larger vocabulary, and he has her to emulate and learn from."

~ Advertisement

# 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, Bioptic 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 bioptic 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 ex-

cept 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 bioptic 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:

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



# Food



## Home Fires

By Jo Marshall

### Tasty cooking on the cheap: Keeping the collectors at bay

*One of the saving graces of the less-moneyed people of the world has always been that they were forced to eat more unadulterated, less dishonest food than the rich bitches.*

— M.F.K. Fisher, from *How to Cook a Wolf*

When M.F.K. Fisher wrote her 1942 treatise on economy in the kitchen, wartime food shortages were at their peak. Even those who had managed to squeak through the Great Depression well-fed and happy felt that “the wolf was at the door.” In chapters with titles like “How to Be Sage Without Hemlock,” “How to Distribute your Virtue” and “How to Have a Sleek Pelt,” Fisher dispensed prudent advice on thrift along with generous examples of the fearless disposition it takes to dine well without extravagance.

Fast forward to 2008: With food prices at all-time highs, everybody is feeling the pinch. Coupon redemption has spiked for the first time in years. Eggs cost 24 percent more than in 2007. Consumers who once shopped only at upscale groceries are flocking to the big-box supermarkets. We don’t have WWII-style, government-mandated rationing, but if you’re feeding a family on a budget, you ration yourself.

How do you rein in the grocery bill without sacrificing taste? Here’s some food for thought, culled from ancient sages and modern professionals:

**Dump the junk.** If there’s a silver lining in the current burst of food inflation, it’s that Americans desperately need to go on a diet. This is not to diminish the tragedy of hunger. Poor people suffer even more as food prices surge. But as a nation, we’re obese, and many of us could stand to drop a few pounds. Pledge to stop spending your cash on empty calories. Do you really need that soda or bag of chips? Cut the junk, and you’ll be tightening your belt in more ways than one.

**Go whole.** Whole foods are far cheaper than processed foods. Just compare the price of a five-pound bag of potatoes to a pound of pre-cut frozen fries. Making every meal from scratch isn’t easy for busy parents, but simple foods, simply prepared, simply cost less than their processed counterparts. And you’ll get better nutrition in the bargain.

**Waste not.** Fisher recommended keeping “an old gin bottle” in the refrigerator to collect the juices from canned vegetables, then turning them into a broth. It’s not a practice I plan to adopt, but the wisdom is unquestionable. The most expensive food in the world is the food you throw away. Toss chicken



Save money without sacrificing taste. Dress up your dishes with parsley in the winter and buy your potatoes in bulk instead of indulging in those pre-cut frozen French fries. PHOTOS BY JANET HOSTETTER

bones into a bag in the freezer until you’ve got enough for stock. Freeze that unfinished baguette and use it for crostini. If a recipe calls for egg yolks, refrigerate the whites for tomorrow’s omelets.

**Keep inventory.** Take stock of your pantry and refrigerator every day. That leftover steak might make a great sandwich, but only if you remember it’s there. Making the most of what you’ve got requires some vigilance. When celery and carrots begin to look limp, make soup. When the yogurt is about to expire, have a smoothie for breakfast.

**Simplify, simplify, simplify.** Those of us with a passion for cooking can convince ourselves that life will come to a screeching halt without this or that exotic and often expensive ingredient. I should know. Some time back, I realized that cooking oils were taking up so much real estate in my cupboard, they required a second zip code. A quick tally revealed three kinds of vegetable oils, peanut oil, three different olive oils (one for cooking, one for salads, one for dipping bread) and numerous oils for flavoring (walnut, hazelnut, chili, etc.) It’s nice to have an arsenal, but enough is enough. I now manage to survive with only two cooking oils—canola and an extra virgin olive oil that I buy in three-liter tins.

**Stock up. Or not.** Some cooks economize by stocking up on items when they’re on sale. Others quickly forget what’s in the freezer and believe they economize by shopping daily, mindful of what will go on the table that night. Know thyself. Make a grocery list, but be flexible so that you can plan meals around

what’s good and what’s cheap.

**Indulge in affordable luxuries.** We all have our weaknesses. Despite the price, I always have saffron in the spice rack. Just a pinch in a paella or risotto makes me feel like a million. In winter, when rosemary seems to cost a buck a sprig, fresh herbs fall off my shopping list, but I’ll never part with parsley. It’s cheap, it keeps for weeks and it makes winter taste like spring. Parsley isn’t indulgent, but with the right attitude it can certainly taste that way.

**Take recipes with a grain of salt.** When food writers develop recipes for glossy food magazines, someone else is picking up the tab. On a recent episode of “Everyday Food,” one of Martha’s minions suggested fillet of beef as an easy weeknight supper. *Excuse me?* At \$25 a pound, fillet isn’t something you sling at the kids on a Tuesday. Look to food magazines for inspiration, but remember: They’re designed to make us salivate, not save us money. Dried herbs can be substituted for fresh ones, dried cranberries can stand in for dried cherries, walnuts will work for pecans, and most sauces that call for cream will be just fine with Half & Half. In the frugal kitchen, substitution is a daily ritual.

**Pick your battles.** At some point, economics will likely trump ethics. As much as we’d love to eat a purely organic diet, finances often force us to reconsider. If you must have organic milk, economize on other things. Natural meat is a priority for

KITCHEN ECONOMY ► 30

### Shopping on a budget

By JO MARSHALL

You probably know all the ins and outs of your neighborhood grocery stores, but here are some economical opportunities that may have passed under the

radar:

**Calling all carnivores.** The name isn’t sexy, but the prices are certainly appealing. The Meat Lab Sales Room at the University of Minnesota sells beef, pork, lamb and poultry that has been raised on university farms. On my last trip, sirloin was \$5.00 a pound and Italian sausage was \$1.25 a pound. The Sales Room also sells cheese and ice cream.

It is open from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Wednesdays at the Andrew Boss Laboratory of Meat Science, 1354 Eckles Ave.

**Co-op shopping on a budget.** Learn how to shop co-ops on a budget from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 28, at Mississippi Market, 622 Selby Ave. The class is free, but reservations are required. Call 651-310-9499. Groups that are interested in healthy eating

on a budget may avail themselves of their own class by calling Liz McMann at 651-310-9487.

**A nice catch for seniors.** Seafood-loving seniors (ages 55 and up) save 20 percent on Tuesdays on everything in the store at Coastal Seafoods, 74 S. Snelling Ave. in St. Paul (651-698-4888) and 2330 Minnehaha Ave. S. in Minneapolis (612-724-7425).

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me, and I'll continue to buy it even if it means switching to cheaper cuts.

**Go meatless.** Speaking of meat, most of us eat far more than we need to, and economics alone makes this a great time to go vegetarian, if only for a few meals a week. In many parts of the world, people survive just fine eating very little meat. Lentils are a terrific source of protein, as are their leguminous brethren, beans. Summer might not be the best time to stew a pot of split peas, but how about a white bean salad or a dish of Cuban beans and rice?

**Peasant is pleasant.** When budgeting gets you down, remember that anyone can produce a feast on a limitless budget, but it takes a skillful cook to create a great dish on a shoestring. Many of the world's most revered dishes—cassoulet, ossobuco, etc.—came from the kitchens of peasants. We get misty-eyed over memories of grandmother's cooking—well, grandma wasn't cooking with truffle oil.

**Eat in season.** Gastronomes have long been telling us to eat in season for reasons of taste. Now, economics is forcing the issue. An out-of-season tomato that tastes like cardboard isn't a bargain at any price. But summer is just around the corner, and the farmers' markets will soon be overflowing with tasty, reasonably priced produce. Eat it while you can. The low prices will improve the flavor.

**Shop around.** I pass four grocery stores on my way home from work. At some point in

the week, I'll invariably visit several. The co-op is great for meat. Another store has produce priced right. A third sells butter for at least a dollar cheaper than the others. Obviously, it doesn't make sense to drive halfway across town to save a dime on milk, but it does pay to know who's likely to have the best prices on food you use all the time. And when you're in the neighborhood, swing into an ethnic store: Asian, Hispanic or Greek. Terrific values await in unfamiliar territory.

**Say a prayer.** This isn't an attempt at conversion, but food eaten with a grateful attitude tastes better and seems more plentiful. Reserve a moment to give thanks for what you have, if not to a deity, then to the person who grew it, bought it, cooked it. And turn off the television: It's been proven that loud noise makes us eat more with less appreciation for what we've eaten.

**Join the greater generation.** Sure, we bemoan what we can't afford, but chances are we have far more than someone on the other side of the planet or, for that matter, down the block. People have been dealing with food shortages since the beginning of time. Talk to someone who survived WWII—you know, the so-called Greatest Generation. You'll realize that now is the perfect opportunity for baby boomers and their even more self-indulgent offspring to buck up and show what we're made of. Give grandma a run for her money. Then see how righteous you feel.

## Tidbits

**The Big Top Wine Club** will sample some of the best Spanish wines currently on the market during a sit-down tasting at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 21, at the Lexington Restaurant, 1096 Grand Ave. Complimentary appetizers will be served with the wines. The cost is \$20. Call 651-644-4501.

**TeaSource**, 752 S. Cleveland Ave., will offer the following spring classes: "Mom & Me Tea," a Mother's Day tea party featuring snacks, games and complimentary flowers for mothers from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Saturday, May 10 (free for children 10 and younger); "New Teas" featuring exotic, limited production teas from a variety of tea estates, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Thursday, May 15; and "Iced Tea Basics" from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 21. The cost is \$10 per class, unless noted. Call 651-690-9822.

