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A woman who was already at the top helped Danielle McClure, 3, overcome her trepidation about venturing down the inflatable snow slide in Rice Park during the final weekend of the St. Paul Winter Carnival. After that initial run, McClure was ready to go right back up again. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

St. Paul eyes \$44M in cuts over 3 years

Recreation centers and libraries could close if state aid is cut as governor has proposed

By JANE MCCLURE

A proposed \$7.7 million cut in state aid for St. Paul in 2009 and even bigger cuts in 2010-2012 have city officials contemplating widespread layoffs of city employees and the closing of recreation centers and libraries. Police and fire department ranks could also be pared, and capital improvement projects could be delayed or dropped altogether unless the Legislature votes to restore state aid or to repeal state mandates that drive up city costs.

As part of his plan to address a projected state deficit of \$4.85 billion for the two years beginning July 1, Governor Tim Pawlenty has proposed cutting Local Government Aid (LGA) to cities statewide by a total of \$77.8 million this year and \$168 million in 2010. For St. Paul, that means a loss of \$7.7 million, or 12.3 percent, from the city's expected LGA allotment of \$62.6 million in 2009. The reduction in LGA for the city is expected to be closer to \$17 million per year in 2010-2012. Factor in inflation and a \$5.7 million cut in the 2008 allotment

of LGA in December and St. Paul is looking at a budget deficit of \$43.8 million over the next three years.

"Quite frankly, we've run out of options," said Mayor Chris Coleman.

Although a complete picture of the changes in store for St. Paul will not come into focus for at least a month, city officials are planning a series of public meetings in the weeks ahead to discuss which services to cut. "If we're going to close recreation centers and libraries, we need to start those discussions right away," said City Council president Kathy Lantry.

The City Council met with city finance staff and Coleman's administration on January 28 to review departmental budgets. The following day, the mayor sat down with union representatives to discuss layoffs and the need to renegotiate contracts. Meetings with department heads are ongoing through February.

No city budget changes have been made as yet. However, city officials have agreed to postpone the winter bond sale, putting several capital im-

CITY BUDGET ► 2

'Billboard Capital of Minnesota' takes stock of its signage

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul may have lost 51 billboards over the past few years, but the 561 that remain still give the city the distinction of having the most billboards of any municipality in Minnesota. That's according to the group Scenic St. Paul, which held a forum on billboards at City Hall in January. The more than 100 people who attended saw a slide show of every billboard in town and heard an overview of how billboards are currently regulated by the city and state.

The push to reduce the number of bill-

boards in St. Paul began almost 40 years ago, according to Ruby Hunt, a former Ramsey County Commissioner and former St. Paul City Council member. "Some progress has been made," she said, "but St. Paul is still the Billboard Capital of Minnesota."

Scenic St. Paul contends that billboards are a blight on neighborhoods due to their size and poor maintenance. As proof of the poor maintenance, Scenic St. Paul officials displayed large sheets of paper that they said had fallen from peeling billboards.

Billboards intrude on the outdoors, said Peggy Lynch, executive director of Friends of

the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County. "We shouldn't have to have advertising in front of us during all of our waking hours," she said.

Others spoke of how billboards can make redevelopment more costly due to the high prices they command and the complexity of their leases. According to City Council member Russ Stark, the billboard that towers over the long vacant lot at the northeast corner of Snelling and St. Anthony avenues "is and will remain an obstacle to redevelopment there." Billboards create hazards, Stark said, by encouraging motorists to look at them rather

than the road. That's especially true of flashing electronic signs, which are the latest trend in the billboard industry, he added.

Leanne Muller, president and general manager of Clear Channel Outdoor, which owns most of the billboards in St. Paul, maintains that many of Scenic St. Paul's claims are false. "People can say anything if they don't have to back it up," she said.

Muller objected to a statement that billboard companies "seek forgiveness rather than permission" when it comes to repairing bill-

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SUMMER CAMPS



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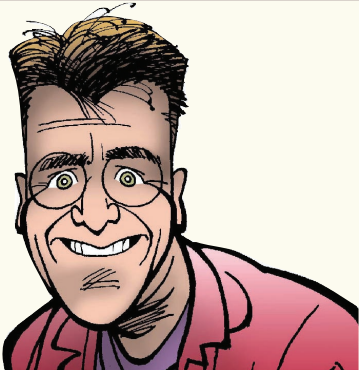
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University Avenue businesses anxiously await the city's plan to replace parking that will be lost to light rail ► 3

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1◀ CITY BUDGET

provement projects on hold, including the Cretin-Goodrich and West 7th-Douglas street repaving projects. The city is proceeding with construction of the new fire station at West 7th Street and Randolph Avenue, but city projects whose contracts have not been awarded could be scotched.

According to city finance director Margaret Kelly, much of the budget cutting will be a matter of departments deciding which services they can no longer deliver.

The city will do all it can to minimize layoffs, according to Coleman. "We're very, very mindful that we don't solve larger economic problems by putting more people out on the street," he said.

Coleman had earlier ordered a freeze on hiring and on all non-union salaries. That meant dropping plans to hire 14 additional police officers in 2009, even though the department is 18 officers below its authorized strength.

The mayor's staff has also prepared an incentive package to encourage early retirement by city workers. The package was offered to 180 employees, and five had accepted it by January 14, according to city human resources director Angie Nalezny. Another 15 to 25 city workers are expected to accept the early retirement package before the February 6

The city will do all it can to minimize layoffs, according to Coleman. "We're very, very mindful that we don't solve larger economic problems by putting more people out on the street," he said.

deadline.

Mulholland said the mayor would likely refrain from cutting department budgets across the board. That drew criticism from some City Council members, who said they wanted to see what effect cutting department budgets equally would have. Council members also objected to the mayor's proposal to close one or more libraries rather than reduce library hours systemwide.

One model city officials may follow to reduce and reorganize services is the method used to restructure the city's parks and recreation system over the past two years. That involved closing eight recreation centers across the city and reorganizing services by district rather than by playground. By redirecting resources that way, the city was actually able to provide better parks and rec

services, according to Coleman.

However, the reorganization of Parks and Recreation has also been criticized for a top-down approach that weakened local programs and booster clubs. Ward 5 City Council member Lee Helgen noted that in most cases, the city had to spend money to improve the recreation centers it closed before it could lease them to outside parties.

Finding outside parties to lease city facilities may not be as easy this time around because of the state of the economy. However, the city has heard from one charter school that is interested in leasing a recreation center. City staff would not say which school or recreation center was involved.

Ramsey County is also preparing for budget cuts, according to new county administrator Julie Kleinschmidt. Minnesota counties receive a variety of program aids from the state rather than the lump-sum LGA allotments given to cities.

Many county program aids are expected to be cut over the next two years. Last week county officials were still reviewing Pawlenty's budget to get a handle on the numbers and prepare a response.

In her letter to county employees, Kleinschmidt said the county would be making "strategic changes, not across-the-board cuts." However, she warned that the cuts will be "unprecedented."



A billboard looks down on traffic at the intersection of Snelling and St. Clair avenues. PHOTO COURTESY OF SCENIC ST. PAUL

1◀ BILLBOARDS OF ST. PAUL

boards. All of Clear Channel's billboards in St. Paul were built and are maintained legally, she said. She denied that Clear Channel has cut down any trees blocking their signs without first obtaining permission. "We don't cut a twig unless we get a permit for it," she said.

Clear Channel in the past has offered to work with city officials to remove billboards in residential areas in exchange for permission to erect new billboards in high-trafficked commercial areas. The so-called "cap and replace" policy would remove older and smaller signs in exchange for larger and electronic signs along freeways.

Some people may see blight when they see a billboard, Muller said, but others see an advertising opportunity and a means of promoting business.

St. Paul officials and billboard industry representatives have spent much of the past decade arguing their case in court. In 1999 a citywide referendum that would have forced the removal of about half of the billboards in St. Paul as public nuisances failed on a 53 to 47 percent vote.

The following year the City Council passed an ordinance banning new bill-

boards and making existing billboards "nonconforming uses" that needed to be removed if faced with major repairs. However, in 2001 the Minnesota Legislature passed a law protecting the property rights of owners of nonconforming uses, in effect allowing all billboards to be repaired.

In 2007 the city banned the extension of billboards beyond their frames. Clear Channel Outdoor has disputed the city's right to ban sign extensions and both sides expect the matter to end up in court.

No legal action has been taken on the city's latest effort to limit the placement of electronic billboards.

Muller described St. Paul's anti-billboard activists as a "very small group of people who exert a lot of influence." Her comment drew protests from the audience at the forum, which included representatives of most of the city's 17 district councils. Among the forum's 18 cosponsors were the Ramsey Hill Association, the Historic Irvine Park Association, the Highland District Council, the Macalester-Groveland Community Council, the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, the Summit-University Planning Council, the CapitolRiver Council, the Friends of the Mississippi River, University United

and the Friends of the Parks and Trails.

With the slide show of all 561 billboards in the city, Scenic St. Paul now has a more comprehensive and up-to-date record of the billboards than the city itself, according to Scenic St. Paul board member Gerald Mischke, who produced the slide show.

According to Scenic St. Paul, most of the 51 billboards that have been removed in recent years were taken down as a result of redevelopment, a property owner's decision not to renew a billboard lease or disasters such as fire and rock slides.

By Scenic St. Paul's count, Ward 2 has the most billboards in St. Paul with 141. Ward 4 is next with 127, followed by Ward 1 (93), Ward 5 (60), Ward 7 (51), Ward 3 (46) and Ward 6 (43).

There are about 300 billboards in all of Minneapolis, according to Scenic St. Paul. Eagan, Roseville, Bloomington and Maplewood each have 10 or fewer signs. Mendota Heights and West St. Paul have none.

Correction

Project for Pride in Living's proposed 44-unit affordable housing development on West 7th and Springfield streets is estimated to cost \$11.5 million.

Light rail creating more problems than solutions for businesses

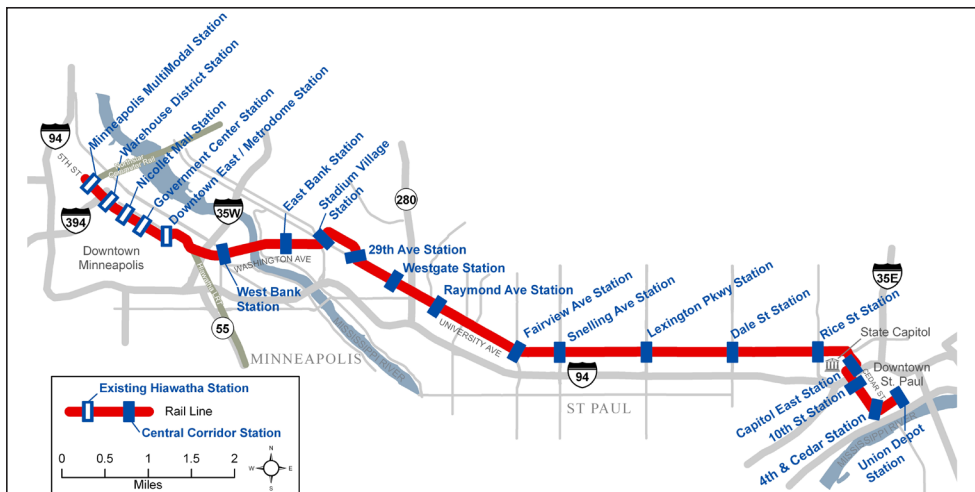
University shopkeepers anxiously await plan for addressing parking loss

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul officials will release a Central Corridor parking plan this month, and they are hoping it will go a long way toward easing the concerns of University Avenue businesses about the potential loss of customer parking. The proposed light-rail transit line would bring about the removal of 1,003 of the 1,215 on-street parking spaces on University between Rice Street in St. Paul and 29th Street in Minneapolis. Many blocks would lose all of their on-street parking, and for businesses without off-street parking or alley access, that means no convenient customer parking and no place for deliveries.

"About a year ago at this time, we were looking at a parking problem on University in capital letters," said Craig Blakely, project manager in the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development. Since then, he said, the city has been able to define the parking problems area by area and pull together potential solutions for each block.

The parking problems and their solutions need to be examined as part of an overall system, according to Blakely. Packaged together block by block, the proposed solutions include shared parking, parking meters and new signs



The route of the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit line.

to direct customer and delivery vehicles. Resident-only permit parking in adjacent neighborhoods is also a possibility to discourage commuter parking.

More than 40 people attended a January 29 forum on parking sponsored by the University Avenue Business Association (UABA). Although light rail on University has been discussed for many years, its effects on parking only became clear in the last 12 months. As St. Paul City Council member Russ Stark explained, "slowly but surely, much of the on-street parking was taken out of the plans."

UABA has surveyed business people along University to gauge their concerns about the light-rail line. More than 90 percent of the respondents believe that small businesses need

a stronger voice to influence decisions about the light-rail line. Seventy percent said they do not believe light rail will expand their business opportunities. A similar percentage said they do not believe the Metropolitan Council, which would operate the transit line, is adequately addressing their concerns. Half of the respondents said they had not been contacted by the Metropolitan Council in the last six months.

Parking was the biggest concern for the businesses, with more than 80 percent ranking it as a high priority. The threat of rising property taxes after the light-rail line is built was next, with 60 percent ranking it high. That was followed by financial assistance for businesses having to struggle during the light-rail

line's construction, the possibility of increased crime and new zoning regulations.

University business owners have been frustrated by what they perceive as a fragmented planning process for the Central Corridor. The light-rail line was initially planned by Ramsey County, then handed off to the Metropolitan Council. Metro Transit and the Minnesota Department of Transportation have also been heavily involved. The city of St. Paul and Ramsey County both have staff working with the light-rail project team, although the city's focus has largely been on parking and land use around the light-rail station sites.

"There has been so much brain damage on all of the issues, and no one has come up with solutions," said Jim Segal of Ax-Man Surplus at . "At some point, there should be one point of contact."

"I think that's a fair criticism," Stark said. However, he added, the city's parking plan should bring all concerned closer to solving one of the biggest problems.

One sticking point may be finding the money to implement the solutions. At a time when the city and state are slashing spending to address ballooning deficits, the \$910 million Central Corridor project budget includes no money for mitigating the loss of parking.

The city of St. Paul is hoping to pay for some of the improvements through its 2010-2011 Capital Improvement Budget and the federal economic stimulus package now under consideration in Congress. The light-rail line could begin operating as early as 2014.

Five-story mixed-use development proposed for Grand and Cleveland

By JANE MCCLURE

A tentative plan to construct a five-story retail and residential development at the southeast corner of Grand and Cleveland avenues was unveiled on January 28 before the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Housing and Land Use Committee. The developers, Michael Roehr and Chris Schmitt of Minneapolis-based Roehr-Schmitt Architecture, said they would distribute more information to residents of the surrounding neighborhood this month and hold a neighborhood meeting in the future.

"We see this site as a book end for west Grand Avenue," Roehr said. If the required zoning changes and any needed variances can be obtained, he said, his firm would purchase the former gas station and the house to its east and replace them with a single building that

would have 16,000 to 17,500 square feet of retail space on the first floor and 19 condominiums on the second through fifth floors.

The two lots that make up the 160-by-160-foot site are currently zoned commercial and residential, respectively. That zoning would have to be changed to traditional neighborhoods to accommodate the mixed-use development. Until a site plan review is conducted, it is not clear if any variances would be needed.

The first-floor retail space would likely be divided among three or four businesses, Roehr said. The developers would like to have a restaurant as an anchor tenant.

The fourth floor of the building would be stepped back 12 feet from the front and sides of the building, and the fifth floor would be stepped back further yet with a single 6,000-square-foot penthouse. By having the top two

floors stepped back, the building would appear less massive from the street, according to Roehr and Schmitt. That type of stepped-back construction, known as wedding-cake design, has been used for other recent developments on Grand Avenue, including the Muska Lighting building and Oxford Square.

According to the developers, the height of the proposed building would match the existing four-story apartment building to the east. The building would have two levels of underground parking with a total of 90 spaces. The new condos would not be marketed to students of the nearby University of St. Thomas, the developers said, but rather empty-nesters or older adults without children.

Roehr and Schmitt said they are cognizant of neighborhood concerns about parking and traffic, having worked on several projects at St. Thomas, including the university's child

development center at Grand and Finn Street and its new parking ramp at Grand and Cretin avenues. Their plan is to provide access to the underground parking from Cleveland and to discourage use of the alley by residents and customers.

Members of the Macalester-Groveland Housing and Land Use Committee expressed cautious optimism about the project and encouraged the developers to discuss their plans with the neighbors.

The Macalester-Groveland district plan supports mixed-use developments at commercial corners. However, it also recommends that new buildings be no higher than three stories. If the developers stick to five stories, they will need a variance to traditional neighborhoods zoning regulations. According to Schmitt, anything less than five stories would not be financially feasible.

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St. Paul Schools prepare to cut \$25 million from '09-10 budget

Teacher layoffs are likely as enrollment drops and transportation costs rise

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

Barring any increases in federal or state aid, the St. Paul Public Schools are facing a \$25 million deficit for the 2009-10 school year. School district administrators are now drawing up plans to address the shortfall, which they will present to the School Board on February 10.

"It'll be difficult to avoid cuts anywhere," said Lois Rockney, the school district's chief financial officer. "Since staff salaries make up 84 percent of the budget, there's no way this isn't going to affect teachers' jobs." And that means larger class sizes are likely, according to Rockney. "Nothing is sacred," she said. "Everything is on the table."

The school district's projected deficit has increased \$10 million in the past six months due to a \$1 million drop in interest revenue, a greater decline in enrollment than expected and inflationary increases in health care, transportation and maintenance costs, according to Rockney.

"This is the largest budget shortfall in more than a decade," Superintendent Meria Carstarphen told the School Board on January 20.

The St. Paul Public Schools has a total budget of \$628.1 million in the current school year. Its general fund budget is \$476.4 million.

Total enrollment in the school district is now 39,604 students in grades pre-K to 12. That's down from 40,549 in 2007-08 and down 238 from what the school district had projected last summer. School district officials are now predicting enrollment to drop by another 744 students in 2009-10.

According to Carstarphen, the drop in enrollment will bring about a decrease of \$10.1 million in general education funding and another \$2.8 million in compensatory funding from the state.

With the recent downturn in the economy, school district officials are also expecting fewer staff to retire this year. "That will adversely impact our potential rollover savings (to newer, lower-paid staff)," Carstarphen said. "The same economic conditions have caused lower investment interest rates, and so we've been forced to limit our investments to money market funds."

Meanwhile, the district's transportation costs are expected to increase more than 7 percent next year. They were \$27.1 million in 2007-08, are estimated to be \$27.9 million in 2008-09 and are projected to be \$30 million in 2009-10, according to Rockney. The school district expects to receive about \$25.3 million from the state as reimbursement for trans-

portation expenses in 2009-10, according to Rockney, leaving a shortfall of \$4.7 million.

The district's transportation costs "are way out of line," said School Board member Tom Conlon. He believes the district should switch to a clustered transportation system rather than having school buses travel to the ends of the district. Referring to a plan introduced a few years ago, Conlon said the district should "replicate the most popular magnet programs in three different regions of the city and give each region its own busing system. A lot of fuel would be saved because buses wouldn't be going all over the city."

"I would hope that district staff would heed President Obama's reference in his inaugural speech to people giving up raises in salaries and benefits to help co-workers keep their jobs," Conlon said. "I don't think the School Board can accept any contract that includes salary or benefit increases for teachers or any other district staff for at least the next year or two. Otherwise, we'll be putting people on the streets. I just think it's financially responsible to hold off on increases until we have a clearer sense of where the economy is going and what the future of school funding looks like."

"I think it's appalling that, because of the way education is funded in Minnesota, this kind of budget crisis can't be addressed without hurting kids," said School Board member Anne Carroll. "As we continue to face falling enrollment and rising inflation, we also con-

tinue to face (unfunded) state and federal funding mandates. And the district has had to make up the difference."

Carroll said she hoped there would be some movement in the Legislature to change the state's school funding mechanisms and that President Obama's economic recovery package would be of some help.

The economic stimulus plan that Congress is contemplating does include billions in new federal spending on education. "If (the bill) were to pass as is," Rockney said, "the St. Paul school district would receive \$9.7 million more in each of the next two years in Title I funds (for free or reduced-price lunches for low-income students)." Another \$6.9 million in each of the next two years would be made available for the district's special education expenses, she said, along with \$20 million for district construction projects over those two years.

Rockney's staff is currently assembling enrollment projections and budget allocations for the coming year for each school in the district. Those numbers will be forwarded to the schools sometime in March. Principals and school site councils will then use that information to prepare their own budgets for 2008-09, with a deadline to return them to the district office in May. Rockney's office will then draft the district's budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The School Board is scheduled to vote on the budget at its June 16 meeting.

District 197 adopts team approach to tackle \$2.2M budget deficit

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

School District 197 is facing a \$2.2 million budget shortfall for the 2009-10 school year. "It's about 5 percent of our general fund budget, and that's significant for us," said Superintendent Jay Haugen.

The district, which operates schools in Mendota Heights, West St. Paul and Eagan, was initially facing a \$1.6 million deficit. However, with the announcement of the state's \$4.8 billion deficit for the 2009-11 biennium and the realization that state funding for the district will be frozen, if not cut, the district decided another \$600,000 in budget reductions was necessary to make up for inflationary costs and a continuing drop in enrollment.

The district, with the help of private con-

sulting firm Teamworks International, developed a decision-making process to assist in getting parents, staff and other members of the public involved in deciding how to trim the 2009-2010 budget. "This will only be for the next school year," Haugen said. "We can't plan beyond that because the shape of the state and national economy is in such flux."

Three teams have been formed to advance the process. A 40-member input team composed of parents, teachers, staff and the public at large is responsible for providing ideas to a 14-member design team composed of building principals and department heads. Their recommendations will be considered by the decision-making team composed of School Board members, Haugen, business director Carl Colmark and human resource director MaryAnn Thomas.

The School Board is tentatively scheduled to approve the budget cuts on February 17.

"We're going into this on the theory that, while everything is on the table, not everything is going to be cut across the board," Haugen said.

Though he would not say what would be trimmed, Haugen said it has been agreed that the district would not close any schools or change any grade configurations—currently K-4, 5-8 and 9-12. Nor would the school district change any attendance boundaries or pull any programs that have generated enrollment growth.

Some of the \$2.2 million deficit may be ameliorated by President Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan, which includes economic aid to schools. If the plan is passed by Congress as it stands now, District 197

could receive as much as \$685,000 for each of the next two years.

"If that happens, we'll be getting \$170,000 in Title I funds (to cover the cost of free or reduced-price lunches for low-income students) over two years," Haugen said. "We may also get about \$700,000 for two years in special education funds and \$500,000 for two years for construction and maintenance."

Haugen said preliminary ideas on how to address the budget will be posted on the district's website by February 3. The input team will have its next meeting from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Thursday, February 12, in the Sibley High School cafeteria.

For more information, call District 197 headquarters at 651-403-7000 or visit www.isd197.org/se3bin/clientgenie.cgi.

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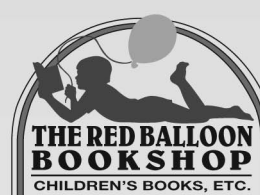
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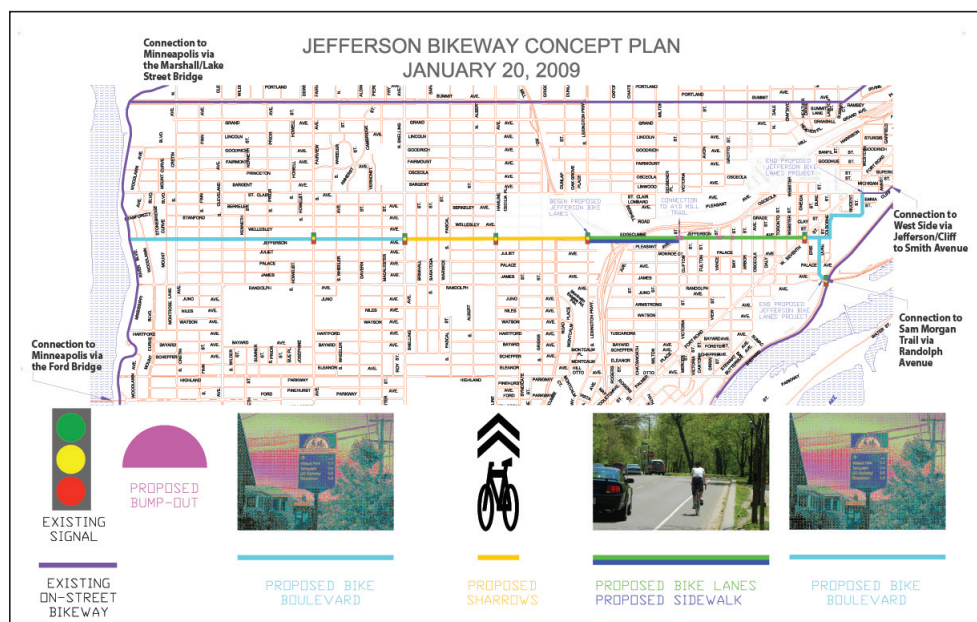


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News Briefs



St. Paul Public Works is now proposing an east-west bikeway along Jefferson Avenue.

St. Paul switches gears, looks at Jefferson for bike boulevard

A bicycle boulevard that ran into opposition last year when it was proposed for Highland Parkway and Edgumbe Road could be moved to Jefferson Avenue instead. St. Paul Department of Public Works staff met with the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Transportation Committee on January 26 to discuss the idea. Future discussions will also involve the West 7th/Fort Road Federation. Public Works staff members were also expected to talk the plan over with Ward 3 City Council member Pat Harris this week.

The newly proposed route would run on Jefferson Avenue from Mississippi River Boulevard to West 7th Street, from where it would connect to bicycle paths along Shepard Road. It also would cross I-35E, making it possible to connect with the bike path that runs along that roadway.

The project would be paid for by a grant from Transit for Livable Communities (TLC), a St. Paul-based group that is administering a larger federal grant meant to encourage more biking and walking. One condition of the funding is that the bicycle boulevard connect with Minneapolis' trail system. The Jefferson route would cross into Minneapolis on the west end via Mississippi River Boulevard and the Ford Bridge.

Creating a bicycle boulevard entails marking a street for shared use by bicycles and motor vehicles, lowering the speed limit and installing sidewalks where none currently exist. The street would not be widened and no on-street parking would be lost.

TLC had been planning to spend \$250,000 for the previous bicycle boulevard on Highland Parkway and Edgumbe Road. That route ran into opposition from a vocal cadre of neighborhood residents who argued that it would create a safety hazard.

Public Works staff tried to convince the Highland District Council's Transportation Committee to form a task force and test a portion of the Highland Parkway route this spring, but the committee declined to do so.

Council approves license with conditions for Anytime Fitness

Anytime Fitness, 1059 Grand Ave., was granted a health and sports club license on January 21 by the St. Paul City Council. The business must adhere to 19 license conditions similar to those issued to other 24-hour, no-frills fitness clubs that have opened in the city in recent months.

The conditions restrict the business to having fitness equipment and restroom and shower facilities. It cannot have saunas, steam rooms, hot tubs or massage facilities. If tanning beds are added in the future, a city permit will be required.

The facility must have at least 75 square feet

of external windows that are free of obstructions. Security measures must include 24-hour video monitoring equipment; personal safety devices that members can wear around their necks; an access monitoring system that records names, dates and times members enter; and doors with alarms that record if more than one person tries to enter when no staff member is on the premises. An automatic electronic defibrillator must also be on the premises and club members must be offered free training on its use, as well as in CPR and first aid, at least three times per year.

The City Council approved regulatory changes after much debate last year to allow 24-hour health clubs to operate in the city without staff members on the premises at all times. Council members Dave Thune and Dan Bostrom said they did not want the city to have the problems it had in the 1980s and 1990s when businesses that posed as health clubs or saunas were actually fronts for prostitution.

The concerns about the sex trade were revived more than a year ago when the first 24-hour fitness club tried to open in St. Paul. One of the operators unsuccessfully took the city to court. Business organizations and mayor Chris Coleman supported the no-frills clubs' efforts to open in St. Paul, but it took several months of negotiations to hammer out conditions on which most people could agree.

Met Council awards grants for cleaning up polluted land

The Metropolitan Council has approved brownfield cleanup funds for 13 projects in the Twin Cities, including the new Mississippi Market food co-op now going up on West 7th Street, supportive housing for homeless people at Lexington Parkway and St. Anthony Avenue, and the expansion of Digigraphics in Minneapolis' Longfellow neighborhood.

Mississippi Market was granted \$68,000 for environmental investigation and soil vapor mitigation on a 1.2-acre site near West 7th and Otto Avenue. The site was formerly part of a Koch-Mobil fuel tank farm. The food co-op plans to move this summer from Randolph and Fairview avenues if all goes as planned.

The proposed Lexington Commons development at Lexington and St. Anthony avenues was granted \$448,800 for asbestos abatement in a former nursing home. The building will be converted into 48 apartments for formerly homeless people as well as administrative offices and common areas for tenants.

Digigraphics was granted \$22,400 for environmental investigation, soil remediation and soil vapor mitigation on a 2.8-acre site at 2639 Minnehaha Ave. S. A one-story addition to an existing building is planned on the former railroad yard.

News Briefly was compiled by Jane McClure and Dale Mischke.

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Mendota Plaza redevelopment plans finally pass muster

By KEVIN DRISCOLL

After more than a year of planning and several rejections by the Mendota Heights City Council, Paster Enterprises received unanimous preliminary approval on January 20 for its \$40 million plan to redevelop and expand the Mendota Plaza Shopping Center on Highway 110 and Dodd Road.

Five separate resolutions were approved at the meeting, including rezoning of the property, a wetland permit, a conditional use permit, a preliminary plat and a preliminary planned unit development (PUD).

"The preliminary PUD gets them on their way," said city administrator Jim Danielson. "They just need to send their completed final developer's agreement."

Final approval of the development agreement, the final plat and the final PUD are expected to be considered by the City Council on March 3. Work on the site could begin in April or May.

According to company president Howard Paster, phase 1 of the work will begin with the demolishing of about 14,000 square feet on the west end of the shopping center to make way for a new Walgreens. Remodeling of the existing shopping center along with major parking lot and landscape improvements should be completed by the end of this year.