**The Blue Plate Restaurant Company** recently opened 3 Squares at 12690 Arbor Lakes Pkwy. N. in Maple Grove. The restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner, with entrées ranging from vegetarian risotto to grilled meatloaf. 3 Squares is the newest restaurant in the Blue Plate family, which began when Australian-born chef David Burley and Minnesota native Stephanie Shimp opened

the Highland Grill on Cleveland Avenue in 1992. The company also operates the Edina Grill, Groveland Tap and Longfellow Grill.

**SheCooks** has been launched by Shelagh Geraghty Mullen of Macalester-Groveland, who has combined a passion for cooking and more than 20 years as a graphic designer into a gourmet baking mix business. Her mixes are produced locally from organic, stone-ground flours. SheCooks mixes for pancakes, biscuits, pizza dough, cupcakes, corn bread and popovers are available at Cooks of Crocus Hill, the Golden Fig, Sociale Gourmet and www.shecooks.biz. Geraghty Mullen also plans to conduct cooking classes this spring.

**Chocolat Céleste**, 2506 University Ave., a gourmet chocolate company that is owned by Highland Park resident Mary Leonard, will introduce a new line of bonbons featuring children's original designs on June 1. Students from Highland Catholic, Holy Spirit, Nativity and St. Mark's schools were invited to draw their pets for the design contest. A panel of judges will select four of the drawings to become the first Kids Create Art chocolates. A portion of the sales of those products will be donated to the four schools. For information, visit www.Chocolatceleste.com.

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# The Kiosk

## Wednesday/May 7

**THE CAPITOL REGION** Watershed District will hold a public meeting this evening to present its Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP) and stormwater management activities conducted in 2007. The meeting will be held at 6:00 this evening at the CRWD's office, 1410 Energy Park Drive, Suite 4. A copy of the SWPPP and draft 2007 SWPPP annual report is available at [www.capitolregionwd.org](http://www.capitolregionwd.org). Contact Anna Eleria at 651-644-8888 or [anna@capitolregionwd.org](mailto:anna@capitolregionwd.org).

**"FROM MRS. TO MS.:** The Nuts and Bolts of Divorce," a class for women who are considering or are in the process of divorce, will be offered from 6:00 to 9:00 this evening at WomenVenture, 2324 University Ave. The fee is \$80. Call 651-646-3808.

## Thursday/May 8

**A WORLD WAR II HISTORY** Roundtable on Omaha Beach will be held at 7:00 this evening at Fort Snelling. Adrian Lewis, author of *Omaha Beach: A Flawed Victory*, will be joined by Army infantry, airborne, Rangers, Navy and Air Force veterans from the campaign in Normandy. The cost is \$5.00 Call 612-726-1171.

## Friday/May 9

**IMACULÉE ILIBAGIZA**, a young Rwandan woman who survived the 1994 genocide in her country, will speak about forgiveness and her experiences during a lecture at 7:00 this evening at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. Admission is \$12. Part of the proceeds will be used to assist Rwandan orphans. A reception will follow.

**A SAMBA** (Silent Auction, Music, Books, Art) Festival will be held from 4:00 to 9:00 this evening at the Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph Ave. Proceeds will benefit St. Joseph Workers, a spiritually based program for young women sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

**THE ARMSTRONG-QUINLAN HOUSE**, 225-229 Eagle Pkwy., will be open for touring at 5:30 this evening. The tour will provide an insider's look at the historic property and a chance to mingle with friends of Historic St. Paul and Preserve Minneapolis. Wine and cheese will be served. Admission is free.

## Saturday/May 10

**A "STAMP OUT HUNGER"** food drive will be held today to gather donations for Second Harvest Heartland. Nonperishable food items may be left by the mailbox, where they will be picked up by letter carriers. Especially needed are canned soups, meats, fish, juices, vegetables and fruits; boxed goods, such as cereal; pasta, rice and peanut butter. Call 651-484-5117.

**A YARD SALE** will be held by Highland Park Senior High School's student council from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. today in the garden just off Snelling Avenue and Edgumbe Road (in case of rain, the sale will be moved into the field house). Clean, gently used sale donations may be dropped off at the school's parking lot doors from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. Friday, May 9.

**A USED BIKE SALE** will be held by the Nativity Boy Scout Troop from 10:00 a.m. to



A youngster scales a climbing wall during Wilder Center's grand opening on May 3. The new \$36 million center on University Avenue and Lexington Parkway features nearly 100,000 square feet of space and is expected to provide health and human services for more than 22,000 client visits each year. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

1:00 p.m. today on the school playground, 1900 Stanford Ave. The Safe Kids Program will fit bike helmets and sell new ones at cost. Bikes can be consigned or donated for the sale by bringing them to Nativity between 7:00 and 10:00 this morning or by calling Bob Hyland at 651-698-3992 to arrange for a pickup.

**"CAREER AND LIFE PLANNING** for Moms" will be offered from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on five Saturdays, beginning today, at WomenVenture, 2324 University Ave. The cost is \$290 and includes a personalized career consultation. Contact Anne Rodenberg at 651-251-0687 or [arodenberg@womenventure.org](mailto:arodenberg@womenventure.org).

**AN INTERPRETIVE BIKE TOUR** will be offered at 1:00 this afternoon at Fort Snelling State Park. Bikers will rediscover the sites of waterfalls, Dakota villages, military camps and old railroads. Helmets are required. The program is free. To register, call 612-725-2724.

**THE HIGHLAND FRIENDSHIP** Club will hold its first Art of Friendship fundraiser from 6:00 to 8:30 this evening at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. The event will feature art made by Highland Friendship Club members, live music by local musician Larry McDonough, a silent auction, appetizers and beverages. There is no entrance fee. Proceeds will be used to provide summer activities for young adults with disabilities. Call 651-698-4096 or visit [highlandfriendshipclub.org](http://highlandfriendshipclub.org).

**THE TWIN CITIES BUNGALOW** Club will hold its spring home tour from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. today. Eight bungalows and other Arts & Crafts-era houses will be open to the public. Maps with the addresses and descriptions may be picked up at 10:00 this morning at the first house on the tour, 3627 27th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Tickets are \$5.00 for nonmembers. Call 612-724-5816 or visit [www.bungalowclub.org](http://www.bungalowclub.org).

## Sunday/May 11

**MOTHER'S DAY** will be celebrated from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. today at Fort Snelling. Visitors can learn about the important roles 19th-century women served at the fort, meet Abigail Snelling and other costumed history players, visit with cook and nanny Barbara Ann Schaedeker, join in a mother-daughter art project and enjoy refreshments. Admission is \$5.00-\$10. Call 612-726-1171.

**A MOTHER'S DAY TEA** will be served at noon and 2:30 this afternoon at the Sibley House Historic Site in Mendota. Visitors will meet Minnesota's first First Lady, Sarah Sibley, and enjoy a multi-course tea, including special Sibley House blends, from McHattie's Victorian Times of Woodbury. The cost is \$24-\$29. For reservations, call 651-452-1596.

**A MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH** will be served from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. today at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. The cost of the all-you-can-eat affair is \$16.95-\$23.95. For reservations, call 651-259-3031.

**"OFF THE BEATEN PATH,"** a neighborhood walking tour, will be offered by the Ramsey Hill Association from 2:00 to 4:00 this afternoon. Walkers should meet at the flagpole on Summit Avenue across from the Cathedral of St. Paul. The tour will be led by St. Paul historian and writer Jane McClure, Jim White and RHA president Jim Groskopf.

## Monday/May 12

**SAMI RASOULI** will talk about medical care and other conditions in Iraq at 7:30 this evening at Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Ave. Rasouli, a long-time U.S. citizen and Minnesota businessman, returned to Iraq after the war and started to form the Muslim PeaceKeeper Team. The event is co-

sponsored by Pilgrim Lutheran Church. Admission is free.

**MOTHERS & MORE** will have a Mother's Day party and open house from 7:00 to 8:30 this evening at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. The evening will include a guided discussion on "Pop Culture Moms." Call 651-204-2107.

## Tuesday/May 13

**THE COMO-MIDWAY LA LECHE** League will meet at 7:00 this evening to discuss the advantages of breastfeeding. Current and expecting mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527.

**THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE**, 943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. Chingwell Mutombu will talk about First Step Initiative, a business that she started in 2002 to help women in the Congo. 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 this evening in the Whole Foods parking lot, 30 S. Fairview Ave., for a residential hike. Call 651-646-6421.

**THE ST. PAUL HERITAGE** Preservation Awards will be presented this evening in the lower level of St. Paul City Hall (enter on 4th Street). A social hour will begin at 6:00 p.m., followed by the awards at 7:00. A \$5.00 donation is suggested. Register by May 9 by calling Judith VanDyne at 612-338-6763.

## Wednesday/May 14

**BEGINNING ISRAELI DANCE** for adults will be taught by Twin Cities dancer Shira Schwartz at 7:00 p.m. on eight Wednesdays, beginning this evening, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The cost is \$40-\$60. Free dancing will follow from 8:00 to 9:30 each night and is open to the public. Call 651-698-0751.

**A SPRING GARAGE SALE** will be held by YMCA Camps du Nord and Widjiwagan today through Saturday, May 17, in the Merchandise Mart at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. today through Friday, and from 9:00 a.m. to noon for Saturday's bag sale. Admission is free. Call 612-465-0490.