"Our goal is little or no downtime for our



The Mendota Plaza Shopping Center on Highway 110 and Dodd Road is in store for a major makeover beginning this spring. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

business tenants," Paster said.

Ken Henk, director of development and construction for Paster, said the company expects to have the new, 14,820-square-foot Walgreens building up by the spring of 2010. It also plans to have a 12,000-square-foot retail building and a 7,600-square-foot restaurant building along Highway 110 completed by that time.

Phase 1 also will include filling in the creek that runs diagonally through the 21-acre

property. The water will be redirected to three ponds, one with a fountain near the new restaurant. A greenway will be created where the creek is now.

Henk said the cost of Phase 1 has risen from \$12 million to \$15 million due to the city's insistence that the greenway and a plaza be added as amenities.

"We also have increased landscaping throughout the development," he said. The retail and restaurant buildings also have been

repositioned closer to Highway 110.

"The project finally crystallized in the last month and a half," said Mendota Heights City Council member Ultan Duggan. "The most recent delay was over some of the wording of the developer's agreement and what Phase 2 would look like. We hadn't seen any drawings of those buildings. Even though Phase 2 won't happen for a few years, we needed something to hold them to."

Paster's plans for Phase 2 were also reviewed by the council on January 20. They include senior housing, an office building and a daycare center that could house up to 120 children. Phase 2 is expected to be built between 2011 and 2013, depending on market conditions.

Duggan said there was some "pause in the conversation" when the height of the senior housing was revealed, since it would be 42 feet higher than any other building in the immediate area. "But since it isn't going to happen for a while, we decided not to let it stand in the way of all the rest of their good work," he said.

The senior housing will likely consist of a 100-unit assisted-living facility "in partnership with experts who would help us design and manage it," Paster said.

St. Paul-based Paster Enterprises, which purchased Mendota Plaza in 1985, owns 10 other shopping centers in the Twin Cities, including Sibley Plaza in Highland Park.

St. Paul back to square one for developing Selby-Victoria corner

By JANE MCCLURE

After a series of aborted plans, the long-vacant southeast corner of Selby Avenue and Victoria Street will be the focus of yet another push for development. The Summit-University Planning Council (SUPC) agreed on January 27 to have the Selby Coalition consider ideas for the city-owned property. That group, which is made up of area business owners and residents, will use the 1997 Selby Avenue Small Area Plan as a guide and will involve other neighbors and business owners in coming up with a recommendation for what should be built on the site. Under a preliminary timeline, city officials could choose a new tentative developer by next fall and construction could start in 2010.

Robbinsdale-based Global Construction and Investment was designated by the city as the property's tentative developer in June

2007, but the company let its development agreement lapse last year. A challenging economy precluded the developers from building the \$5.98 million commercial-residential building they had envisioned for the site, said David Youmans of Global. The company had proposed a three-story, mixed-use building with four retail stores on the first floor and 14-18 condominiums on the top two floors.

City Council member Melvin Carter III has asked that efforts begin to find a new developer and that area residents once again be involved in the selection process. City officials were criticized in 2007 when Global was selected with no neighborhood involvement.

Stephanie Hawkinson, the St. Paul planning department's project manager for the site, said the city would be open to a neighborhood review process for the property. At the SUPC's Neighborhood Development Committee meeting on January 21, several residents urged

that the same group that drafted the Selby Avenue Plan lead the redevelopment process.

"I don't think we need to re-create the wheel," said Vernon Crowe, owner of Selby Wine & Spirits and co-chair of the group that drafted the plan.

The Selby Avenue Plan calls for the corner to be developed for commercial or mixed use. SUPC board member and Selby Coalition co-chair Carl Nelson believes commercial development at the corner may be the key to what eventually happens along the rest of Selby between Lexington Parkway and Dale Street.

Crowe said housing may not be feasible in this economic climate. "You can build all the housing you want, but you can't pay for it," he said.

Numerous proposals have been considered over the past decade to develop the property, which has been vacant since 1969. RS Eden once proposed constructing a residential-

commercial building for youths transitioning out of foster care, but withdrew its plans in the face of neighborhood opposition.

Two years ago, the property was envisioned as the site of Rondo Lofts, a condominium development. However, that proposal required numerous variances and also fell through.

Hawkinson said the city sent out 90 requests for proposals for the property two years ago. Global was one of just two developers that expressed an interest in the site. The other was Timbercraft Homes.

Part of the Selby-Victoria lot was previously used as a community garden. The property was also used at one time for overflow parking by congregants of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church. In the 1990s, pressure from church members who wanted to retain the parking lot scuttled the city's efforts to bring in a developer. The church has since moved to a new building on the city's North End.

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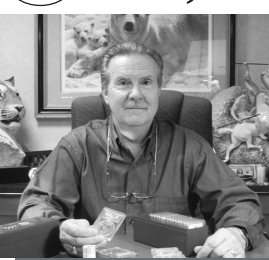
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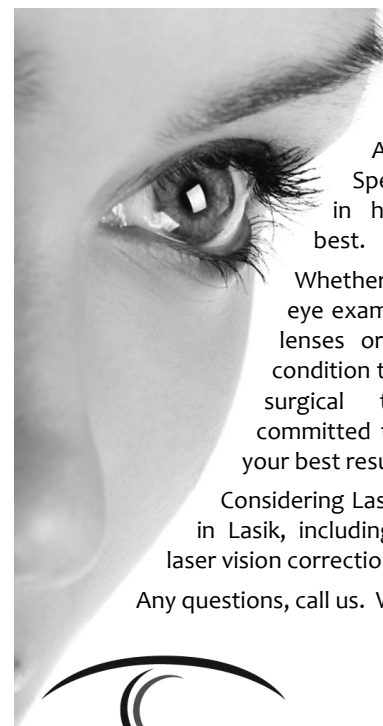
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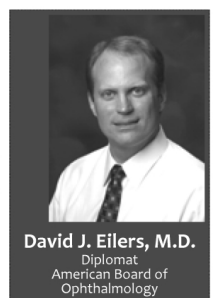
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Judge dismisses claims against city's housing code enforcement

BY JANE MCCLURE

The city of St. Paul did not discriminate against low-income and minority tenants in stepped-up enforcement of housing codes, a federal judge has ruled. However, the legal battle is likely to continue. The attorneys for some of the landlords involved in the four-year-old legal dispute said they will appeal the decision.

U.S. District Court Judge Joanne Erickson handed down a 53-page ruling in December that dismissed three lawsuits filed by a total of 16 current and former St. Paul landlords. The court cases targeted former Mayor Randy Kelly, former city Neighborhood Housing and Property Improvement (NHPI) director Andy Dawkins and 16 other city staff members. The landlords involved own or owned properties throughout the city, including some in the West End and Snelling-Hamline neighborhoods. They contended that the city's actions in enforcing property codes violated the Federal Fair Housing Act and the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act.

In her ruling, Erickson noted that some of the properties in question had been cited for 10 to 25 code violations each, including rodent infestation, inadequate heat, lack of working locks, broken or missing doors and screens, and inoperable smoke detectors.

The city filed for summary judgment more than three years ago to dismiss the landlords' suits, and city officials praised Erickson's ruling. City Attorney John Choi said it validates the city's efforts to enforce its housing codes and maintain its neighborhoods.

City Council president Kathy Lantry agreed with Choi, but also expressed frustration at the amount of time and money the city had to expend to defend itself. One part of the lawsuit that caused considerable angst at City Hall was the need to disclose about 2.5 million e-mails that the plaintiffs had sought to establish whether the city discriminated in code enforcement. In many cases, previously deleted e-mails had to be retrieved.

The attorneys for the landlords said they will take their cases to the Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Attorney John Shoemaker, who represents landlords Sandra Harrilal and Thomas Steinhauer, said the plaintiffs were disappointed in Erickson's ruling. Harrilal and Steinhauer are two of the lead plaintiffs in the legal action. The third is Thomas

Gallagher, co-owner of Dadders properties.

At issue is the stepped-up housing code enforcement conducted under the Kelly administration as the city sought to address deteriorated single-family and duplex rental properties. Those properties had previously not been subject to the same level of inspection as larger multi-family properties.

Kelly's administration formed NHPI and hired former state representative Dawkins to lead it. Dawkins plunged into the task by organizing neighborhood enforcement sweeps and working with district councils and block clubs to identify problem rental properties. Dawkins and Kelly also waged a high-profile effort to encourage citizens to come forward to report code violations.

NHPI is now defunct, its code enforcement powers having been placed under the city's Department of Safety and Inspections along with property code enforcement for all other properties in the city.

The Kelly administration's crackdown on rental properties met with vehement opposition from landlords. The landlords who sued the city contended that the property code enforcement actions were an attempt to discriminate against low-income and minority tenants, and that some housing inspectors were racist and corrupt. They also claimed that the city violated state and federal laws, and that the city unfairly protected rental properties owned by the city's Public Housing Agency.

The landlords further claimed that the housing code violations found at their properties were exaggerated or fabricated, that the city used police officers to intimidate them and their tenants, that tenants were pressured to file false claims about the rental properties, and that tenants were subjected to unreasonable searches and seizures of property as well as unannounced inspections in violation of their Fourth Amendment rights.

At one point, landlords and their supporters picketed the sites where they said discrimination had taken place, and protested at buildings that the city had torn down for code violations.

Erickson's ruling addressed, point by point, the many claims the landlords made against the city. Toward the end of the document, the judge expressed frustration with the landlords, noting the voluminous legal filings. The city's motion for summary judgment resulted in four large file boxes of objections from the landlords alone.

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Viewpoint

Making government of any size work better

BY CHARLIE QUIMBY

In his inaugural address, President Barack Obama said: "The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works." That's a question civic leaders in Minnesota must also ask.

Minnesotans hold state government accountable for many of the things they care most about: quality education, good jobs, clean air and water, safe and reliable infrastructure, affordable health care. But the truth is, we don't know whether governmental policies in those areas are working as well as we expect them to. More than ever, the public demands better performance and more accountability. Yet the realities of delivering a wide range of services through a complex, multi-layered web of providers almost defy effective oversight and management, if not comprehension.

So we tend to judge government's performance by anecdote, cherry-picked statistics and isolated example, all seen through a veil of ideology, special interests and changing events. And when we don't understand or trust information about how government is performing, we assume the worst.

With the state now facing a massive budget shortfall, the discussion will inevitably focus on size—whether revenues are sufficient and which expenditures have priority. Earlier this month, the state's Budget Trends Study Commission released its report. It was striking how much of its advice echoed that of eight previous fiscal advisory groups going back to 1984, and how much of that advice has been ignored or inconsistently implemented since then.

Eleven months ago, a group of state legislators outlined a set of principles and proposals aimed at better linking policy goals and results. The response from the news media and public was somewhere between silence and a yawn.

But let's assume the current budget crisis has refocused our attention on making government work better. What would be required to tackle it? How about these guiding principles:

1. Leadership. Accountability starts at the top. The challenge is leading in an environment where power is distributed between parties, policy goals compete, and legislative and executive leadership roles can shift. However leaders may differ on specific programs, they should first reach consensus on governing with accountability as an enduring commitment.

2. Long-term, clear priorities. Partisan divides are best bridged by raising our sights and agreeing on a long-term vision for the state. Each year we should report on our progress and set future priorities. Innovations and cost-saving opportunities too often fail when improvement efforts are not part of a larger, ongoing framework.

3. Straight talk and open books. Budget transparency isn't the same as clarity. The public wants to know the total cost of government and how it's performing.

4. Fiscal responsibility. Consistent budget practices, asset management, accurate cost projections and broad, fair taxation foster the revenue stability that is needed to provide effective and reliable services.

5. Efficiency and effectiveness. No one, inside or outside government, likes bureaucratic red tape, duplication and waste. The governor has championed a "Drive for Excellence" that adopts the practices of private enterprise to streamline state operations. But there's still plenty of room for improvement.

6. Accountability. We like to talk about elected officials being held accountable, but day to day, public services are delivered by a network of public agencies, private service providers and nonprofit organizations. Governing with accountability makes all of these players accountable for delivering the results for which they receive public funds.

By more rigorously defining policy intent, specifying expected outcomes, and linking results to factual indicators, legislators and administrators can better judge whether or not initiatives are working—and whether they should be revised or eliminated altogether. That's a lot to take on in the midst of a budget typhoon. But until the state better addresses the gaps between intent and outcomes, we can look forward to repeating this unpleasant cycle again and again.

Charlie Quimby is a fellow with Growth & Justice, a St. Paul-based think tank.



Inbox

Realign light rail in downtown

Dear editor,

The time is at hand for Minnesota Public Radio, the members of downtown's St. Louis Catholic and Central Presbyterian churches, and numerous business people and individuals, myself included, who are said to be out to destroy St. Paul to instead get on board with the Central Corridor plan for light-rail transit downtown. Or so says Mayor Chris Coleman.

I beg to differ. Our concerns are not an attempt to "delay or derail this vital transit improvement project," one which "will provide improved access to important employment, educational and economic opportunities for thousands of area residents, including minority and disadvantaged populations."

If our mayor were truly concerned about vital transit projects and the concerns of minorities and the disadvantaged, he would have years ago delved into the problem of rampant profanity, trash talk and classless behavior that has become the norm on many city bus routes. As I reach my 15th year of doing business in downtown, I find it shameful that the mayor and Ward 2 City Council member Dave Thune question the judgment of others, when they have overseen the collapse of downtown retailing, a record office vacancy rate of 30 percent and the continued decline of Minnesota's first city as a center of business.

The closing of Macy's is coming; nothing currently in the works will stop it. Downtown residential growth does not make up for thousands of lost jobs and their retail buying power. The Republican National Convention was a bust. A red carpet was laid out for protesters, and conventioners took most of their activities and money elsewhere.

I have invested heavily in my hometown's downtown and know it well. As downtown suffers, St. Paul suffers. My business has survived and grown in spite of the "renaissances" and "resurgences" that never occurred, and now there are promises that light rail will bring economic revitalization to downtown.

Years ago it was the same politicians who pushed the adoption of the St. Paul on the Mississippi Framework, the plan that disdained skyways and sought the elimination of one-way streets, no more tall buildings and new traffic-calming techniques (the intentional creation of traffic congestion). Who stood by while the Farmers' Market was going to be moved to a barren West Side Flats lot? Who oversaw the Upper Landing redevelopment that promised St. Paul a vibrant urban village yet delivered only a gym and coffeehouse as its retail component? Who stood silent while

misinformation about a world-class riverfront proposal called The Bridges of St. Paul became commonplace? And who two years ago supported the relocation of the St. Paul Winter Carnival from its idyllic Rice Park setting to the frozen tundra of Harriet Island?

Mayor Coleman should abandon the light-rail route along Cedar and 4th streets for a wider Jackson Street. This realignment would bring less disruption, more redevelopment opportunities, no loss of ridership and huge cost savings. To remain on Cedar and 4th will mean the loss of core traffic lanes and nearly 100 high-use parking meters, key dropoff and pickup lanes, an arterial skyway and Union Depot's front drive-up. The quiet ambiance of historic Lowertown will be shattered from 4:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. daily as 200 trains travel to and from the proposed maintenance facility in the former Diamond/Gillette Building.

During these extraordinary economic times, Mayor Coleman can raise the bar for our city and ensure all citizens receive a sound historic transit investment for generations to come. We deserve nothing less.

Bill Hosko
Downtown St. Paul

Anarchists can be peaceful, too

To the editor:

You furthered the stereotyping of Republican National Convention protesters with your article on "what went wrong during GOP convention" (*Villager*, January 21). It suggested that peaceful protesters and anarchists are mutually exclusive groups. This assumption spreads ignorance and fear as it leads to the idea that all anarchists at the RNC were violent.

Anarchy at its core is about taking responsibility for one's own actions and having an equal say in how one's own community ought to function. In other words, life without hierarchies of power is better. A common complaint that "radicals" have about hierarchy is how it often leads to physical and institutional violence. People in power seem to have a hard time not taking advantage of those with less power. It is also easy to shift blame from oneself to an anonymous superior or inferior. During the convention many people who simply wanted to express their need for an end to war and exploitation were met with police intimidation and brutality, thus reminding protesters of the connection between hierarchy and violence, particularly when assailants would say, "I'm just following orders."

Throughout the RNC, many peaceful protesters were

8◀ INBOX

neither served nor protected by government institutions, but rather by the nonviolent anarchist community. Free nutritious meals were passed out daily, transportation and shelter were arranged in advance, an organizing space was opened, first aid and general health care were provided. These services were accessible to protesters of varying political backgrounds. What's more, this wasn't accomplished by a billionaire radical; it was done through a network of people pooling their resources. On closer examination, one can see that anarchist communities around the world are based on peaceful cooperation to fulfill needs, especially for those of us who are traditionally disenfranchised because of class, race or gender.

I can't speak for every anarchist at the RNC (it would contradict our ideal of individuality after all), but I'm an anarchist, I'm a peaceful protester, and I'm not alone.

*A. Eufrates
West End*

IRV would empower voters

To the editor:

The frivolous lawsuit brought against instant runoff voting (IRV) in Minneapolis has been settled. As expected, IRV was ruled constitutional. The handful of voters who filed the suit seem to have merely wanted to delay the implementation of IRV in Minneapolis and the right to vote on it in St. Paul. Thanks to a City Council that was all too willing to thwart the will of the people, IRV was temporarily kept off the ballot in St. Paul.

Mike Beach (*Villager* Inbox, January 21) says that IRV is "backroom math," implying that there is something secretive and dishonest about how votes are counted under IRV.

Mr. Beach's statement is false and misleading. In fact, it is our current voting system that prevents voters from expressing clear choices through their votes and can even alter the outcome of elections.

In our winner-takes-all elections, being able to express only one preference creates an unacceptable dilemma. Let's say the candidate you like best doesn't seem to have a good chance to win the election. You can either vote for the candidate you like best or vote for someone who doesn't represent your values as well because you think this other candidate has a better chance of winning. This turns voting into a ridiculous game of guessing who is "electable" instead of choosing who we really want. Our elections are turned into superficial popularity contests that don't even guarantee that the most popular candidate will win.

Voting for your true first choice can create a spoiler effect in our current voting system. Voting for your favorite candidate can help your least favorite candidate. On the other hand, voters who vote for someone who is not their true first choice are not sending a clear message about who they really want. This distorts the message sent to the winner, creating a false mandate and weakening our democracy.

IRV guarantees that the winner will have at least 50 percent of the vote, and it does this in a way that makes it clear where those votes came from. You will know how many of the votes were first choices, second choices, etc. Thus IRV eliminates false mandates for winners. IRV allows you to express your real choices clearly without fear of "spoiling" the election with your vote. Having better choices, since all candidates are allowed to be in the general election, and being able to express that choice clearly by ranking your preferences are truly empowering to all voters.

IRV brings better choices to the general election where there is higher participation. IRV eliminates the spoiler effect in elections and

it eliminates voting for the lesser of two evils. Because of this, voter interest and participation are greatly encouraged.

IRV discourages negative campaigning because candidates are aware of how mudslinging can alienate voters who might otherwise pick them as a second choice. Thus IRV promotes more issue-based campaigns. Many people are turned off by the politics of negativity and the lack of substance.

IRV improves democracy by removing barriers to voting. Having to show up twice to vote (once for the primary and once for the general election) makes it harder to fully participate. Anything that makes it harder to participate in the electoral process weakens our democracy. IRV is an idea whose time has come.

*Paul Busch
Snelling-Hamline*

Editor's note: On January 26 the plaintiffs, the Minnesota Voters Alliance, appealed the decision by the Hennepin County District Court that upheld instant runoff voting as constitutional.

Street legal

To the editor:

"Bicycles are legal vehicles on Minnesota roads, and they share the same rights and responsibilities as other vehicles." These words appear on page 40 of the Minnesota Driver's Manual. This makes it pretty clear that bicycles have the right to be on any Minnesota road or street unless specifically prohibited. Several letters to the editor have appeared in this and other publications indicating that bicyclists should not be on the streets and that their rightful place is only on a bike path. Well, the law in this state says different. So please remember that the bicyclist on the street in front of you has a legal right to be there, no matter the weather.

*Dave Pasiuk
Macalester-Groveland*

Racist message was clear

To the editor:

An outside investigator has concluded that the stuffed monkey in a noose that was hanging on an Energy Park service garage was "not racially motivated." It is insulting to people of color who have been terrorized for hundreds of years by acts such as this one when St. Paul Fire Chief Tim Butler says, "we'll have to find out why they put it up and what they meant by putting it up."

History tells us what they meant. It is a slap in the face of the black St. Paul firefighters who brought this to our attention when investigators go to the perpetrators and ask them what they meant by hanging a stuffed monkey in a noose. Whites who are being racist are given more rights than the people they are being racist toward. Excuses given for committing hate crimes are considered more believable than the fears and concerns of people of color. Racism stops us from properly defining and investigating racist crimes.

The whole point of using a stuffed monkey was to be racist; that's why they didn't use a stuffed polar bear or a stuffed giraffe. Chief Butler knows exactly what they meant. It was a sickening act to terrorize. The punishment should be severe. Grown men should not act this way.

*Frank Erickson
Standish, Minneapolis*

INBOX ▶ 10

VILLAGER

Volume 56, Number 23

Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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

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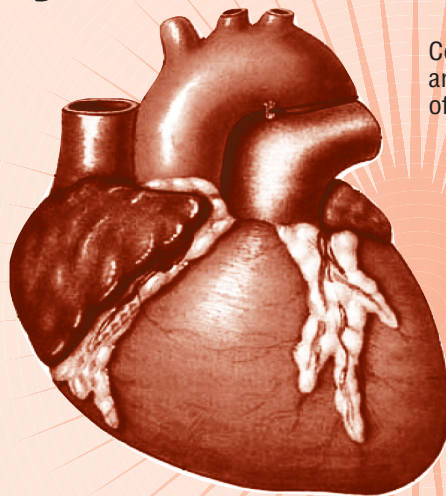
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Olivia Dodge made us all lords of land

Olivia Irvine Dodge, the local philanthropist who had a big hand in procuring for the public the Minnesota Governor's Residence on Summit Avenue and the 320-acre Dodge Nature Center in West St. Paul and Mendota Heights, died on January 24. She was 90.

Dodge, the daughter of lumber tycoon Horace Hills Irvine and Clotilde McCollough Irvine, grew up at 1006 Summit Ave. Following her parents' death, she and her sister Clotilde donated the Tudor mansion and its 1.5-acre lot to the state of Minnesota in 1965 for use as the Governor's Residence.

The previous year, Dodge had moved back to Minnesota from New York with her husband Arthur and bought a home near Delaware Avenue in West St. Paul. At the time, the many truck farms in the area were being bought up for residential development and Dodge

became concerned about the loss of natural habitat.

"I felt bad about all the neighboring farms going out of business because they couldn't compete with the combines and the developers," she said in a 2003 interview with the *Villager*. "Coco (her nickname for her sister) suggested that if I felt that strongly about it, I should buy available property to keep the developers from getting it."

The Dodges initially purchased 15 acres of land east of their home, and by 1967 they had acquired 130 acres bounded by Charlton Street and Delaware, Wentworth and Marie avenues.

That year Olivia Dodge led a group of naturalists, civic leaders, business executives and Boy Scout officials on a tractor tour of her property, asking them for their thoughts. When one of them suggested a nature center, "a light

bulb went off," Dodge recalled in 2003. "It would save the land and teach children the wonders of nature, how to preserve the land and be good stewards of our natural resources."

The Thomas Irvine Dodge Foundation, named for Dodge's son, was incorporated in September 1967 to oversee the nonprofit nature center. Olivia was the first president of its board of directors.

A former chicken coop was turned into a schoolhouse and a former farmhouse into the nature center's office. In 1974, an abandoned barn was moved to the site and converted into space for classrooms and a laboratory. That same year, Dodge added 55 acres to the center south of Marie Avenue and David Lilly donated an additional 155 acres across Highway 110 in Mendota Heights. In 1986, Reuel Harmon donated



Dodge and grandchildren Olivia, Matt and Nick in an undated photo.

another seven acres to the center.

Under Dodge's leadership, the nature center grew into a 320-acre preserve of prairie, oak savanna, hardwood forest, lakes and wetlands. Its working model farm, orchard and apiary serve as a classroom each year for more than 35,000 children and adults who enroll in the center's various

educational programs. The Dodge Nature Center's six miles of hiking trails are also open to the public from sunrise to sunset seven days a week.

Dodge was preceded in death by her husband Arthur. She is survived by her son, Thomas Dodge of West St. Paul, and three grandchildren.

9◀ INBOX

Time to atone for Iraq

To the editor:

With the inauguration of our new president, it is wonderful to feel the country prepare to take that next step forward. As the new administration comes into power and tries to bring about the change the American people voted for, it is important that we push for an adequate understanding of why more than 80 percent of Americans feel the country is on the wrong track. Only in this way can the change be more than fleeting and have a civilizing effect on the country.

In this area, President Obama has been unhelpful and perhaps even dishonest to the American people. Throughout the campaign he talked about the Iraq war as a "strategic blunder," completely dismissing or dodging any question on the moral legitimacy of the conflict, never calling the conflict by its proper name—a war of aggression.

Two generations earlier, his grandfather fought in another war of aggression. After that conflict, the Nuremberg Tribunal declared that a war of aggression "is not only an international crime, it is the supreme international crime, differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole." Evil of the whole—think for a moment of what that encompasses in Iraq: at least 90,000 civilian deaths, 4.2 million refugees, more than 30,000 wounded and 4,000 dead U.S. soldiers, Abu Ghraib, and misery and destruction that is hard to imagine.

Only through recognition of the Iraq war as a great evil act, moral failing and war crime can we ensure that it does

not happen again. We should not be outraged at the apparent mismanagement of the war, but outraged that the supreme international crime was committed in our name. We must be honest about what we have done, we must atone, we must leave immediately, and we must never do what we did again.

If we can be honest with ourselves and adhere to the ideals we have hung others for violating, maybe we can have "change we can believe in."

*Cody Fleischfresser
Macalester-Groveland*

Essence of citizen participation

To the editor:

On January 12 close to 50 people braved subzero temperatures and treacherous driving conditions to attend a Highland District Council (HDC) committee meeting on a proposed West 7th Street Project for Pride in Living (PPL) housing development. Community members questioned PPL officials for over an hour, asking about the housing and the choice of location for this development. Of those 50 or so people, only two spoke in favor of the project. There were so many questions and opinions from community members that the committee didn't have time to discuss the matter, and decided to put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

When people show up at a meeting and want to be heard on an issue, especially when it is difficult to get to the meeting, that is the essence of citizen participation, which district councils are set up to encourage. As we have seen from the Highland Parkway residents who have voiced opposition to a bicycle boulevard planned by the city for

their street, people want a say in what happens where they live, and rightly so. We hear so often of citizens who are disengaged and too preoccupied to involve themselves in their community.

The HDC's Community Development Committee will take this issue up again at its meeting in mid-February. I look forward to seeing many other Highland residents there and hearing what they have to say on this issue.

*Georgia Dietz, Board Member
Highland District Council*

Mail delivered after dark

To the editor:

If you have recently had your mail delivery time changed from midday to 5:00 or 6:00 p.m., it is due to changing the routes, and unless many people complain, this inconvenience will be permanent. I urge people who want their mail delivered before 4:00 p.m. to call the U.S. Postal Service's Elway Station and let their wishes be known. It may not do any good to complain, but the squeaky wheel usually gets the grease.

On Saturday, January 17, our mail came after 6:00 p.m. We received our mail on Saturday, January 24, at 5:15 p.m., and it included Rainbow Foods and Korte's Market flyers and other ads that were to have been delivered the previous Wednesday as they expired a few hours after we received them.

*Janet Llerandi
Highland Park*

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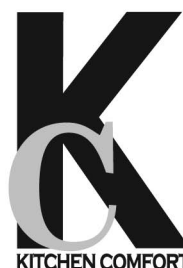
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Obama's election may turn longtime local resident into a U.S. citizen yet

BY CARREEN HEEGAARD

For years I had been on the fence. Though I am a Canadian citizen with legal resident status, I have spent my entire adult life in the United States. I married and had children here. I have never voted or participated in Canadian politics, yet I majored in political economics in college and my senior thesis was about the separatist movement in Quebec.

Although I have volunteered for and donated money to political causes, I generally regarded myself as an outside observer. I held onto my Canadian identity as a way to cling to an ideal that had no basis in reality and as a buffer that kept me from throwing myself wholeheartedly into "the game."

The game of politics seemed to me to be about money and connections and abuses of power. To remain detached meant that I was not complicit in a system that had too many flaws and heartbreaks and not enough fairness.

The year 2001 was a big year for me. I lost my father, uncle and grandfather within three months. The terrorist attacks of September 11 and sending my first child off to full-day school also rocked my world. I was unhappy with the election of President George Bush, and frankly felt that I had not done enough to prevent it. I had been a spectator more than a participant, and I shared in the blame when the country headed off on a new course under Bush.

For a long time during the 2008 presidential campaign, I was skeptical of Barack Obama's ability to be president. Given the complexity of our times, it seemed impossible that he could win anyway. I was angry that so much money was being spent on the election when the country was clearly struggling. Politicians praised teachers during the campaign, but instead of funding education they spent millions of dollars on campaign advertising.

Initially, I thought U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton had more knowledge and experience in the international realm and on health care reform, two areas of concern for me. But as the presidential campaign wore on, I felt a shift. Clinton's approach seemed defensive, and the race was no longer about her qualifications and strengths. Obama remained calm and unflappable. This was the presidential trait I admired most and thought

For the first time in the U.S., I now feel welcome at the table. I know that in the highest office in the land there is a man who understands what it means to be in the minority, to be different and yet to work together wherever someone reaches out his or her hand in peace.

most relevant.

I had read and was impressed by Obama's book, *The Audacity of Hope*. I had listened to and agreed with his speech on race. I identified with his single-parent childhood and his experience living in a variety of places. But what won me over was when as president-elect he chose Clinton as his secretary of state. I thought, now there is a man who knows how to make peace and will value everyone's contribution. Here is a man who believes in unity.