**OUR NORTHERN STARS** leadership breakfast will be held from 7:30 to 9:00 this morning at the College of St. Catherine. The guest will be Deborah Pierce, former head of the FBI's Minneapolis office and the first female deputy assistant director in the bureau's criminal division in Washington, D.C. Ruth Koscielak is the host. The cost is \$15-\$24. Call 651-690-6819.

**DR. EDWARD HALLOWELL**, a psychiatrist and author, will speak about *The Childhood Roots of Adult Happiness* from 7:00 to 9:00 this evening at St. Paul Academy and Summit School, 1712 Randolph Ave. Admission is free. Call Sarah Davies at 651-696-1408.

## Thursday/May 15

**HAMLIN MIDWAY HISTORY CORPS** will present Brian McMahon of University



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### 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.



### St. Paul's Cathedral Choir

TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 7:45 PM  
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### 31◀ KIOSK

United speaking on "Transportation History along University Avenue" from 7:00 to 8:30 this evening at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. Admission is free. Visit [www.hamlinemidwayhistory.org](http://www.hamlinemidwayhistory.org).

### THE ST. PAUL METRO LA LECHE

League will meet at 7:00 this evening. All expectant and nursing mothers and their babies are welcome. For meeting location, call 651-645-8516.

### Friday/May 16

GRAND OLDE ST. MARK'S DAYS will be celebrated from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m. today and from noon to 10:00 p.m. tomorrow at the church and school on Dayton and Prior avenues. The ninth annual festival will feature carnival rides, bingo, food, entertainment, a country store and more. Call 651-645-5717.

"LET'S CELEBRATE 10 YEARS," a fundraising event for Historic St. Paul, will be held at 6:00 this evening at the Lightner House, 318 Summit Ave. The evening will include music, cocktails, appetizers and friends. Visit [www.historicsaintpaul.org](http://www.historicsaintpaul.org).

### Saturday/May 17

ADOPTION INFORMATION will be presented from 9:00 a.m. to noon today at Children's Home Society and Family Services, 1605 Eustis St. Both international and domestic infant adoption will be covered and a panel of adoptive families will share their experiences. Admission is free. Call 651-646-6393.

CARD AND BOARD GAMES will be played at 1:00 this afternoon in Fellowship Hall at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 700 Wesley Lane, Mendota Heights. Adults should bring their own games. Coffee and snacks will be furnished and prizes will be awarded. Players will have a chance to meet their neighbors and donate to the church's local mission, Emma Norton Services, which helps the homeless get back on their feet. Call Beda Lewis at 651-437-3948.

FISH TRAPS will be the topic of discussion during a program at 1:00 this afternoon by Fort Snelling State Park. Participants will learn how fish traps are used to inventory and monitor fish populations in the rivers and lakes of Minnesota. They will check fish traps with the naturalist and identify the species caught. The program is free. For location, call 612-725-2724.

BUCKS FOR BOOKS, a book sale to raise scholarship money for high school seniors, will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. today and from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. tomorrow at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. The sale will feature hardcover, paperback and coffee table books, used CDs, CD-ROMs, DVDs, gently used games, puzzles and related items.

### Sunday/May 18

BLACKSMITHING WILL BE taught under the direction of skilled smiths from 1:00 to 4:00 this afternoon at Fort Snelling. Visitors will select a project, work the forge and pound the hot metal. The cost is \$30-\$33. Call 612-726-1171.

A WALKING TOUR of the city of Mendota will begin at 1:00 this afternoon from the Sibley House Historic Site. Visitors will view original landmarks in one of the oldest towns in the state. The cost is \$4.00-\$6.00. Call 651-452-1596.

A FLOOD PLAIN WALK will be offered

## Scots gather for annual fair May 17

Minnesota's largest gathering of Scots will come together "Where the Highlands meet the Prairie" at the fifth annual Minnesota Scottish Fair & Highland Games from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday, May 17, at the Dakota County Fairgrounds, 4008 220th St. W., Farmington.

The day will feature competitions in bagpiping, Highland dancing and the heavy events. There also will be a Parade of Scots, sheepherding demonstrations, a living history encampment, a Scottish dog breed exhibit, a Celtic Marketplace and traditional Scottish foods, including haggis, meat pies, and Scotch eggs.

The event is the offshoot of the former Scottish Country Fair, which ended a 31-year run on the grounds of Macalester College in 2003. The gates open at 8:00 a.m. Admission is \$5.00-\$15.

For more information, visit [www.mn-scottishfair.org](http://www.mn-scottishfair.org) or call 952-470-6300.

at 1:00 this afternoon at Fort Snelling State Park. Participants will learn how creatures adapt for survival in this type of wetland. The program is free, but a state parking permit is required. Call 612-725-2724.

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 2:30 this afternoon at Cherokee Park for a hike in West St. Paul and Mendota Heights. Call 651-646-6421.

### Monday/May 19

THE GARDEN CLUB of Ramsey County will meet at 7:25 this evening at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Malcolm Burleigh, a local expert on cacti and succulents, will be the guest speaker. Admission is free. Call 651-696-1996.

### Tuesday/May 20

"GREAT READS RECYCLED," a used book exchange, will take place today through May 23 at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Chuck Frederick, author of *Leatherheads of the North: The True Story of Ernie Nevers and the Duluth Eskimos*, will speak from 6:30 to 8:00 this evening. Admission on opening night is \$5.00, or \$10 per family, and includes refreshments. There also will be appearances by Kate Havelin, author of *Minnesota Running Trials: Dirt, Gravel, Rocks and Roots*, at 7:00 p.m. tomorrow; and Norita Dittberner-Jax, author of *Longing for Home*, at 7:00 p.m. on May 22. Used books may be dropped off for the exchange on May 18-19. Those who contribute five or more books will receive a coupon for one free book. Otherwise, the cost is \$3.00 for hardcovers and \$2.00 for paperbacks. Call 651-698-0751.

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE, 943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. The discussion will focus on the book *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson and journalist David Oliver Renin. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

### Wednesday/May 21

HEART HEALTHY ACTIVITIES will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 this evening at St. Paul Fire Station No. 14, 111 N. Snelling Ave. The evening will include chair massages, blood pressure checks, yoga, food, games, demonstrations and prizes. Admission is free, but registration is required and children must be accompanied by an adult. To register, call 651-224-7811 by May 14.



# On the Town

## Flying the coop

Merriam Park couple recall how as young empty-nesters they spent two years on the Wee Mad Road

BY BOB GILBERT

On a trip through the Scottish Highlands, Jack and Barbara Maloney came across a small hand-lettered sign beside the highway that read "The Wee Mad Road." It was too intriguing to pass up.

They turned their car onto the one-lane road and after 10 miles came upon Achiltibuie, a coastal village of whitewashed stone houses with slate roofs, small windows and chimneys on either end. Located on the Coigach peninsula, the town offered a panoramic view of Badentarbat Bay, the northern tip of the Isle of Skye and the channels separating the Outer Hebrides Islands from Scotland.

"We went through the little village and fell head over heels in love with it," Barbara said. "Neither one of us can explain it. We found a bed and breakfast, stayed five days, and when we were leaving we had tears in our eyes. There was something about it, as if we'd been there before."

The Merriam Park couple promised themselves that when their daughters were grown, they would find more time to travel. That opportunity arose several years later, and they returned to Achiltibuie, not as tourists this time, but as two of the 60 residents of the town. They lived there

from 1978 to 1981 and recently published a memoir of the experience, titled *The Wee Mad Road*.

"Our children grew up and left home," they write in an introduction to the book. "Before they could come back, we sold the house and ran away to a foreign land."

Jack wrote much of the text. Barbara had kept a diary during their sojourn and half of the book is taken from it. Barbara also contributed 24 sketches and paintings depicting life on the treeless moors of heather and gorse where rain, wind and tide govern every facet of daily life. Her painting of Scottish farmers loading sheep on a rowboat headed to a remote grassy island for the winter graces the cover of the book.

"The book is kind of like Peter Mayle's *A Year in Provence* with rotten weather and lots of whisky," Jack said. As he relates in the book:

*...often as not, the weather here is horrid. For which I am grateful. After all, we have a spectacular coast, gorgeous mountains, lovely islands, sparkling beaches. Were it not for horrid weather, the whole place would have been bought up by rock stars, sheikhs and speculators. Coigach offers five-star scenery on a one-star budget, and I can enjoy it all without speaking German or Arabic—so long as I can live with the weather.*

Jack was raised on Chicago's South Side and Barbara in North Minneapolis. The couple said they had never experienced the sense of community they felt living among the shepherds, fishermen, poets, crofters, poachers and musicians in Achiltibuie. The nearest supermarket was 2½ hours away in the town of Inverness, so the citizens of Achiltibuie raised sheep, fished and tended small gardens.

"When we arrived, we decided that we wanted to get involved in the life of the community, so we made ourselves useful," Jack said. "There was a lot of communal work. We threw ourselves into it and that opened all the doors."

"It was fun being in that culture," he said. "Every house had a musical instrument, and when the pub closed at 11:00, we'd go to people's houses and sit around all night long telling stories, playing music, singing songs,



*The Wee Mad Road* authors Barbara and Jack Maloney. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

declaiming poetry. People shared their talents and entertained each other, and they were an appreciative audience."

"It's a tight community, but they were very generous to strangers," Barbara said. "They were an interesting people, well-read and very articulate, and they weren't yet devoured by television."