For the first time in the U.S., I now feel welcome at the table. I know that in the highest office in the land there is a man who understands what it means to be in the minority, to be different and yet to work together wherever someone reaches out his or her hand in peace. I know my contribution will make a difference, that one vote does count, that I will be valued, respected and called upon in this renewed spirit that Obama brings to his presidency.

As Obama has so eloquently made clear, the involved citizen is our political strength, our economic engine and the core of a healthy community. He wants us all to be on his team, and that is an invitation too good to pass up.

Carreen Heegaard, a resident of the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood, recently submitted the forms and fee for U.S. citizenship and expects to be invited to take the citizenship exam later this year.

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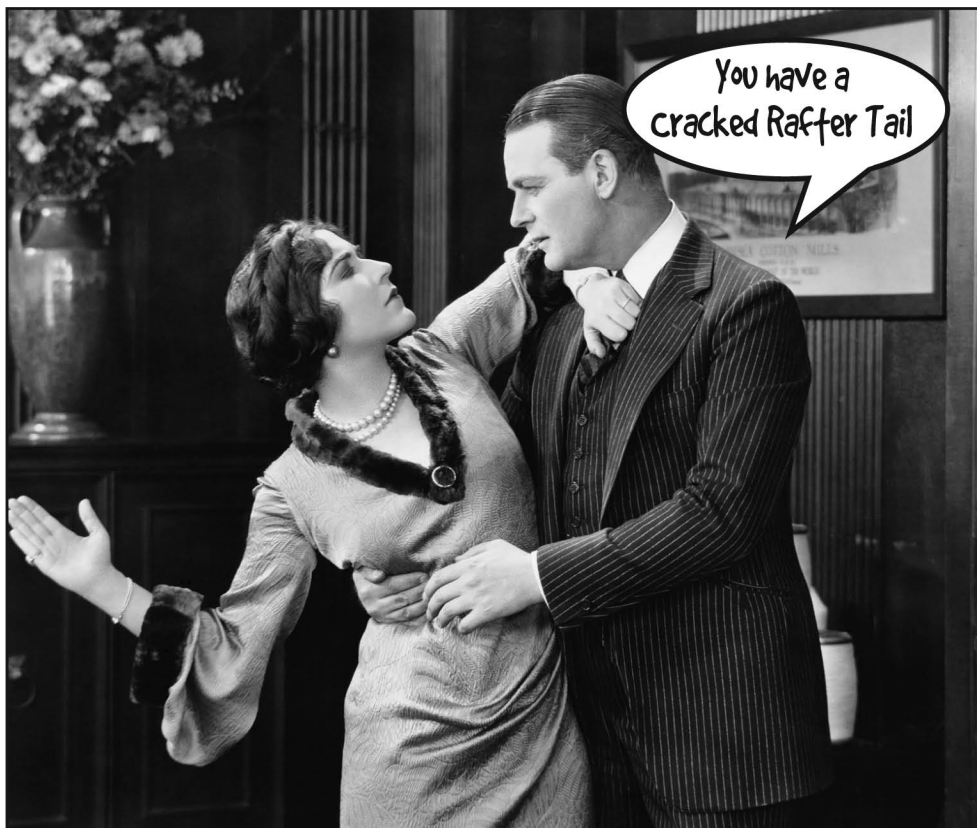
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District council volunteers are on a roll

Neighborhood volunteers from across St. Paul were honored on January 23 during the Neighborhood Honor Roll celebration held at the University of St. Thomas. The annual event recognizes individuals and groups for outstanding neighborhood service. They were nominated for the Honor Roll by the boards of directors of the city's 17 district councils. Their names are on display at City Hall.

Local honorees for 2009 include the following:

Summit-University (District 8)—Stephen Wilson, a longtime Summit-University Planning Council (SUPC) president who is also the vice chair of the District Councils Collaborative, a group that is working on Central Corridor light-rail issues; Rena Moran, an SUPC board member and volunteer in the Aurora-St. Anthony area who has worked on leadership development,

voter registration and traffic-calming projects in the neighborhood; and Emmerson and Susan Ward, block club leaders who work to address chronic problem properties in the neighborhood. (Emmerson is also on the SUPC board).

Union Park (District 13)—Theresa Heiland, former executive director and community organizer for the Merriam Park and Union Park district councils; Nancy Hone, founder of Neighbors Against the Burner, a group of area residents who organized to fight the proposed burning of garbage at the Rock-Tenn paper recycling plant; and the Sober House Task Force, including Angie Palomo, Diane Gerth, Dean Nelson, Mark and Cathy Perrone, Ryan Kapaun and Phil Gerlach, who were cited for their work in studying and calling for new regulations on sober houses.

Macalester-Groveland (District

14)—Don Arnosti, who put in many hours researching energy alternatives as the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's representative on the Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel; Melanie Peterson-Nafziger, a district council board member who has worked on Mac-Grove Moves and the Alley Garden Award programs and volunteers at numerous neighborhood events; and Todd Seabury-Kolod, who successfully organized his block and adjacent blocks to reduce the number of garbage trucks driving through the alleys.

Highland Park (District 15)—Chuck Nehls, who has volunteered to clean up graffiti and improve pedestrian safety in Highland Village for the past decade; and Molly Armstrong, who has helped organize the Highland Plant Share since it began in 2003 and has hosted the fundraiser many times.



Highland volunteer Chuck Nehls, left, shakes hands with Mayor Chris Coleman at the 2009 Neighborhood Honor Roll celebration.

Summit Hill (District 16)—Nancy Breymer, the owner of two Grand Avenue businesses who has served on the Summit Hill Association, Grand Avenue Business Association and Metro Independent Business Association; Jaimee Lucke Hendrikson, a GABA employee and SHA board volunteer who has

worked on numerous neighborhood projects including the district council's new welcome booklet for new neighbors; and Linda Winsor, a member of the SHA board and its Zoning and Land Use Committee who has worked on several projects, including the neighborhood parking task force and the district plan.

Umbria won't appeal parking variance decision for Village space

By JANE MCCLURE

Umbria Pizzeria will not be coming to Highland Village after all—at least not to the vacant storefront at 2073 Ford Pkwy. Prior to a scheduled public hearing on a parking variance appeal before the St. Paul City Council on January 21, the property and restaurant owners withdrew their appeal.

Property owner Robert Lunieski filed the appeal after the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-2 in November to deny a parking variance for the new restaurant. The vari-

ance had the support of the Highland District Council, some neighboring businesses as well as city zoning staff.

Umbria is a Twin Cities-based restaurant chain with four suburban locations. The Highland Village restaurant would have been its first in the central cities. It would have employed 32 full- and part-time workers.

The variance was opposed by Snyder Drugstore, which owns its building and parking lot to the immediate west of Lunieski's properties. It was also opposed by some neighbors on Pinehurst Avenue and by the owners of the

Pinehurst Building, 757 S. Cleveland Ave.

The appeal application indicated that the appellants wanted to present a revised parking plan. Prior to the BZA vote, they had contacted the owners of parking lots in the surrounding area but were unable to find anyone willing to share space.

The retail space at 2073 Ford Pkwy. was previously occupied by a photography studio. That use required four off-street parking spaces. Because of the more intensive use, Umbria would have required 26. Umbria and the property owner were seeking a 22-space

variance, believing surrounding streets had ample space to accommodate parking.

However, a majority of BZA members disagreed. They said the restaurant would only compound parking problems in Highland Village. Last year city officials, neighbors and Lifetime Fitness representatives wrangled for months over a much larger parking variance when Lifetime wanted to open a cafe in its health club a block away. That variance was also rejected by the BZA, but it was approved by the City Council after several conditions were attached to it.

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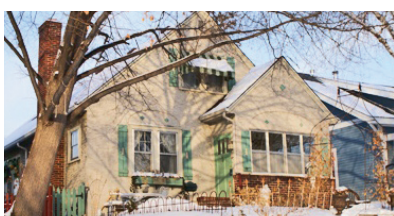
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Local projects vie for CIB dollars amid budget woes

By JANE MCCLURE

More than 150 projects are vying for funding through St. Paul's Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) process for 2010-2011. Applications from city departments, district councils, community development corporations and business associations were received in January and are currently being reviewed by city departments. Local projects in the mix include the renovation and expansion of the Highland Library and Hillcrest Recreation Center, replacement of the Hamline Avenue Bridge over Ayd Mill Road, and parking and sidewalk improvements tied to the proposed Central Corridor light-rail line.

The projects will also be reviewed in the coming weeks by CIB citizen subcommittees on community facilities, streets and utilities, and residential and economic development. District councils will review and rank projects in their neighborhoods, and city departments will rank projects they would oversee. The full CIB Committee will make its recommendations to Mayor Chris Coleman this summer, and the City Council will vote on a final slate of projects by the end of the year.

How capital spending will be affected by the city's current budget woes remains unknown. About \$20 million per year of the city's capital budget comes from capital improvement bonds, which are repaid through property taxes and Local Government Aid (LGA) from the state. Cuts to LGA could reduce capital spending.

"Everything has to be on the table, including the capital budget," said City Council president Kathy Lantry.

About \$900,000 is being sought by the city to improve off-street parking lots and to post signs for the Central Corridor line. An unspecified amount is also being sought for trees, lighting, benches, trash containers, pavers and other amenities not covered as part of the light-rail project's main budget. Another request associated with the Central Corridor is for new sidewalks on north-south streets that would connect to the light-rail line.

Most of the projects vying for CIB dollars do not have dollar figures attached to them yet. Cost estimates are typically added after city staff review is completed.

Other local projects include the following:

- Public Works wants to rebuild Fairview Avenue from Randolph to Summit; rebuild the Grotto Street staircase between Grotto and St. Clair Avenue; replace the deteriorated Hamline Avenue Bridge over Ayd Mill Road; install fiber optic cable and make other improvements to stop lights on West 7th Street, Cleveland Avenue, Ford Parkway and Snelling Avenue; create a bicycle boulevard on Jefferson Avenue; and replace the Kellogg Boulevard bridge over I-94.

- Parks and Recreation wants to change the Crosby Park entrance at Elway Street, renovate the Highland National Golf Course clubhouse, expand the Highland Library and Hillcrest Recreation Center, renovate the Highland Park Pavilion, complete improvements to the Highland Pool, establish a dog park along the Mississippi River, and expand and renovate the Palace Recreation Center.

- The St. Paul Police Department wants to install cameras and audio devices at three locations, including Lexington Parkway and Concordia Avenue.

- The Union Park District Council wants to complete the installation of medians, boulevard plants, signs and other improvements on Marshall Avenue, and to continue work on a master plan for Merriam Park.

- Mister Michael Recycles Bicycles, a volunteer bicycle repair business, is asking that bicycle lanes be striped on Prior Avenue from Summit Avenue to Pierce Butler Route.

- The CapitolRiver Council wants to preserve the opening of the old Selby streetcar tunnel and a formal proposal for the proposed Fitzgerald Park on the block bounded by Minnesota, 9th, 10th and Robert streets in downtown.

- The Highland District Council wants to complete the final phase of Shepard Road reconstruction between I-35E and Mississippi River Boulevard and more trees on West 7th Street.

- Public Art St. Paul wants streetscape improvements and public art on Western Avenue from Summit to University avenues.

- The Grand Avenue Business Association and Summit Hill Association want to add traffic-calming features and a crosswalk on the 1100 block of Grand, and decorative street lighting on Grand from Lexington Parkway to Ayd Mill Road.

moving toward allowing new on-sale liquor, beer and wine licenses for restaurants only. However, existing bars and a handful of the remaining 3.2 beer joints in the city have been grandfathered in and allowed to continue operating.

Any new business that obtains an on-sale liquor, wine or beer license is supposed to serve food with alcohol. The food sales are measured by the city during compliance checks or by examining the establishment's gross annual receipts. Retaining an on-sale liquor, beer or wine license requires gross sales to be at least 60 percent food.

City council members had earlier postponed a decision on the ordinance because of a disagreement over how the changes should be implemented. Council members Pat Harris and Russ Stark questioned the fairness of forcing some restaurants with wine and beer licenses to close at 1:00 a.m. According to Harris, any problems caused by late-night activity at those establishments would be better addressed through adverse actions and the review of individual business licenses.

Other council members pushed for broader regulations. Council members Dave Thune and Lee Helgen said the restaurants that abuse their beer and wine licenses cause problems for neighbors and city officials.

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St. Paul restaurants serving alcohol get 1:00 p.m. curfew

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul restaurants that obtain beer and wine licenses in the future will have to close by 1:00 a.m. under an ordinance that was adopted unanimously on January 21 by the St. Paul City Council. The ordinance exempts restaurants that obtained city and state permits to close at 2:00 a.m. prior to January 1, 2009.

City officials said the change was made because some restaurants with beer and wine licenses have been functioning as de facto nightclubs. Those businesses are required to sell food with beer and wine, but some have been found to be selling alcohol alone and, in some cases, offering musical entertainment or dancing without proper city licenses.

The City Council held two public hearings in January to discuss the ordinance. No one appeared at either hearing to speak for or against the change.

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Crime Report

The following calls were gathered from recent Community Watch reports by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department. For a list of weekly crime reports by neighborhood from the St. Paul Police Department, visit <http://stpaul.gov/index.asp?NID=2399>.

Highland Park

Robbery—Four males robbed a man of his wallet on the 1700 block of Norfolk Avenue at about 8:30 p.m. Sunday, January 18. The suspects fled on foot.

—A male juvenile was robbed of his wallet on Bayard Avenue and Kenneth Street at about 8:00 p.m. Sunday, January 18. The suspects were described as black, about 6 feet tall and wearing black puffy jackets and hats.

Burglary—Budget Towing, 1145 Homer St., was broken into between 4:30 a.m. Saturday and 8:30 a.m. Monday, January 10-12.

—Various items were stolen from a house being remodeled on the 600 block of South Lexington Parkway between 5:00 p.m. Monday and 8:00 a.m. Tuesday, January 19-20.

—Numerous items were taken from a home on the 1000 block of South Howell Street between Sunday and Thursday, January 18-22.

Theft—Two male suspects stole an Apple iPhone from the AT&T store, 2132 Ford Pkwy., at about 5:30 p.m. Sunday, January 11. Three males stole an iPhone from the same store at about 6:30 p.m. Friday, January 16.

—Three suspects stole two bottles of liquor at Haskell's, 2221 Ford Pkwy., at about 4:00 p.m. Thursday, January 15. The suspects fled in a maroon Chevy Suburban toward Minneapolis.

—Four Pioneer Press newspaper stands had their locks cut and the coins stolen on the 700 block of South Cleveland Avenue between 5:00 and 7:00 a.m. Monday, January 19. Pioneer Press newspaper boxes were also broken into at Kenneth Street and Randolph Avenue, Ford Parkway and Finn Street, and Cleveland Avenue and Highland Parkway during the same time frame.

Assault—A suspect assaulted a man while the victim was playing pool at the Queen of Sheba, 2447 W. 7th St., at

about 11:00 p.m. Sunday, January 18. The victim suffered a lacerated eyebrow and was taken to Regions Hospital.

—A 32-year-old Cottage Grove man was arrested for assault after deliberately ramming his truck into the offices of Planned Parenthood, 1965 Ford Pkwy., at about 8:00 a.m. Thursday, January 22. The incident occurred on the 36th anniversary of the Supreme Court's Roe vs. Wade decision that legalized abortion.

Weapons—A bomb threat was made at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St., at about 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 20, prompting school officials to cancel that evening's varsity basketball game. Staff and explosive-detecting dogs searched the building, but found nothing out of the ordinary.

Miscellaneous—Police responded to a report that two men were trying to open car doors at Alaska Avenue and Race Street at about 1:30 a.m. Saturday, January 10. Officers found the suspects at Albion and West 7th streets. One man, a 19-year-old New Brighton resident, was arrested for sex offender registration violations. The other man, a 22-year-old Summit-University resident, was arrested on a parole violation.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—Hand tools were stolen from a construction site on the 400 block of South Lexington Parkway between 10:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday, January 1-2. Tools were taken from the same site again between 9:30 a.m. Sunday and 6:30 a.m. Monday, January 11-12.

—Willwerscheid Funeral Home, 1167 Grand Ave., was burglarized between 1:00 and 6:30 a.m. Wednesday, January 7. Cash was stolen from the safe.

—An apartment building on the 1200 block of Grand Avenue was burglarized between 5:30 p.m. Tuesday and 7:00 a.m. Wednesday, January 20-21. Two washing machines in the laundry room were damaged, coins were stolen and water lines to the washers were cut.

Merriam Park

Robbery—A man was robbed on the 1600 block of Marshall Avenue at about

8:00 p.m. Thursday, January 22.

Burglary—A dorm room at the University of St. Thomas was burglarized at about 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 7. The student was in the dorm room at the time.

—A home on the 1800 block of Dayton Avenue was burglarized at about 8:30 p.m. Friday, January 9. The residents were home at the time.

Theft—A stolen car was recovered on Herschel Street and University Avenue at about noon Thursday, January 15.

Assault—A man was assaulted at Snelling Avenue and Spruce Tree Drive at about 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 20. The victim fell after the assault and began bleeding from the head. Paramedics later arrived to help.

Weapons—Shots were fired at Iglehart and Prior avenues at about 2:00 a.m. Saturday, January 10.

Miscellaneous—Police responded to a complaint about a loud party on the 2200 block of Selby Avenue at about 2:00 a.m. Sunday, January 4. A 20-year-old man was arrested for underage consumption, disorderly conduct and obstruction.

—A man was cited for aggressive panhandling at a bus stop on Snelling and St. Anthony avenues at about noon Sunday, January 25.

Summit Hill

Robbery—Two suspects robbed a man at knifepoint and took his cell phone at Lincoln Avenue and St. Albans Street at about 7:00 p.m. Saturday, January 10.

—A woman was robbed of her purse at Grand Avenue and Milton Street at about 4:00 p.m. Thursday, January 22.

Burglary—Domino's, 1110 Grand Ave., was broken into between 2:00 and 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, January 13.

—A home on the 300 block of Ramsey Street was broken into between 4:00 and 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, January 21.

Assault—Twin 23-year-old brothers from Woodbury were arrested for assaulting two workers at Billy's on Grand, 857 Grand Ave., at about 1:30 a.m. Saturday, January 17.

CRIME REPORT ► 15

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94	Date *
Ashland	
Summit	
Grand	

Fire Calls

The following calls were gathered from recent reports by the St. Paul Fire Department.

Highland—An estimated \$200,000 in damage was done by a fire at a car wash on the 2100 block of Ford Parkway at 8:24 a.m. Sunday, December 14. A hydraulic fluid leak was ignited by a nearby water heater. The occupant of the vehicle in the car wash at the time escaped.

—A candle caused a fire in an apartment on the 600 block of South Snelling Avenue at 2:50 p.m. Saturday, December 20. The candle was left burning on a plastic storage bin next to a bed. Damage was estimated at \$25,000.

—An automobile struck a gas line supplying the commercial strip on the 700 block of South Cleveland Avenue at 2:38 a.m. Tuesday, December 30. Firefighters shut off the gas, monitored gas levels inside the building and called Xcel Energy.

Macalester-Groveland—A an apartment fire was reported on the 1500 block of Grand Avenue at 10:14 p.m. Monday, January 19. Careless smoking ignited a mattress. Damage was estimated at \$17,500.

Merriam Park—A malfunctioning ceiling fan caused a fire at a home on the 400 block of Dewey Street at 2:44 p.m. Saturday, January 17. The homeowner put out most of the fire with a portable fire extinguisher. Damage was estimated at \$4,500.

—Grease left unattended on a stove caused a kitchen fire at a home on the 1700 block of Marshall Avenue at 12:48 p.m. Sunday, January 25. Damage was estimated at \$500.

—A car started on fire in a garage on the 1700 block of Carroll Avenue at 10:57 a.m. Tuesday, January 27. Damage was estimated at \$8,800.

Summit-University—A candle was the likely cause of a house fire on the 300 block of Portland Avenue at 11:29 a.m. Saturday, January 17. Damage was estimated at \$3,500.

West End—Firefighters responded to an apartment fire on the 700 block of Stewart Avenue at 1:45 a.m. Wednesday, December 17. The fire, started in the eaves of the attached garage, was caused by a resident thawing pipes with a propane torch.

St. Paul reports lowest fire death rate in 22 years

The city of St. Paul had only one death due to fire in 2008, the lowest number in the city since 1986, according to St. Paul Fire Marshal Steve Zaccard. The lone fatality occurred on August 10 when an 86-year-old woman died in a fire that was attributed to smoking in bed.

St. Paul has averaged three deaths a year by fire over the past 10 years, Zaccard said. The most fatalities in modern history occurred in 1976 when 28 people died from fires in the city.

Careless smoking is the leading cause of fatal fires in Minnesota. In an attempt to address the problem, the state Legislature enacted a law in 2007 requiring that all cigarettes sold in the state be self-extinguishing if the users are not actively smoking them. The law went into effect on December 1, 2008.

"The widespread use of smoke detectors has also helped a lot by giving residents early warning," said St. Paul Fire Chief Tim Butler, "but smoke detectors are not foolproof. Some people can sleep right through a sounding smoke detector and some people are still taking the batteries out or not replacing them each year."

Butler also attributed last year's lower fatality rate to the fire department's quick response times and the ability to confine fires to the rooms in which they start. According to him, the fire department's average response time to a fire is now 4 minutes, and fires are confined to the room they originated in more than 90 percent of the time.

Butler said other factors in reducing fire fatalities include stepped-up code enforcement, safety education and having paramedics at the scene of every fire.

14 CRIME REPORT

—A 23-year-old Maplewood man was arrested for assault, disorderly conduct and obstruction at the Wild Onion, 788 Grand Ave., at about 1:30 a.m. Sunday, January 25. Police were called to the bar after about 40 people began fighting outside on the sidewalk.

Weapons—Shots were fired on the 1000 block of Grand Avenue at about 10:30 p.m. Tuesday, December 30.

Summit-University

Robbery—A woman was robbed of her purse on the 300 block of North Western Avenue at about 6:00 a.m. Monday, January 12.

—A juvenile was robbed on North Western and Fuller avenues at about 4:00 p.m. Saturday, January 24.

Weapons—Shots were fired on the 600 block of Selby Avenue at about 12:30 a.m. Sunday, January 4. A man told police he was shot at, but not hit.

—Shots were fired at Marshall Avenue and Milton Street at about 1:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 7.

Miscellaneous—Police cited a Hudson man for disorderly conduct on the 400 block of Selby Avenue at about 10:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 21. The man had been trying to get into a security apartment building by ringing all the buzzers, pounding on the glass door, and yelling obscenities at the residents and caretaker who would not let him in.

—An attempted kidnapping occurred on

Milton Street and Selby Avenue at about 7:00 a.m. Wednesday, January 21. A 12-year-old girl was walking to the bus stop when she was approached by an male in a vehicle who told her to get in. She refused and then ran when the man got out of his car.

West End

Burglary—La Limena Market, 1211 W. 7th St., was broken into between 2:00 and 3:00 a.m. Saturday, January 10. The front window of the store was broken out and cigarettes were found scattered on the sidewalk and street.

—A 31-year-old Minneapolis man was arrested on the 800 block of Juno Avenue for burglary at about 5:00 a.m. Thursday, January 15. The residents found him in their living room and called police.

—Someone entered through a window and stole cash from the register at Chris & Rob's, 603 W. 7th St., at about 3:00 a.m. Thursday, January 15.

Sex crime—A rape was reported at about 11:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 20, at the Eagle Street Grill, 176 W. 7th St. The suspect was described as a white male, 30-40 years old, about 6-foot-4 and 220-240 pounds. The victim was brought to Regions Hospital.

Miscellaneous—The St. Paul Police Department's Narcotics Unit assisted Hennepin County officers in executing a search warrant on the 1400 block of West 7th Street at about 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, December 23. A marijuana-growing operation was found and dismantled.

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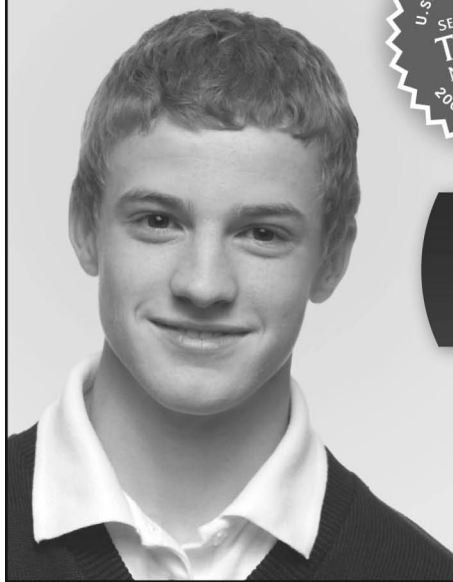
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Elevating experience

South Mpls. sculptor's renderings reach new heights in 'Topography'

BY BOB GILBERT

Cameron Zebrun's abstract wooden sculptures begin with a pinewood base that he covers with layers of birch plywood whose stepped surfaces serve as canvas for his painted images.

"Over the past 25 years my art has taken many different shapes, but it has always been about intuitively interpreting my experiences in nature," said Zebrun, a resident of Minneapolis' Nokomis East neighborhood.

Zebrun cuts into the layered birch to create negative space that gives his paintings a three-dimensional quality. Some of his sculptures are adorned with maps or cartographers' symbols. Many of them mimic the sleek contours of a kayak, a craft he views as a metaphor for the artist's solitary journey.

"Art is something I feel compelled to do," Zebrun said. "There's a challenge involved in trying to solve the problems associated with

designing and fabricating sculpture. But most important is the satisfaction I get from making a work of art from beginning to end. It's not important to me that I'm making art for the ages. I'm more interested in living in the moment, while the process of making art is happening."

Zebrun has worked as the director of program services at the Walker Art Center for the past 17 years, overseeing the construction, arrangement and lighting of the exhibitions there.

His sculpture has appeared in group and solo shows across the United States and is included in the collections of individuals, corporations and institutions, including the Minnesota Museum of American Art in St. Paul and the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art in Madison, Wisconsin.

Nine of his recent sculptures will be displayed in "The Topography of Experience," an exhibition that opens with a reception from



Sculptor Cameron Zebrun (above) and some of his abstract wooden creations (below).

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Saturday, February 14, at Form and Content Gallery, located in Suite 104 of the Whitney Square Building, 210 N. 2nd St. in Minneapolis.

Along with his sculpture, Zebrun will be showing 50 black-and-white and color pho-

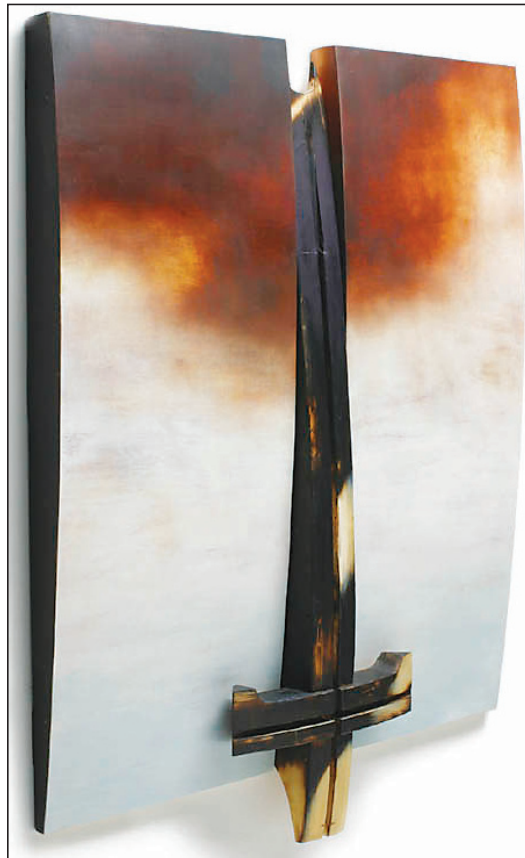
tographs, most of which he produced with a Minnesota State Arts Board grant he received in 2005 to capture the natural beauty of America's national parks. In three weeks he visited seven parks, including Mount Rainier, Glacier, Yosemite and Crater Lake. He also spent two weeks as artist-in-residence at the Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona.

"(Zebrun) is a mature, professional artist who has a large body of well-developed work," said Howard Oransky, a Summit Hill painter and one of the founding members of Form and Content Gallery. Zebrun joined the 2-year-old artist cooperative in August, and according to Oransky, "he's a perfect complement to our group."

Zebrun is an expert in lighting, a skill he honed during his tenure at the Walker. He said his interest in art as a profession began around age 14. After graduating from high school in Hackettstown, New Jersey, he earned a bachelor of fine arts degree at the Cleveland Institute of Art and a master of fine arts degree in printmaking at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Zebrun's first job out of college was at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. He worked there for nine years, then moved to the Twin Cities with his wife Ellen and daughter Emily to take the job at the Walker.

"The Topography of Experience" will be displayed from February 12 through March 21. The gallery is open from noon to 6:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. For more information, visit www.formandcontent.org.



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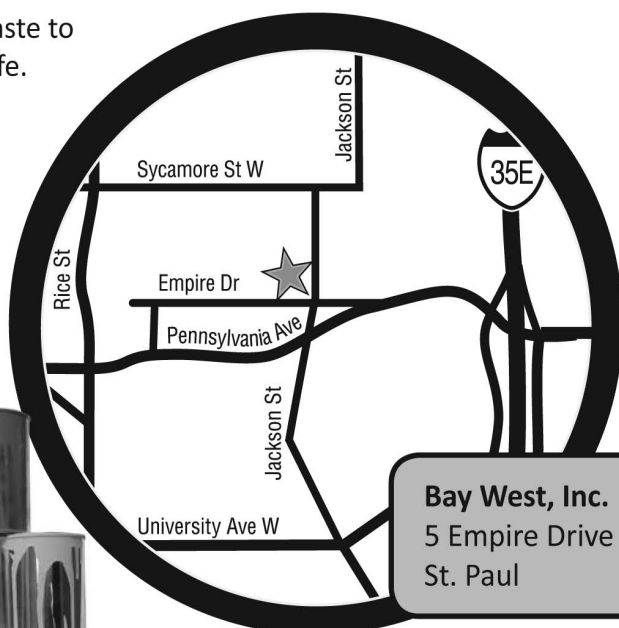
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Names in the News

Operation Glass Slipper, which was founded by St. Paul Academy students in 2006 to provide free prom gowns and accessories to high school girls in the Twin Cities, will host a fundraiser from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday and noon to 3:00 p.m. Sunday, February 6-8, at the Wellstone Center, 179 Robie St. The sale (cash only) will include dresses from \$5.00-\$20, bridal gowns from \$20-\$50 and jewelry for under \$5.00. Additional sales (cash or charge) will take place on February 16 and 26-28 at the Apparel Design Center/Wedding Warehouse, 1650 99th Lane NE, Blaine, but will not feature wedding gowns. Proceeds will support the organization's annual spring giveaway in March, where hundreds of girls from across the metro will get outfitted for prom. Visit www.operationglassslipper.org.