The Maloneys embraced that generosity, and would sometimes offer the spare bedrooms in their 100-year-old cottage to wayfaring musicians who came to the Highlands in search of their Gaelic roots or inspiration. As the Maloneys write:

*Coigach is poor land, more rock and acid peat than arable soil. The miles of drystone dykes that delineate crofts and roads and march up hills were built with the labor of generations, as much to stow the stones somewhere as to create barriers. Atlantic storms build speed and strength across 3,000 miles of open ocean until they strike the Northwest Highlands and hammer into submission any living thing that tries to grow.*

The couple wrote the book within two years of their return, but the manuscript sat in a drawer for two decades. Recently, they dusted it off and shopped it around to publishers. Eventually, they decided to publish it themselves.

"There's a lot of virtue in self-publishing," Jack said, "as long as you aren't trying to make money."

The book is now available at Itascabooks.com and from other on-line sources as well as several local bookstores. They sold eight copies to a museum in Nova Scotia, where many of the original settlers were from the Achiltibuie area. *Scottish Life* magazine is

publishing an article about the book this summer. The Maloneys have even discovered an article about the book in an on-line Japanese magazine.

The Maloneys, who have been married for 50 years, met in Loring Park in Minneapolis while playing wingmen for their best friends, who were courting. Jack was stationed at the time at Camp Ripley in Minnesota while training for the Illinois National Guard.

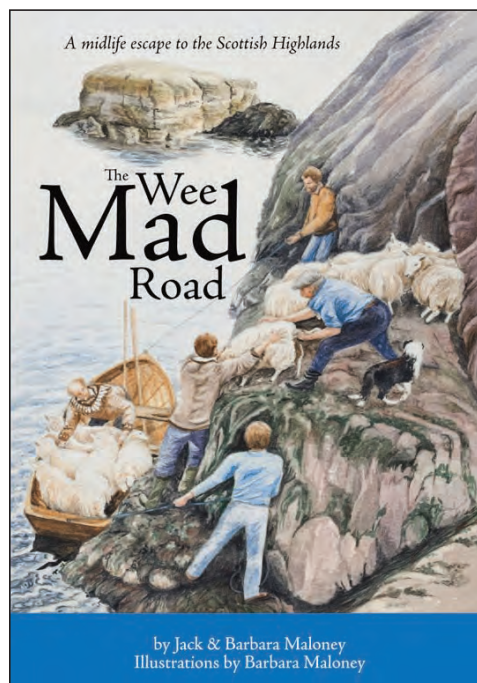
A graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism, Jack wrote scripts for a Hopkins company that produced commercial and industrial films. Barbara, who has a degree in biology, got her accounting degree upon her return from Scotland and went to work for the state of Minnesota.

Along with the manuscript gathering dust in their drawer, the Maloneys retained their fond memories of Achiltibuie. In the book, they write about their final weeks there:

*These winding down days are painful and joyous together. Everything we do, every visit, every song, every day of work alongside our friends here, is haunted by the thought of impending loss. Something keeps getting in my eyes, and I'm rubbing them all too often. Still, I'm eager to return to America after two years' absence, and I'm curious to see how it will seem to me through the filter of long separation.*

"A lot of the people we knew and loved in Achiltibuie have since passed away," Jack said. "We wanted to keep their memory bright."

The Maloneys will read from *The Wee Mad Road* during a free program beginning at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 8, at Common Good Books, 165 N. Western Ave.



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# On the Town Briefly

## Dance

**"Bailemos,"** a fundraising dance for Common Hope, a nonprofit that provides education, housing and health care for more than 8,000 impoverished Guatemalans, will be held from 6:30-10:30 p.m. Friday, May 9, at Cinema Ballroom, 1560 St. Clair Ave. Admission is \$15, free for those age 12 and under. Call 651-646-6285.

**Ballet Minnesota** will present the classic *Swan Lake*, starring former Bolshoi dancer Oksana Konobeyeva and Ramon Thielen, at 7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, May 16-17, at the Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E. Exchange St. The children's ballet *Elfin*, by the Classical Ballet Academy of Minnesota, will also be featured. A matinee at 2:00 p.m. Saturday will feature *Elfin*, excerpts from *Swan Lake* and a variety of other works. Tickets at \$14-\$28 are available at the box office (651-290-1221) or by calling 612-673-0404.

**Lóma Mór Irish Dance Club** will hold a benefit céilí from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, at the Odd Fellows Hall, 2380 Hampden Ave. In addition to the usual group dances, the event will feature dance demonstrations and other activities. The suggested donation is \$10, or \$3.00 for those who come simply to dance as usual.

## Theater

**Students at St. Paul Open School**, 90 S. Western Ave., will stage both *Driving Miss Daisy* and *Maggie Magalita* beginning at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, May 7-9. Admission is \$7.00 for adults and \$5.00 for students and seniors. Cabaret-style seating is also available on Thursday and Friday. The \$60 fee includes the theater, desserts and beverages for four. Call 651-293-9670.

**The decadence of 1930s Berlin** comes to life in the Tony Award-winning musical *Cabaret*, playing through May 18 at the Ordway. Tari Kell, Nick Garrison, Louis Hobson, Suzy Hunt, Allen Fitzpatrick and Tyson Forbes star. 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, is being performed through May 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 and 2:00 p.m. Sundays in the auditorium of the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Panel discussions will follow the show on May 18. Tickets are \$17 to \$24. Call 651-647-4315.

**Mom's the Word**, a wildly funny, sometimes touching collection of monologues, skits, songs and dances about motherhood, is being performed 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.

**These Shining Lives**, the story of the Radium Girls, the female employees who unwittingly exposed themselves to radioactivity at the Radium Dial Watch Company in Chicago, will open May 10 at the History Theatre, 30

E. 10th St. Following previews at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 8, and 8:00 p.m. Friday, May 9, the show will run at 8:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, 10:00 a.m. Tuesdays, and 10:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through June 1. For ticket information, call 651-292-4323.

**Real Women Have Curves**, a play by Josefina Lopez about Latina immigrants and the power of women working together, will be performed May 9-29 by Teatro del Pueblo. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m. Sundays at the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Center, 179 E. Robie St. An interactive fashion show that explores the female image, from both the Latina and non-Latina perspective, will augment the experience. Tickets are \$14, \$16 and \$18, or whatever you can pay on Sunday evenings. For reservations, call 651-225-8106.

**Central High School's Touring Theater** will perform two original plays at 8:00 p.m. Friday and 2:00 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday, May 16 and 17, in Pearson Theater at Concordia University, 312 N. Hamline Ave. *We are Called to Speak* is the story of a young man who encourages his younger

brother to stay in school by introducing him to current events, connecting the life of a Minnesota teenager to sweatshops, child labor and global warming. *Seeds of Change* is a performance piece that examines the reasons behind and possible solutions to the achievement gap between African American males and others. Tickets are 5.00.

## Music

**"Eternal Spring,"** music that addresses the human spirit by such composers as Copland, Chatman, Fissinger, Fauré, Lauridsen and Stanford, will be performed May 9 and 10 by the 60-voice Oratorio Society. The choral concerts will begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights and 7:30 p.m. Saturday in Sundin Hall at Hamline University, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$16, \$13 for students. Call 651-209-6689.

**"For the Birds,"** music about our feathered friends by Dvorak, Rautavaara and Kodaly, will be performed by the St. Paul Civic Symphony in a free concert at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, May 11, at Landmark Center.

**French poetry** on the rapturous joys of love and nature, set to the music of Fauré and Berger, will be performed by the Bakken Ensemble on Sunday, May 11. Soprano Maria Jette will join violist Korey Konkol, cellist Mina Fisher, violinists Stephanie Arado and Celine Leathead and pianist Timothy Lovelace in the concert, which begins at 2:00 p.m. in the Huss Music Room of the Hamm Building, 406 St. Peter St. Tickets are \$25, \$15 for students and seniors. Call 651-291-1144.

**"With Bread and Salt,"** songs and stories for Mother's Day from the cultures of Central and Eastern Europe, will be performed on Sunday, May 11, by the Mila Vocal Ensemble. Niks Folk Ensemble will accompany the seven women of Mila. The music begins at 2:00 p.m. at the Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$18. Call 612-340-1725.

**The a cappella ensemble InVocation** will celebrate the season of love with a program of English and American music 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.

**Kantorei chamber choir** will close its 20th

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# Worldly sur Seine festival returns

The Minnesota sur Seine international music festival returns May 15-25 with more than a dozen events that will have local musicians performing alongside musicians from around the world. Improvisational jazz, world music, hip hop, Celtic folk and rock 'n' roll are among the genres that will be featured at venues across the Twin Cities. The schedule includes:

- Bassist Anthony Cox and guitarist Raymond Boni, 8:00 p.m. Thursday, May 15, at the Black Dog Cafe, 308 Prince St. (\$9.00).

- The music and poetry of the late Federico Garcia Lorca performed by cellists Michelle Kinney and Jacqueline Ultan, pianist Tony Hymas, singer Violeta Ferrer and guitarists Jef Lee Johnson and Raymond Boni; and flamenco music by singer Gabriel Gonzalez and guitarist Miguel Linares, 8:00 p.m. Friday, May 16, at Central Presbyterian Church, 500 Cedar St. (\$12 and \$6.00).

- A Night on Top of the Pops with guitarists Peter Cusack and Noël Akchoté, singer Viv Corringham, saxophonist Chris Thomson, bassists Chris Bates and James Buckley, zarb player Pablo Cueco, keyboardist Ryan Olcott and drummer Joey Van Phillip, 8:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, at the Minnesota Museum of American Art, 50 W. Kellogg Blvd. (\$12).