Katherine Heer of Macalester-Groveland has earned a Gold Award, Girl Scouts of America's highest honor given for the completion of a community service project. A first-year student at Winona State University, Heer worked with the Franciscan Sisters of St. Paul to produce a DVD on the mission of its Francis Basket and Clare's Closet food and clothing shelves in Highland Park. She also built and stocked a library that children may use while their parents are patronizing the food and clothing shelves.

Jacob Heitzinger of Highland Park, a freshman at Cretin-Derham Hall, has been awarded the Paul Leebens Award by the Holy Spirit Men's Club. The award is presented annually to a dedicated Boy Scout in Troop 82 to commemorate Leebens' dedication to the troop.

Seven Girl Scouts from Troop 1793 have collected 527 pounds of food for the Francis Basket food shelf in Highland Park. The girls are Luci Huber-Kennedy, Elizabeth Farley, Maddie Stein, Hayley Butterfield, Laura Jopp, Sarah Hamilton and Rachel Lindholm.

Brian McDonell of Macalester-Groveland, a physical therapist at the Children's Therapy Center in Eagan, received Arc of Minnesota's Irving Martin Professional of the Year Award at the agency's annual awards banquet. With a friend who is a speech therapist, McDonell developed a respite care program for families in the Faribault area. A Methodist church in Rosemount has since adopted the idea and now serves 41 children.

Craig Currie of Merriam Park has been appointed to the governing board of the Cedar Riverside People's Center, which provides health care and social services in the West Bank neighborhood of Minneapolis. Currie recently retired as a partner in the law firm of Dorsey & Whitney.

Roger Meyer of Merriam Park has been chosen interim executive director of Community Shares of Minnesota, 1619 Dayton Ave. He will lead the fund for social justice during its search for a permanent director. Meyer has more than 15 years of experience working with partnerships, nonprofits, governmental entities and neighborhood groups. He previously was the interim director at Child Care WORKS in Minneapolis. He has also worked with the Selby Area Community Development Corporation and was active on the Merriam Park Community Council, the Summit-University Planning Council and the Neighborhood Energy Connection.

Air National Guard Airman Daniel Iverson has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. A 2008 graduate of Henry Sibley High School, he is the son of Liz Iverson of Mendota Heights and Greg Iverson of Florida.

Larry McDonough of Highland Park has received the Distinguished Service Award from the Minnesota Justice Foundation. McDonough is the managing attorney of the

housing unit at the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis. He has been a legal services attorney in Minnesota for 25 years and is an adjunct professor of law at the University of Minnesota, University of St. Thomas and William Mitchell College of Law.

Lois Quam of Merriam Park has been selected as a Women of Distinction award recipient by Century College. Quam is managing director of alternative investments for Piper Jaffray and is the former CEO of United Health Group's Ovation division.

Vince Gillespie has retired after 36 years of working for the St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation. Gillespie earlier was selected by Mayor Chris Coleman as the 16th recipient of the Karl Neid Community Involvement Award, which annually recognizes a city employee with a record of outstanding public service. Gillespie had been with St. Paul Parks and Recreation since 1972. Successful programs under his leadership include the Night Moves program for disenfranchised youths, Winter Carnival events, Gus Macker 3-on-3 basketball tournaments, the appropriation of more field space for soccer and, most recently, the First Tee program that introduces golf to youngsters throughout St. Paul.

Air Force Airman Jonathan Krejci has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. The son of Jeananne Krejci of West St. Paul, he is a 2006 graduate of Cretin-Derham Hall.

Air Force Airman Louis A. Closmore has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. He is the son of Ray Closmore of West St. Paul and is a 2007 graduate of Henry Sibley High School.

Winnie S. Tan has graduated from the Air National Guard Academy at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville, Tennessee, and has been commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Air National Guard. Tan, a training navigator, is assigned to the 133rd Airlift Wing in St. Paul. She is the daughter of Ramon G. Tan of Mendota Heights.

St. Mary's Health Clinics, a St. Paul-based organization that provides free health care to uninsured people in the seven-county metro area, has received the 2008 Nonprofit Excellence Award from the Management Assistance Program for Nonprofits and the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. The clinics, which are staffed by volunteer physicians, nurses, admission personnel and drivers, have provided health care to more than 67,000 patients since the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet established them in 1992. There are nine Park Nicollet clinics, nine church- and school-based clinics, and three parishes that offer health programs. To volunteer or donate, call Barb Dickie at 651-690-7021 or visit www.stmaryshealthclinics.org.

Elena Modl, an 8th-grader from Holy Spirit Catholic School, has won first prize in the Minnesota Department of Health's radon poster contest. Her poster will advance to the national competition, which is sponsored by the National Safety Council to promote the testing for radon levels in homes.

The VISTA High School Band composed of students from St. Thomas Academy and Visitation School had 11 of its musicians recently named all-conference. They include Concert Band members Jack Vickers, Sam Johnson, Kevin Cooper, Tom Ingebrigtsen, Dan Sosa, Jacob Schacker and Emily Partington; and Jazz Band members Rose Schwietz, Leah Feitl, Mark Riehm and Tom Grojean.

Army Private Tiffany Traxler has graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. The daughter of Patricia Traxler of St. Anthony Avenue, she is a 2008 graduate of Central High School.



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District Council News

Highland Park

www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Board opening—The Highland District Council has an opening for an alternate member on its board of directors. The alternate will be elected by the board at its next meeting, which will be held at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, February 5, at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. The person chosen will fill the seat until the board holds its annual meeting and elections in April. For information, contact the HDC office.

Board basics—St. Paul district council coordinator Diane Wanner is planning to conduct free leadership training sessions throughout the year for district council staff, board members and other citizens who may be interested in serving on a district council board. The first session will be held from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday, February 7. For the location and registration information, contact Wanner at 651-266-8572 or diane.wanner@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Block club leaders sought—The HDC is currently recruiting block club leaders who are interested in working with their neighbors to make Highland a safer place. Block club leaders receive information about how to prevent crimes in the area and how to build neighborhood connections. For information, call the HDC office.

PPL tour—Project for Pride in Living has offered to take anyone who is interested on a tour of its properties on Saturday, February 7. Those who are interested should meet at 9:30 a.m. that day at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. PPL will supply coffee and doughnuts and a vehicle for the tour. Tour-goers will be able to look inside some of the agency's buildings and talk to site staff. To sign up for the tour, contact the HDC office.

Upcoming meetings—HDC board meeting with Ramsey County commissioner Raphael Ortega and a representative from the County Assessor's Office, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, February 5, Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.; Community Services meeting on the Magnolia Blossom's charter boat service from Watergate Marina, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 11, Hillcrest; Community Development meeting on Project for Pride in Living's proposed housing development, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 17, Hillcrest.

Save the dates—Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland Home Improvement Fair on Saturday, April 4, at Cretin-Derham Hall; Highland District Council annual meeting and elections on Wednesday, April 22, at a location to be determined; and annual spring cleanup on Saturday, May 9, in Ford Motor Company's parking lot.

Macalester-Groveland

www.macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Beautification Committee—Macalester-Groveland residents who enjoy gardening are invited to join the community council's Beautification Committee. The committee conducts annual spring and fall plant-sharing events and organizes the annual Alley Garden Awards in addition to promoting and managing other beautification projects in the neighborhood. Committee meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each

month from March through October. For information, contact Afton Martens at the council office.

Frost Fest success—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's second annual Frost Fest on January 17 proved to be a great success thanks to all of its volunteers and sponsors. Special thanks goes to Dunn Bros. Coffee, Euphoria Salon, Peapods, Shish, St. Clair Broiler and Widmer's Market for their generous participation.

Electronic crime updates—Those who are interested in receiving e-mailed updates regarding crime in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood may contact Afton Martens at the council office.

Save the date—The Highland/Macalester-Groveland Home Improvement Fair will be held on Saturday, April 4, at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. For more information, including exhibitor and sponsor applications, visit the website.

Summit Hill

www.summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Neighborhood residents honored—Summit Hill Association volunteers Nancy Breymeier, Jaimee Lucke Hendrikson and Linda Windsor were among those who were honored at the 2008 St. Paul Neighborhood Honor Roll celebration on January 23 at the University of St. Thomas. As an SHA board member and treasurer, Breymeier promoted greater accounting transparency and strategic planning for the association. Lucke Hendrikson, an SHA Board member and co-chair of the Communications Committee, has given countless volunteer hours to help organize neighborhood projects, including the creation of the 2008 welcome booklet for new neighbors. Windsor is a long-standing member of the SHA board and its Zoning & Land Use Committee and has been deeply involved in neighborhood improvement projects.

Resolve to volunteer in 2009—Summit Hill residents are invited to get involved in one of many volunteer opportunities offered by the Summit Hill Association. Some opportunities include starting a block or building club to help prevent crime, joining an SHA committee to tackle neighborhood issues, or sharing their technical skills to help the association remain electronically up to date. For details, call the SHA office.

Welcome neighbors—An updated booklet welcoming new residents to the Summit Hill neighborhood is now available in the SHA office in the Linwood Recreation Center and on the SHA website. Copies of the booklet were distributed in the Summit Hill neighborhood last fall. Some apartment and condominium residents may have not received them, however, if volunteers were unable to enter their buildings.

Thanks to SHA donors—The Summit Hill Association would like to thank all those who donated to its 2008-09 campaign for financial support. Their generosity is appreciated, especially given the current economically challenging times.

Dates to remember—Board of directors meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, February 12; Communications Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Monday, February 23; spring progressive supper on Saturday, April 25; spring garage sale on Saturday, May 2; and neighborhood cleanup on Saturday, May 9. Most meetings will be held at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave. For more information, call the SHA office.

OPTIMISM AND REAL ESTATE

Maybe it's time to buy that first house.

More from **RON LIEBER**
The New York Times

Between now and June 30th, there is a \$7,500 federal tax credit for income eligible first time buyers that works like an interest free loan. Lieber quotes a young Twin Cities couple who just bought their first house, Michael and Jaime Proman, "This is a long-term investment for us, and it truly is the best investment we have in our portfolio right now." The Promans look forward to putting down roots and enjoying the amenities that home ownership provides...FOR A COPY OF THIS COMPLETE ARTICLE AND FREE ADVICE, CALL JIM BURTON WITH 28 YEARS OF REAL ESTATE EXPERIENCE.



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Food



Home Fires

By Jo Marshall

Food budget pinched? You don't know beans

When my children were younger, I made one of those commander mommy decisions that parents make for the good of the family: Every Wednesday during Lent, we would eat a supper that represented much of the world's ration for an entire day—a simple bowl of rice and beans. No meat. No frills. No seconds. No dessert. One modest portion. The money we saved on Wednesday's dinner would be donated to world hunger relief.

In the process, I believed, my family would achieve new levels of social consciousness. That, and maybe the kids would stop talking about how the neighbors just bought another Lexus.

It didn't take long to notice my scheme was going awry. Like so many teaching moments, the lesson wasn't proceeding as planned. By Tuesday of the second week, my daughter was disappointed that it wasn't Wednesday yet. The dinner designed as Lenten penance was becoming her favorite meal of the week.

"I like rice and beans," she said. "You usually cook fancy food. Plain food is my favorite."

As shrinking household budgets force us back to basics, my daughter's words seem especially resonant. Perhaps her instincts told her what others have known for thousands of years: Beans are good for you. They're high in protein, rich in fiber, low in fat. And they're cheap. They're comforting. No animals died in their production. And when we're striving to be happy with less, it's hard to imagine a more propitious food.

You've heard the expression "full of beans," sometimes used to describe one who's badly mistaken. But the old English axiom refers to an energetic, cheerful mood. In its original context, it's utterly devoid of cynicism.

Beans and their leguminous brethren, lentils and peas, are among the world's oldest cultivated foodstuffs. Paired with a grain like rice or corn, they form a complete protein. Since antiquity, they've been a mainstay of life for millions. And in the hands of a competent cook, they can be elevated to dishes of greatness.

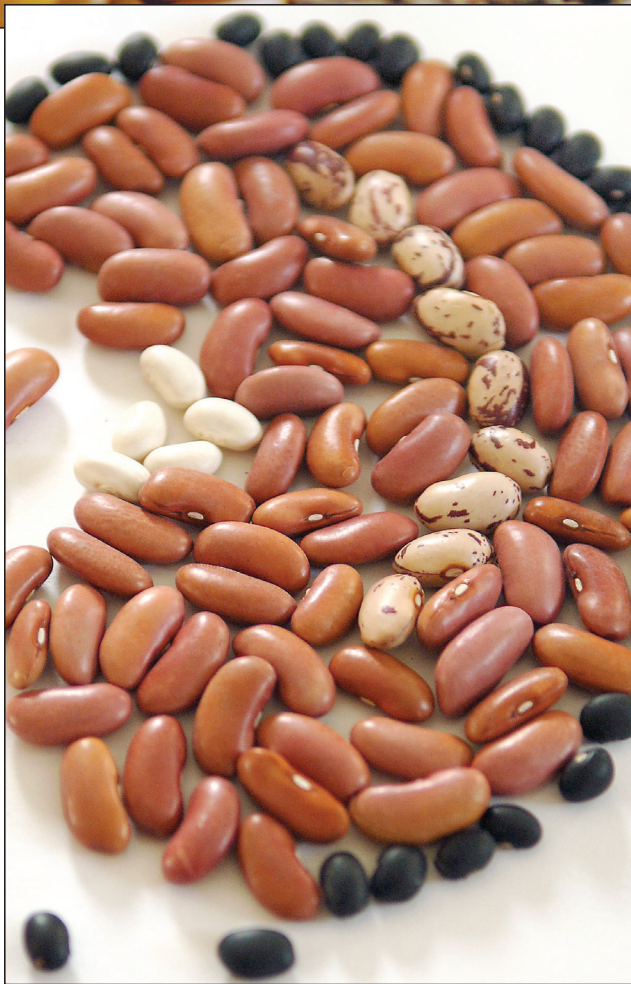
One of the most memorable meals of my life was a blue-plate special of white beans and rice served up at a dive in New Orleans. The crawfish etouffée I had for dinner that night was a revelation, but it was the humble bean and rice dish that haunted. Now there, I thought, is the work of a cook, a gifted soul who could conjure magic from a handful of beans and a ham bone. The juju offered up at the voodoo shop next door seemed powerless in comparison.