- Guitarist Noël Akchoté plays Kylie Minogue, 11:00 a.m. Sunday, May 18, at the Black Dog Cafe (free).

- Clarinetist Christophe Rocher, pianist Christofer Bjurström, keyboardist Benoît Delbecq and drummer David King, 3:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18, at the Artists' Quarter, 408 St. Peter St. (\$12).

- New and Old World roots music with Roma di Luna and the Jacky Molard Quartet, 7:30 p.m. Sunday, May 18, at the Cedar Cultural Center, 416 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis (\$17 and \$23).

- Festival of the Night at 8:00 p.m. Monday, May 19, at the Black Dog Cafe (\$10).

- An Evening in Paris with pianist Tony Hymas playing Debussy's Etudes and Satie's Gymnopedies, 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, at Creation Audio, 2543 Nicollet Ave. S. in Minneapolis (\$9.00).

- Taut Hides and Tuned Strings with Pablo Cueco on zarb, Tony Hymas on keyboards, bassist Bruno Chevillon and drummer J.T.



Ursus Minor featuring Stokley Williams, Tony Hymas, Jef Lee Johnson and François Corneloup will perform May 22 at the Triple Rock Social Club. PHOTO BY GUY LE QUERREC

Bates, 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 21, at the Artists' Quarter (\$12).

- Hip Hop Night with Post Nomadic Syndrome, La Rumeur and Ursus Minor at 8:00 p.m. Thursday, May 22, at the Triple Rock Social Club, 629 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis (\$12 and \$15).

- A CD release party with violinist Dominique Pifarely, saxophonist François Corneloup, organist Julien Padovani, saxophonist Tim Berne, drummers Eric Groleau and J.T. Bates, guitarist Dean Magraw and bassist Chico Huff, 8:00 p.m. Friday, May 23, at the Minnesota Museum of American Art (\$22).

- Four gigs between 1:00 and 6:00 p.m. Saturday, May 24, at venues in St. Paul's Lowertown with cellist Didier Petit and violinist Gary Schulte, saxophonist Tim Berne and bassist Bruno Chevillon, cellist Petit and Carnage, and cellist Petit with saxophonist Nathan Hanson, bassist Brian Roessler and drummer Alden Ikeda (\$10 for all four shows).

- A Night in Ethiopia with bassist Yohannes Tona, drummer Michael Bland, guitarist Jef Lee Johnson and Mahmoud Ahmed and his ensemble, 8:00 p.m. Saturday, May 24, at the Fine Line Music Cafe, 318 1st Ave. N. in Minneapolis (\$25 and \$30).

- Four gigs between 1:00 and 6:00 p.m. Sunday, May 25, at venues in St. Paul's Lowertown with cellist Didier Petit, percussionist Milo Fine, Zeitgeist performing Pablo Cueco, saxophonist Douglas Ewart and cellist Petit, and trumpeter Kelly Rossum and clarinetist Denis Colin (\$10 for all four shows).

Festival passes are available for \$100, \$50 for those events open to people ages 18 to 21 and \$30 for those events open to people under age 18. Call 651-292-9746.

anniversary season on Saturday, May 17, with the cathedral music of Vaughan Williams, Reger, Purcell and Albert Becker; literary masterpieces by Vaughan Williams, Brahms, Sir Charles Villiers Stanford and Bauernfeind; songs by Minnesota composers Dominick Argento, Libby Larsen, Stephen Paulus, Carol Barnett and Anne Kilstofte; and favorite pieces by Josef Rheinberger, Bruckner, Reger and Petr Eben. The music begins at 7:30 p.m. in St. Mary's Chapel, 2260 Summit Ave. Tickets are \$12, \$7.00 for students and seniors.

**A Classical Guitarathon**, featuring solos, duets and trios by some of the area's best musicians, will be held on Saturday, May 17, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave.. The annual benefit for the Minnesota Guitar Society will begin at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$22, \$17 for students and seniors. Call 612-677-1151.

**The Musical Offering** will close its season on Sunday, May 18, with gems from Central Europe, including a quintet by Dvorak, Wind Sextet by Janacek and a nonet by Martinu. The music begins at 3:00 p.m. in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$15, \$12 for seniors, \$5.00 for students. Call 612-523-2459.

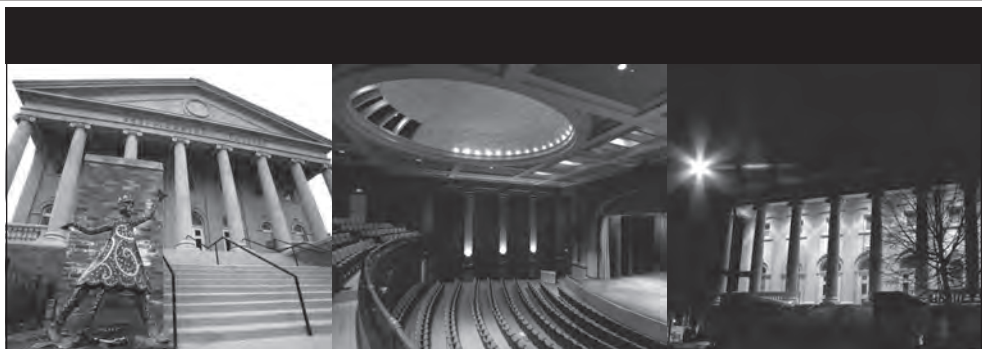
**The women's vocal ensemble** Virgin Ground will perform medieval delights by Hildegard

von Bingen as well as folk songs by Brahms and Petr Eben on May 16 and 18. Joining singers Lisa Habeck, Linda Kachelmeier and Marita Link will be Ginna Watson on vielle and harp. The music begins at 7:30 p.m. Friday at St. Clement's Episcopal Church, 901 Portland Ave., and at 7:30 p.m. Sunday at Assumption Catholic Church, 51 W. 7th St. Admission is free. Call 651-487-3340.

## Exhibits

**"The Figure and the Landscape,"** sculpture and black-and-white landscape photography by Will Agar, Doug Beasley, Chris Faust, Roger Junk, Brant Kingman, Jeff Korte, and Nick Legeros, is being displayed through June 14 at the Vine Arts Center, 2637 27th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. 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, are on view through November 2 at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. Admission is \$2.00. A related gallery talk by curator Brian Szott will be



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"We Couldn't Live at Home," the 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, are being displayed through October 6 at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission is \$10, \$8.00 for seniors and students and \$5.00 for children ages 6-17. A free family day with live music, performances and tours of the exhibit will be offered on June 1. Call 651-259-3000.

"Before the Teardown," rarely seen photos from the *Star Tribune* archives documenting Minneapolis on the eve of 1960s urban renewal, will be shown from May 8 through August 31 at the Mill City Museum, 704 S. 2nd St. in Minneapolis. A free opening reception will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, May 8. Call 612-341-7555.

"Venus Reconsidered: Nudes Past and Present" will be displayed May 9-18 at the Water and Oil Art Gallery, located off East 7th Street and Payne Avenue at 506 Kenny Road. Vintage artwork from the gallery's Nordic collection will be shown beside contemporary works by painter Susan M. Davies, sculptor Pauline Mitchell, tattoo artisan Koré Grate and others. A casual opening will be held from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Friday May 9. The opening reception is scheduled for 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Saturday May 10. Admission is free. Call 651-774-2260.

"Architecture and Ceramics," exploring the relationship between clay and building design, will be exhibited May 9 through June 29 at the Northern Clay Center, 2424 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis. Featured are functional and nonfunctional pieces by Dan Anderson, Lidya Buzio, Nora Nananjo-Morse, Robert Winokur and William Daley as well as architectural drawings by Daley's son Thomas. An opening reception is scheduled for 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Friday, May 9. Related lectures will be presented by Naranjo-Morse and Winokur at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, May 8 (\$10), and the Daleys at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, May 10 (\$10). Call 612-339-8007.

The Northstar Watercolor Society will display the paintings of more than 80 artists from Minnesota and western Wisconsin on May 15-17 in the Fine Arts Building at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Barb Parisien of Highland Park and Carol Spohn of Macalester-Groveland will be among the artists participating in the art show and sale from noon to 7:00 p.m. Thursday and from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Admission is free.

## Books

**Common Good Books**, 165 N. Western Ave., will present the following free readings: Margaret Hasse, Richard Solly and Lightsey Darst from their poems at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, upstairs at Nina's Coffee Cafe; local mystery authors William Kent Krueger, Bart Schneider and Mary Logue, 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 14, at Nina's; Robert Alexander from his latest novel, *The Romanov Bride*, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 15, at the Swedenborgian Church; novelist Leif Enger and his *So Young, Brave and Handsome*, 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18, at the Swedenborgian Church; an open mic for favorite poetry, 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, at Nina's. Call 651-225-8989.

"Great Reads Recycled," the Jewish Community Center's 10th annual used-book exchange, will open on Tuesday, May 20, with a talk by Chuck Frederick, author of *Leatherheads of the North: The True Story of Ernie Nevers and the Duluth Eskimos*, on which the new George Clooney-Renee Zellweger film is based. Nevel's talk on

the NFL's humble beginnings is part of an opening-night fundraiser scheduled from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the JCC, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Admission is \$5.00, or \$10 per family, and includes the first selection of books and refreshments. Kate Havelin, author of *Minnesota Running Trails*, will speak at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 21. Poet Norita Dittberner-Jax will read from her new collection, *Longing for Home*, at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 22. The book exchange runs from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. May 21 and 22 and 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Friday, May 23. Hardcover are selling for \$3.00 and paperbacks for \$2.00.

## Family

**Red Balloon Bookshop**, 891 Grand Ave., plays host to storytimes for babies at 10:15 a.m. Tuesdays, toddlers at 11:00 a.m. Tuesdays and preschoolers at 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays. Featured in other free programs will be Susan Marie Swanson and her poetry picture books, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, May 10; Gail Carson Levine and *Ever*, her novel for young readers, 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 13; Caroline Lazo and her picture book *Someday When My Cat Can Talk*, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, May 17; musicians Rolf Erdahl and Carrie Vecchione present "Mozart, The Boy Genius," 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18.

**Learn about life in the deep** by making an underwater scene in a pop bottle during Nature Play from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, May 10, at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. Admission to the drop-in program is \$5.00, \$3.00 for seniors and children ages 3 and older. Call 612-624-7083.

## Et cetera

**Russian Seasons in Minnesota**, the multi-cultural variety show created by Highland Park impresario Tatyana Dikareva, returns with a special Mother's Day edition from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Sunday, May 11, at SteppingStone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. Highlights include the 35-voice Land of Lakes Choirboys; Scoil na d'Tri Irish Dance Academy; 17-year-old accordion prodigy Eric Ray performing Germanic folk music; singer Oktyabrina Mollaeva, pianist Harut Kachatryan and flutist Mariam Kachatryan of St. Sahag Armenian Church in Merriam Park performing Armenian, Georgian and Russian folk songs; and Serbian and Russian songs composed by Dikareva. Tickets are \$25, \$20 for seniors, \$15 for students and free to children under age 7. Call 651-695-0792.

**Party like it was 1955.** Dress up in your vintage best and celebrate suburban living of a half-century ago at RetroRama, scheduled from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. Thursday, May 15, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Among the delights of the well-run home will be a 1950s fashion show by Anna Lee and Eclecticoiffeur, cocktail and cooking demonstrations by Nick Kosevich of the Town Talk Diner, a shopping boutique compliments of Swank Retro and Via's Vintage, retro bingo with celebrity callers and great prizes, displays of vintage furniture and fashions, music by Lucy Michelle and the Velvet Lappelles and deejay Jake Rudh and cash bars located throughout the museum where photos from the new book *Suburban World* are being shown. The cost is \$15. Call 651-259-3015.

**Auditions for Hillcrest Recreation Center's** summer musical *The Wizard of Oz* will be held on Monday and Wednesday, May 19 and 21, at the College of St. Catherine. Rehearsals begin the week of May 27 at Hillcrest. The show will be presented July 24 through August 2, at the Como Pavilion. The cost for those who pass the audition is \$60. For an appointment, call 651-695-3706.

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# Sports



## The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

### Wild pre-game is champion caliber

The Minnesota Wild sure made a quick exit from the Stanley Cup Playoffs, getting unceremoniously dumped by Colorado four games to two in the first round. Too bad. You have to wonder what they would've done if they'd advanced to a second or third round.

And by "they" I don't mean the team. It's obvious Lemaire's lads have nowhere near the skills of, say, Detroit or Dallas. However, advancing to another round would have provided an even better stage for one team that clearly excels these days—the team that puts on the Wild's pre-game shows. The players may have petered out quickly in the postseason, but John Maher, who coordinates the game-day theatrics at the Xcel Energy Center, had a terrific Stanley Cup run.

Since the house that Norm helped build opened its doors to welcome the National Hockey League back to Minnesota in 2000, the arena has gained a reputation for being one of the best places in the NHL to watch hockey. In addition to good sight lines and a good sound system, the X has become a cutting-edge showcase for terrific pre-game shows.

Granted, the Wild weren't the first to do this. When Bill Musselman came to the University of Minnesota 35 years ago, he did more than find winning players; he found George Schauer. Schauer wasn't exactly a standout on the U of M basketball team, but he had a knack for dazzling fans before the tip-off. While his Golden Gopher teammates, including future baseball hall-of-famer Dave Winfield of St. Paul, were engaging in shoot-around drills, Schauer, a native of Cleveland, used the time to perform dribbling tricks and routines straight out of the Harlem Globetrotters' playbook. Williams Arena was soon filled with people getting to games early to see Schauer do his thing.

Calvin Griffith had some wonderfully goofy promotions at times for the Minnesota Twins. There was Captain Dynamite, who parked himself in a box behind second base after a game one night. The box blew sky high, with some of the wood landing in the seats. The old captain staggered from the field and the crowd went nuts. (At that point, the captain headed to the bar in the media room and showed reporters how he was able to stand the noise.)

Generally speaking, Calvin's promotions were rather tame affairs. However, one event that did cause a stir was Halter Top Day. It was too good of a giveaway. The team ran out of halter tops and needed to give coupons to many women. (It didn't have the same effect.)

In the 1980s, there was Crazy George, a bald fellow who used to beat drums and himself around the head at Vikings games to whip up the crowds. He also claimed to have created The Wave. He had a four-year run with the Vikings and even worked a few North Stars games before the fans tired of him. Amazingly, he's still going strong.

WRIGHT CALL ► 41

## Full of vim & vigor

Talented SPA softballers have youth on their side

BY BILL WAGNER

The St. Paul Academy and Summit School softball team might not always lead the tough Tri-Metro Conference, but it's usually in the race for the top. That certainly appears to be the case this year.

The Spartans were a solid 6-2 overall and 4-2 in league play through April 28 despite having a young team, including only three seniors and no juniors in the regular lineup. In fact, two starters are 8th-graders. However, SPA coach Bill Ross has a history of getting players to produce quickly.

"Our pitching is really good," Ross said, "and we've been swinging the bat pretty well. Our defense is young, and we've been a little inconsistent there. We've also made some mistakes running the bases. But we've been getting better. We think we'll be right there with the leaders in the league."

The team recorded a crisp, 7-3 victory over Visitation in mid-April. The Spartans pounded out 11 hits in besting hard-throwing Blazers' ace Sammi Leach. SPA freshman Sammi Fox tossed a complete game and was backed up by a solid defense. "I'd say that was our best game to date," Ross said.

The Spartans also got a nice 2-1 victory on April 28 over a strong St. Agnes team. Fox, the team's workhorse hurler, once again got the victory, allowing only two hits. Eighth-grader Erica Miller supplied the winning hit for the Spartans with an RBI single.

Last year, SPA's youth often betrayed it as the regular players had to learn the hard way. However, last year's inexperienced players are a lot closer to being seasoned veterans now.

"We can see that our kids are developing," Ross said, "and the more experienced players have been doing their share."

Pitching is, of course, a big part of a winning softball team, and so it is with the Spartans. Fox had compiled a 5-2 record with an outstanding 0.19 ERA through April 28. She throws a live fastball, mixes in a nice changeup, and had struck out 68.

And Fox's game doesn't end there. She bats cleanup and led the team with a .583 average. She also was leading the team in stolen bases. She has been a regular for the Spartans since 7th grade.

Sophomore catcher Christiania Miller



St. Paul Academy freshman pitching ace Sammi Fox. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

has made a smooth change from second base. "She's been really solid," Ross said. "You want to have a really good athlete behind the plate, and she's been one for us." Miller was also hitting .375.

Erica Miller has been steady at third and was hitting .347. She has shown an uncanny ability to come through in the clutch, as she did against St. Agnes. "She

likes to come up in those situations," Ross said, "and her defense is much improved."

Sophomore shortstop Megan Leslie is a complete player—a great leadoff hitter who also has great range and a fine arm. She is batting .273.

SPA SOFTBALL ► 41

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Raider senior sprinter Sean King. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

# Off and running

CDH senior Sean King is on track to be crowned state's fastest man this spring

BY BILL WAGNER

Cretin-Derham Hall speedster Sean King was torn between football and track in grade school, and actually gave up running for a couple of years. That was until his mother, Denise, who has competed in both the Twin Cities and Grandma's marathons, convinced him to take up running again. She would challenge him to short races to the end of the block. She couldn't help but notice that little Sean usually beat her.

"I knew he had something going when he could outdo his mom," Denise said. "He was always wondering why I was trailing him."

She needn't have felt bad. A lot of athletes have trailed the fleet King since he started running for the Raiders as a 9th-grader. And he isn't done yet.

Last year as a junior, King finished third in state in the 100-meter dash, was seventh in the 200 and anchored CDH's first-place 4x100 relay team. So far this spring, he is on track to win a state title in the 100.

"The two guys who finished ahead of me last year both graduated," he said. "I still have to go out there and get it done, but I think I'm in very good shape. If I apply myself, I think I've got a good chance."

King is working to get his time down to about 10.47 or 10.48 seconds in the 100, which would be a state meet record. He already won both the Eagan and University of St. Thomas invitationals this spring with times of 11.07 and 11.10, respectively. He took bronze at state last year with a 10.92.

In the 200-meter dash last year, he logged a personal best time of 21.7 seconds. This year, he won the Eagan and UST meets with times of 22.68 and 22.80. He knows that the 200 requires greater stamina along with his speed, and he races accordingly. "They are two completely different races," King said. "The 200 is harder."

King is looking forward to helping CDH defend its 4x100 title, despite the fact that two members of that quartet have not returned. Fellow relay member Kyle Moore graduated and senior Shady Salamon is not running track in order to devote his attention to playing football for the Gophers next fall.

As the anchor, King appreciated what Salamon brought to the relay team, whose

time of 42.80 in last year's state meet was less than a second off the record. "This is where we might really miss Shady," he said. "All last year, I had a really good relationship with him. I always knew where I was going to get that baton. You can easily lose two or three seconds off a relay time if the handoff isn't smooth."

Still, Marcus Binns is back from the state title team and CDH has added two newcomers into the group—junior Harry Pitera and senior Joe Mielenhausen. King likes what he has seen from the new relay squad, which won the Eagan and UST meets with times of 43.67 and 44.19.

After the completion of what he expects will be a hallmark year this spring, King will look forward to running for the University of Minnesota. Though the Gophers have not offered him a scholarship, they have set up a string of finishing times that will serve as incentives for scholarship money. "It all depends on how I do," he said.

Just as his mother predicted, King's track career blossomed once he got back into it. "He was running high school times in middle school," Denise said.

However, the gem still needed a little polishing. King prides himself on his quick starts today, but that wasn't the case a few years ago.

"In my freshman year, I was horrible out of the blocks," he said. "I always had to catch kids. But by my junior year, I was a lot better. Lately, I haven't had to catch many people."

He's not thinking about giving up track anymore, even though he also played football for the Raiders as a wide receiver. "I like track and football equally well," he said.

CDH co-coach Chris Babcock said King is a joy to coach. "He's all about the competition," Babcock said. "He knows when he's not doing well. I'll say, 'Great job,' and then I'll ask him what he thinks. It's like being in the pit crew in NASCAR. You always want to know how the car's running. He's one of those guys who's always going to work hard."

Babcock said King is a cinch to be among the state's top contenders in the 100 this year. "He'll be under 11 seconds," Babcock said. "He has the work ethic to do it."

According to sprint coach Tom Hart, King is more than meeting the timetable for optimum success in 2008. "I'd say he's ahead of schedule," Hart said.

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Roosevelt's Krystal Kersten tags out South's Will Ferguson during a Minneapolis City Conference contest on April 28.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



## Baseball is spring sport of choice for Roosevelt's top female athlete

BY BRIAN JOHNSON

Senior Krystal Kersten made Roosevelt High School's varsity soccer team as an 8th-grader and is a three-time MVP in that sport. She is also a two-time letter winner in basketball for the Teddies. However, her biggest sports achievement to date is, in her words, "playing baseball with the guys."

Kersten, the starting first baseman and sometimes pitcher for the Roosevelt varsity baseball team, is one of the few females to play competitive baseball at the high school level—or any level, for that matter. It's a feat that may raise eyebrows in some circles, especially those who are old enough to remember the days when girls did not have the option of playing competitive high school sports, with or without the boys.

But the baseball diamond is truly Kersten's best friend. And why not? The Nokomis neighborhood resident has three brothers and has held her own in rough-and-tumble backyard sports competition against all of them.

"Since I was 5 years old, I've played sports with and against my brothers," she wrote as Roosevelt's selection for the 2008 Minneapolis Athena Awards, which honor top female student-athletes. "I got bumped around a lot, but I got them back, too."

Roosevelt coach Joe Protzmann described Kersten as one of the most "fundamentally sound" players on the team. As a hitter, he said, she makes solid contact with the ball, and as a fielder, she has been nearly flawless this season.

"She just knows what to do and puts the bat on the ball," Protzmann said. "And she's sure with the glove."

On the mound, the 5-foot-8 hurler and two-time letter winner doesn't blow batters away with her heat. However, Protzmann said she throws strikes and "has a pretty decent change-up."

In a memorable game last season, Kersten was brought in to pitch the final inning against a tough St. Louis Park team. She allowed one run, but retired the side and earned the respect of opposing players.

"They were really surprised that, first, I was on the team and that, second, they brought me in to pitch," said Kersten, who also had a hit in the game. "They didn't get any nice, clean shots, so that was good."

Baseball is the sport of choice in the Kersten family. Her parents both played the game, as did older brothers Korben and Kolten. Her younger brother Kolburn is a



Senior Krystal Kersten

shortstop and pitcher for Roosevelt. Though just a freshman, he is already one of the best players on the varsity team.

Protzmann said Krystal Kersten is just like "one of the guys" on the Roosevelt squad and has been accepted by her teammates. Opposing players haven't always been as classy. In an American Legion game a couple of years ago, some of the older guys on an opposing team could not resist dishing some verbal digs at Kersten, but she took the taunts in stride.

"I got stuff thrown out at me, but I didn't let it keep me down," she said.

Kersten brings the same mental toughness to the Teddies, who have stumbled out of the gate with an 0-6 start this spring. Most of the losses haven't been close, and as a team captain and the lone senior on the squad, she encourages her teammates to keep their heads up.

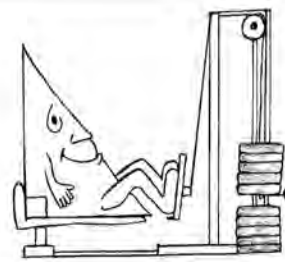
"We have a lot of new players," she said. "We're all trying to work together. But we're having fun, which is always a plus."

Kersten is a National Honor Society member and carries a 4.04 grade point average. After high school, she plans to major in business at Augsburg College. She considered giving college soccer a try, but has decided to focus exclusively on academics in her post-high school endeavors.

Kersten said she never had the desire to play the more traditional girls' sport of fast-pitch softball, despite persistent lobbying from softball coaches.

"As long as they let me play baseball," she said, "softball was never in my mind."

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<b>2:00</b>	Math	Math	Math	Math	
<b>3:00</b>	Games	Games	Games	Games	
<b>4:00</b>	Math	Math	Math	Math	
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# Sports Shorts

**The Minnesota Renewable Energy Society** will host its 16th annual Solar Boat Regatta from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, May 17, at Lake Phalen. Teams of solar-powered boats will race in order to educate middle and high school students about solar energy and engineering. The family event is open to the public will feature live music and Izzy's ice cream. Visit [www.mnrenewables.org/events/solarregatta/](http://www.mnrenewables.org/events/solarregatta/).

**Tour de Cure**, a bicycling event to benefit the American Diabetes Association, will be held on Saturday, May 31, at the Lake Harriet Bandshell in Minneapolis. Six-mile family rides will travel around Lake Harriet and Lake Calhoun. A 25-mile loop will collar the Chain of Lakes. A 45-mile route will continue through Minnehaha Falls, across the Ford Bridge and through downtown St. Paul to Harriet Island. Check-in is at 7:00 a.m. Call 763-593-5333.

**The Breast Cancer Ride** will be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 21-22, to benefit Open Arms of Minnesota. The ride will begin at Normandale Community College in Bloomington and travel through southern Minnesota. Riders will camp overnight at Treasure Island Resort and Casino before heading back the next day. Riders of all levels and ages are asked to raise a minimum of \$750 in pledges. To register, visit [www.breastcanceride.org](http://www.breastcanceride.org).

**Minnesota Lightning** single-game tickets for the 2008 regular soccer season are now on sale. The Lightning will open their season at home against the Michigan Hawks at 7:00 p.m. Friday, May 30, at Elizabeth Lyle Robbie Stadium on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus. Tickets range in price from \$6.00-\$8.00. For tickets, visit [www.mnthunder.com](http://www.mnthunder.com) or call 651-917-8326.

**The Minnesota Freeze**, an amateur Australian-rules football club, is beginning its fourth year of play at the Lake Nokomis fields in Minneapolis. The Freeze were the Division 3 national "footy" champions in their inaugural year in 2005 and won the Division 2 national title in 2007. This year, the team will be playing in Division I and is ranked seventh in the nation. Local competition among three metro-area teams starts this month at the fields on the northwest side of Lake Nokomis and runs through September, with games played on most Saturdays. Players are selected from the three teams to compete as the Freeze against five other clubs in the Mid-American Conference of the U.S. Australian Football League. For information, visit [www.mnfooty.com](http://www.mnfooty.com).

**MS: Twin Cities**, a three-day, 50-mile walk, will be held from Friday through Sunday, September 12-14, beginning at the Minnesota Veterans Home in Minneapolis and finishing at the state Capitol. The seventh annual event is expected to raise \$750,000 to support programs and services for the estimated 9,000 people living with multiple sclerosis in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. A registration fee and \$1,500 minimum pledge are required to participate. To register, visit [www.ChallengeWalk.org](http://www.ChallengeWalk.org) or call 1-800-582-5296.

**The Bike MS: Allianz Twin Cities Ride** will be held on Saturday, May 10 to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis

Society. The one-day, 60- or 30-mile bike ride starts and ends at the Maplewood Community Center and will take bikers along the Gateway Trail. A registration fee and \$50 minimum pledge are required to participate. Visit [www.MSociety.org](http://www.MSociety.org) or call 1-800-582-5296.

**The 29th annual Larkin Hoffman MS 150** will be held from June 6-8 to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. The 150-mile ride will take cyclists from Proctor near Duluth to the National Sports Center in Blaine, with an overnight at Grand Casino Hinckley. A registration fee and \$300 minimum pledge are required to participate. Visit [www.bikeMS.org](http://www.bikeMS.org) or call 1-800-582-5296.

**The Star Tribune TRAM (The Ride Across Minnesota)** will be held from July 20-25 to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. The 250-mile ride begins in Grand Rapids and takes cyclists through Chisholm, Biwabik and Two Harbors before crossing the finish line at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. A registration fee and \$300 minimum pledge are required to participate. Visit [www.bikeMS.org](http://www.bikeMS.org) or call 1-800-582-5296.

**A dog walk** to benefit the Wildcat Sanctuary will be held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, June 7, at Hidden Falls Regional Park (enter the north gate on Mississippi River Boulevard near Magoffin Avenue). The morning will include face painting and prizes for the best singing dog and best dog costume. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m., rain or shine. Visit [www.wildcatsanctuary.org/DogWalk/DogWalk.htm](http://www.wildcatsanctuary.org/DogWalk/DogWalk.htm).

**The St. Paul Lakers** are looking for recent high school graduates who are interested in playing Junior A Tier III men's ice hockey. A free open house for interested players will be held at 5:45 p.m. Tuesday, June 17, at the Veterans Memorial Community Center, 8055 Barbara Ave., Inver Grove Heights. Players may tour the training facility and meet coach Dan Strot. A free, full-contact scrimmage will follow from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. at nearby Wakota Ice Arena. Registration is required. Visit [www.lakershockey.com](http://www.lakershockey.com) or call general manager Ralph Hayne at 651-335-7398.

**The 2008 St. Paul Classic Bike Tour** will be held on Sunday, September 7. Nearly 7,000 cyclists will gather for 15- or 30-mile rides along scenic routes closed to motorized traffic. The ride will start at the University of St. Thomas with a breakfast. Live music will be performed at each of five rest stops. Riders may now register at early bird rates and pay no on-line surcharge at [www.BikeClassic.org](http://www.BikeClassic.org).

**Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys** will hold their first golf tournament at the Wilds Golf Club in Prior Lake on Monday, June 30. Registration and lunch are at 11:00 a.m., with a shotgun start for the four-person scramble at 1:00 p.m. The cost is \$150 per player (or \$600 per foursome) before June 1 and \$175 (or \$700) thereafter. The cost includes box lunch, driving range privileges, lesson with a golf pro, tee bag, cart, 18 holes and banquet dinner. Other activities include a silent auction, prizes and a celebrity surprise. The cost for dinner only is \$50. For information, visit [www.girlscoutsvr.org](http://www.girlscoutsvr.org) or call 1-800-598-5516, ext. 106.

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SPA coach Bill Ross gives hurler Sammi Fox some advice between innings.

### 37◀ SPA SOFTBALL

At second is another 8th-grader, Anna Olson. She was batting .380 and is also the team's second pitcher, providing some quality backup for Fox.

First base is shared by sophomore Kendra Rosario and senior Lauren Mast, and it appears to be working for SPA, with both players hitting over .300. "It gives a chance to both a young player and an experienced player," Ross said.

The Spartans also have the strong bat of freshman left fielder Delaney Middle-

brook, whose .466 average might soon move her up in the batting order.

Patrolling center is senior Rachel Rongstad, who is hitting .375 and covers the outfield well.

At right is senior Mondraya Howard, who has been plagued by hard luck at the plate so far this year. "But she's got some pop," said Ross, adding that Howard will raise her average soon. "Sometimes you just need one or two to fall in and you're on your way," he said.

Reserve strength is provided by junior infielder Erin Lowenthal and junior

Niambi Mitchell.

The Spartans still have some kinks to work out this season. Ross bemoaned a 3-0 loss on April 23 to league-leading St. Bernard's, a game his team had a chance to win if not for some base-running gaffes.

Still, Ross is encouraged. He pointed out that his team seems to hit well when it's not necessarily expected. "Our better hitters are probably better against the hard throwers," he said. "They're not intimidated."

### 37◀ WRIGHT CALL

When they arrived in 1993, the St. Paul Saints adopted a long-standing minor league tradition with wacky between-inning promotions. The Saints' success in that department forced the Twins, who had basically abandoned promotions, back into the game as well.

If Cecil B. DeMille were alive today, he might be doing pre-game shows instead of thinking of a new way to shoot *The 10 Commandments*. The current big league pre-game craze started with the success of the Chicago Bulls during the Michael Jordan era and quickly spread to every arena in the National Basketball Association. NBA starting lineups are regularly introduced with the kind of flair that used to be reserved for the Rolling Stones.

The more staid NHL didn't follow suit immediately. In its early years, the Wild would show a short video followed by that hokey theme song. (It was kind of cheesy, but that's the type of people we are in Minnesota. There's a startling number of people who sing "Skol, Vikings" after every touchdown.)

Seven years after they started, the Wild's pre-game shows have expanded to the point where you almost expect Maher to stand up and take a bow after each performance.

"There aren't a lot of rules about what can't be done," said Bill Robertson, a Cretin-Derham Hall grad who serves as the vice president of communication and broadcasting for the Wild. "Basically, we can do almost anything we want. If we go too far, somebody from the league will tell us. Nobody has called us yet."

Robertson knows a little bit about show biz because he used to work for Disney, which at the time ran the NHL's Ducks and MLB's Angels. He admits the current pre-game routine in St. Paul tops anything that was done in his time with Disney. (St. Paul, the show biz capital. Who knew?)

Maher and company were in top form for the Wild's playoff series with Colorado. For game two, the show started 10 minutes before face-off when the lights were dimmed. Using the video portion of the scoreboard, the team ran highlights from a previous playoff series win over the Avalanche as well as some memorable moments from the first game of the Colorado series.

At that point, the X became a giant slide show. Images were extended onto the ice prior to the players' appearance. The final image was a picture of a giant Stanley Cup that nearly took up the entire rink. As the crowd was getting revved up, Adam Abrams, the public address announcer, muttered the names of the Avs' starters so quickly and softly that hardly anybody in the full house noticed.

For the uninitiated, this is when the fun really begins. A young kid zips out of the Zamboni end of the rink with a Wild flag, plants it as hard as he can into center ice and pumps his arm to the crowd. It's then time to introduce Minnesota's lineup, a foghorn explodes and the starters get a thunderous welcome. Meanwhile, the youngster is still at center ice, waving his arm frantically. Eventually, a couple of players go by and high-five him.

Bob Kurtz, a Highland resident and the team's radio announcer, has an NHL pedigree that dates back three decades. The showmanship is "one of the biggest changes that has happened to the league since I started," he said. "Scoreboards aren't really scoreboards anymore; they're used for entertainment purposes." Kurtz said the Xcel board is nice, but it pales in comparison to those in some arenas. "Vancouver has a scoreboard that's three times the one we have here," he said.

The Wild's pre-game efforts have not gone unnoticed around the league. Even in comparatively staid Detroit, things are reportedly livelier this year. The Red Wings, a member of the NHL's old guard, are famous for concentrating on the game and the game alone. However, this year even they hired a guy to jazz things up before games.

Kurtz said that every team in the NHL now does something, but "some (pre-game shows) are more amateurish than others." The shows are meant to draw the non-fan to the arena, much in the same way minor league baseball uses promotions to draw non-fans to ballparks.

Still, there's something to be said for whipping up a crowd the old-fashioned way. Ron Foyt, now one of the NHL's replay officials, was a linesman for many years. As he surveyed the pre-game scene in St. Paul before game two, he recalled the loudest place he ever worked.

"Chicago Stadium was always an incredible place to work," he said. "The Blackhawks didn't do much pre-game stuff, but the noise would start as soon as the crowd saw the first player hit the ice. If that didn't get you excited to be there, you should've stayed home."

The only special pre-game thing the Blackhawks did was put a spotlight on the National Anthem singer, who stood on a podium in front of the organ near the top of the building. "By the end of the anthem, the place was roaring so loud you swore it was shaking," Foyt said. "I was always afraid the singer would fall off the ledge he was standing on."

Once the puck is dropped, the game's still the thing at the X. But if the Wild draft a Bungee jumper in the fifth round this summer, don't be surprised.

(Dave Wright can be reached at [dwright53@msn.com](mailto:dwright53@msn.com).)

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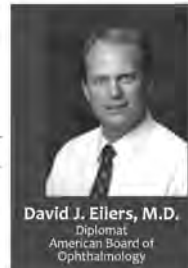
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Continued page 44

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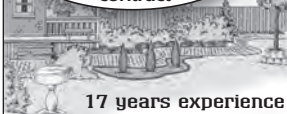
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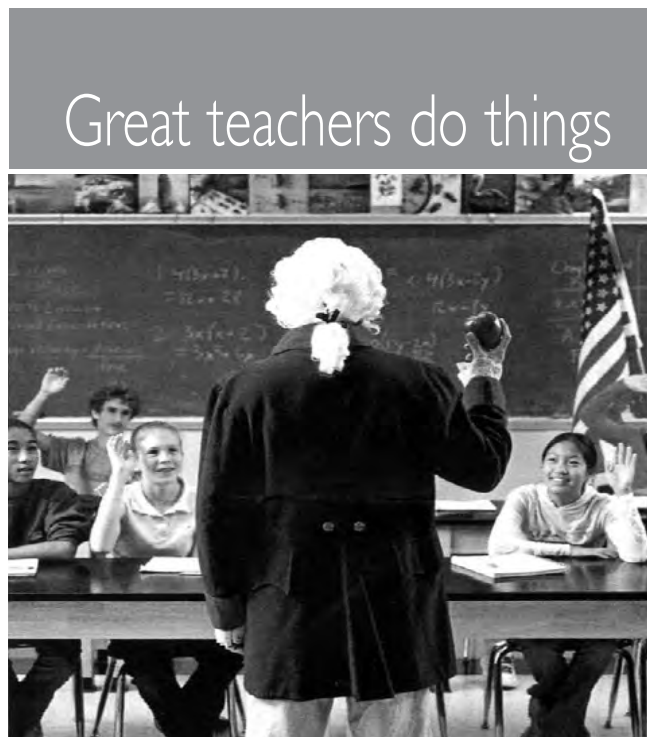
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