In many parts of India where religious traditions forbid eating meat, dal—a dish of lentils spiced in various ways—is an ubiquitous protein ingested at breakfast, lunch and dinner. It's difficult to think of something the Chinese haven't done with the soy bean; it has been cooked, preserved, fermented and turned into tofu, sauces, miso and milk. In Italy, beans have



Add turmeric and cumin seed to yellow split peas (above) to make flavorful dal, a staple in India for the past 10,000 years. Protein-rich legumes (beans, peas and lentils) come in many forms and can be adapted to a variety of cuisines.

PHOTOS BY JANET HOSTETTER



chilies and tomatoes for dishes that bring on the heat.

Dried beans have an unbeatable texture when cooked, but you need to soak them first. No work, really, but forethought is required. On the other hand, with so many precooked beans available in cans, time should never stand between you and a good, cheap meal. You can cook up large batches of beans and freeze them for later use. Lentils, especially the smaller ones, can be cooked with little or no soaking. Soups made from beans, peas or lentils freeze beautifully. Make them on the weekend, and you've got lunch throughout the week.

In many cultures, eating beans or lentils is said to bring prosperity. And in trendy restaurants today, legumes appear on some pretty pricey plates. But cooked at home, they cost pennies. And who couldn't use a little extra change?

CANNED OR DRIED: USE YOUR BEAN

While many contemporary recipes call for canned beans, older ones call for dried beans. Some bean recipes specify quantities by weight; others refer to them by volume. Recipes can be easily adapted, but before you do, here are a few things you should know:

- 1 pound of dried split peas or lentils equals 2-1/4 cups dry or 5 cups cooked.
- Small dried legumes like navy beans double in size when cooked; larger varieties like kidney beans can triple in size when cooked.
- One pound of dried beans will yield about 6 cups when cooked.
- A 15-ounce can of beans equals about 1-1/2 cups when drained. A 20-ounce jar contains about 2 cups when drained.



Yellow split peas, red onions and spices make for an economical, protein-rich dish known as dal.

Creamy Split Peas (Channa Dal)

In India, where legumes have been a mainstay for at least 10,000 years, small split legumes are called dal. Prepared on the subcontinent, they appear at virtually every meal. Prepared at your house, they make for a dinner that's homey yet exotic. Serve with rice or flatbread.

1 cup channa dal or yellow split peas, well rinsed
1/2 teaspoon turmeric powder
3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 small red onion, minced
Salt
1/4 cup heavy cream

1. Soak dal in 4 cups of water for an hour. Drain.
2. In a medium saucepan, combine turmeric, 1 tablespoon of oil, garlic and 4 cups of water. Bring to a boil. Add the dal and cook 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce the heat to medium, cover partially, and cook about 30 minutes, or until the peas are very soft. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until most of the liquid has dried up, about 8 minutes. Remove the dal from the heat and mix well with a wooden spoon.
3. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a medium skillet. Add the cumin seeds. When they sizzle (about 30 seconds), add the onion. Sauté 7 to 8 minutes or until brown.
4. Stir into the dal. Add salt to taste. Add cream and mix well. Serves 4.

Recipe by Monica Bhide. Reprinted with permission from Relish magazine (www.relishmag.com).

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Religious Notes

Enneagram salons will be offered from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on three Wednesdays, February 18, March 18 and April 15, at the Loyola Spirituality Center, 389 N. Oxford St. The salons are intended for people who have a basic understanding of the Enneagram concept and have determined their "number" on the Enneagram grid. Each salon includes guest presenters who lead discussions on a variety of themes. For the upcoming salons, the discussions will focus on interpersonal relationships on February 18, couples in relationship on March 18, and intergenerational relationships on April 15. The cost for all three salons is \$60 in advance, or \$25 per session. The registration deadline is February 12. For information, visit www.loyolaspiritualitycenter.org; call 651-641-0008 or e-mail loyolasrr@comcast.net.

The University of St. Thomas will host an informational session on its master of arts degree in Catholic studies at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, February 5, in Sitzmann Hall on the northeast corner of Summit and Cleveland avenues. Call 651-962-5703 or e-mail gradcath@stthomas.edu to register.

Crash, the Oscar-winning film about prejudice in post-9/11 Los Angeles starring Sandra Bullock, Brendan Fraser, Don Cheadle, Matt Dillon and Jennifer Esposito, will be shown at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 4, at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1895 Laurel Ave. A discussion will follow the screening on how scripture, tradition and reason

shape reactions to the film. Call 651-646-6175.

The Institute of the Himalayan Tradition, 1317 Summit Ave., will offer Super-conscious Meditation at 7:00 p.m. Friday, February 6. Participants will learn the basics of the science of meditation. The cost is \$35 in advance or \$40 at the door. Call 651-645-1291.

A Temple of Aaron Sisterhood Shabbat will take place on Friday and Saturday, February 6-7, at the synagogue, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. Friday will include dinner at 6:00 p.m., followed by Shabbat services at 8:00 p.m. featuring speaker Karen Lukin of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism. Saturday's service will begin at 9:00 a.m. The cost for dinner is \$8.00-\$18. Call 651-688-3030 to register.

Jim Berg, owner of Twin Cities Magic & Costume and a lifelong member of the Temple of Aaron, has been elected potentate of the Osman Shrine Temple for 2009. He will be recognized during an Erev Shabbat Live service at 8:00 p.m. Friday, February 13, at the temple, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. Past potentates will also be recognized that evening. Call 651-698-8874.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 1935 St. Clair Ave., invites children to bring their teddy bears and other friends, stuffed or not, to a Mardi Gras concert on Wednesday, February 18, featuring the Teddy Bear Band. The celebration will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a meal in the Fellowship

Hall of the church. The concert will start at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Call 651-699-6886 for more information.

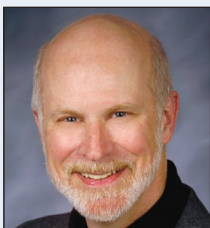
"A Celtic Journey into the Mysteries," Pilgrim Lutheran Church's monthly contemplative worship series, will continue on Sunday, February 8, with a program called "What the World Asks of Us." The service will begin at 6:51 p.m. at the church, 1935 St. Clair Ave. Call 651-699-6886.

Vincenrush.com has been created for those who are interested in downloading and listening to the homilies and lectures of the late Vincent E. Rush, a former Catholic priest who taught philosophy and theology at the University of St. Thomas from 1967-87. The site includes 261 homilies and 139 lectures by Rush, who prior to teaching at St. Thomas was a parish pastor, high school principal, superintendent of an orphanage, and chaplain of a hospital and a retirement home. He was voted teacher of the year four times at St. Thomas and died in 2005 at age 77.

Steve Rosenberg of Highland Park is currently marking his 40th year as the organist for Nativity of Our Lord Catholic Church with the sale of a two-CD set featuring 29 of the most popular organ pieces of all time. The recording is the first to use the church's Sitzmann pipe organ that was installed at Nativity in 2007. The cost of the CD is \$16, and all profits will be used to provide scholarships for students attending Nativity School. To order, call 651-698-0309.



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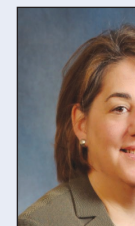
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Business Briefs

Hinding Company Heating & Air recently completed a major renovation of its storefront and mechanical shop at 915 W. 7th St. The family-owned and -operated business has been serving the Twin Cities for more than 72 years, according to co-owners Pat and Tom Costello. Hinding has also updated the company's logo and revamped the company's website at www.hindingheating.com.

Bryan D. Tchida of Highland Park has been named a shareholder in the law firm of Leonard, Street and Deinard. Tchida works in business and class-action litigation, particularly in the areas of securities and financial services. A graduate of the University of South Dakota, he received his law degree from Hamline University School of Law.

Grand Old Day 2009 will be held on Sunday, June 7. Information for participation in the festival through vendor, parade, art fair and fundraising opportunities is now available by visiting the Grand Avenue Business Association's website at www.grandave.com/grandoldday and clicking on the "How to Participate" link. The application deadline for vendor and parade participants is February 28. Fundraising participation is due by March 13. Call the GABA office at 651-699-0029.

Dr. Ahmed Mohamed of Highland Park has joined the staff of the Cedar Riverside People's Center in Minneapolis as a family practitioner in its medical clinic. He is the center's first full-time medical doctor who was born and raised in Somalia. Seventy percent of the clinic's patients are Somali immigrants. Mohamed received his medical degree at Somalia National University and did his residency at St. Cloud Hospital.

Dr. Kent Collins of Highland Park has been elected president of the Minnesota Academy of Audiology. Collins is the national clinic director at SoundPoint Audiology in Plymouth. He earned a bachelor's degree in communications disorders from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, a master's degree in audiology at Purdue University and a doctorate in audiology at Pennsylvania College.



SCORE small business counselors will offer the following seminars: developing a business plan on Wednesday, February 4; business marketing on Tuesday, February 10; and financial management on Wednesday, February 18. The seminars will run from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at University Bank, 200 University Ave. The cost is \$40 per seminar, which includes materials. Call 651-632-8937.

Grand Avenue is participating in the American Heart Association's Go Red For Women campaign in February. Throughout the month, businesses on the avenue will feature window decorations, health messages and special promotions, including Girls' Nights Out on Grand and healthy cooking demonstrations with local chefs. For a list of activities, visit www.grandave.com.

MSP Travel Group has combined its Eagan and Mendota Heights offices into a new space at the Village of Mendota Heights. The agency has been in business since 1994.

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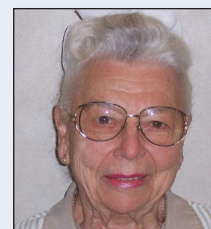
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Summer Camps



StageCoach students from last year's summer camp production of *Mulan*.

On with the show

StageCoach summer camps give kids week in the spotlight

BY LARRY ENGLUND

On a recent Saturday, about 20 kids ages 6-7 were learning to move together in a dance class at Concordia University-St. Paul. Arms and legs flying, their youthful energy was in abundant supply as they stepped together, jumped, clapped and spun around in unison. They could hardly contain their enthusiasm once they had finished. Yet, with a clap of her hands, the teacher brought them to attention and began the next exercise.

The dance class is among those being offered to students ages 4-18 each Saturday by StageCoach Theatre Arts School St. Paul. The musical theater school is now in its 12th year of teaching children and young adults to dance, act and sing. Classes are held throughout the year, with summer camps for children ages 6-16 taking place at five Twin Cities locations from late June through early August.

During the weeklong summer camps, students study with professional actors, singers and choreographers. Each camp culminates with a full musical production. This year, the MainStage students (ages 8-16) will produce either *Beauty and the Beast* or *Camp Musical*, and the Juniors (ages 6-7) will stage *Froggy Day in Lindentown*. StageCoach uses Junior Scripts, which are simplified versions of the original musicals, for the productions. Pre-recorded music makes it easier for kids to perform in the short time they have to rehearse.

StageCoach St. Paul principal Liz McAllister said the key to putting on a musical produc-

tion so quickly is to have campers share the roles, with four or five students learning each part during the course of the camp. "Each student has to learn about 25-30 lines and maybe two songs," she said. "Everybody in camp has a part, but nobody is overwhelmed."

Each camp has up to 70 or so students. The first day is spent with the basics of acting, singing and dancing. Students then read the script for the production. The parts are cast on Tuesday and the first run-through takes place on Wednesday. "By Friday, we have a costumed, fully lit production with sound," McAllister said.

She admitted that the learning is "fast and furious" at summer camp, which necessitates sticking to basics. In singing, for example, students are taught how to use their diaphragms and find the proper pitch.

Dance is a bit more challenging, but students still learn the basic steps that choreographers require, as well as how to move on stage and look at an audience.

Acting class concentrates on stage presence, projection and memorizing lines. A key point stressed in the class is how to cope with the unpredictability of a live performance. "We teach them to think on their feet," McAllister said. "If you pay attention and listen, you can go with it."

StageCoach Theatre Arts was founded in 1988 with three schools in Surrey, England, and quickly grew into the largest network of part-time theatrical schools in the world. McAllister's husband, Simon, started the first StageCoach school in the United States in



Dance coach Stephanie Stockton gets children ages 4-6 moving during an Early Stages program at StageCoach Theatre Arts School at Concordia University. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD



Henna Vadher sings from *Annie* during a Main School program for ages 6-16 at StageCoach. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

1997 at Concordia, two years after moving from London to Minneapolis to teach drama and do commercial voice-overs. It was a natural fit, according to him, since there are more theaters per capita in the Twin Cities than any place in the U.S. other than New York. There are now three StageCoach school sites in the Twin Cities.

Like the regular school classes, McAllister said the purpose of the summer camps is to provide kids with a fun, safe, theatrical experi-

ence. "And once they've done one camp, they usually want to come back," she said.

The camps are also designed to build team spirit, bolster confidence and increase children's self-esteem. "I've been an educator for many years," McAllister said, "and one thing students get is the sense that they can bring this wherever they go."

Emily Albert-Stauning, a 3rd-grader at Highland Park Elementary School, is a prime example. She has attended StageCoach since she was 4 years old and recently landed a role with the Children's Theatre Company. She said she gets more excited about StageCoach every time she goes to class.

Brianna Young, 18, also of Highland Park, is now in her fourth year at StageCoach. She said the skills she has learned there have proven beneficial at Hennepin Technical College. "It's helped me with speeches," she said. "It gives you confidence."

Kirstin Maxam, 16, of Macalester-Groveland, has been a student at StageCoach for 10 years. Last year she was chosen to perform at a StageCoach school in England where she worked with students from Ireland and Germany for three weeks. She still comes back every term at StageCoach St. Paul. "It's one of the best environments," she said. "It's like family."

The StageCoach summer camps in St. Paul will run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. the weeks of July 27-31 and August 3-7 in the Fine Arts Center at Concordia. Tuition is \$290 per week. Some partial scholarships may be available. For information, call 651-775-2849 or visit www.stagecoachcamps.com.

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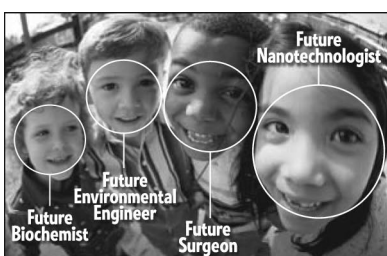
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ArtStart executive director Carol Sirrine, center, is flanked by assistant Cindy Smith, left, and education director Laurie Watson. This year, ArtStart will host summer camps focusing on the arts of India and Indonesia. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

ArtStart summer camps bring world to local kids

By JUDY WOODWARD

It'd be great to be able to take the kids to exotic, far-flung lands, but let's get real. In these economic times, it can be a stretch to show them the marvels of the Mall of America, much less the mysteries of the Far East.

But there's still a way for kids to see the world and they don't even need a passport.

ArtStart, 1459 St. Clair Ave., is once again offering young people an introduction to the cultures of foreign lands through its summer camp program. This year's theme is "Lessons from India to Indonesia." Students ages 4-12 can enroll in sessions that offer an introduction to the music, art, dance and cultural traditions of two of the largest, most fascinating societies in Asia.

"Art from those two countries is so vibrant," said Carol Sirrine, who founded ArtStart 20 years ago. "We learn through many different senses, and non-Western cultures like Indonesia and India don't box up music, art and dance separately. They have more holistic cultural traditions."

This summer's ArtStart camps will be offered in a new location—the New Spirit Charter School, 260 Edmund Ave. Camps will be held the weeks of July 6-10 (India) and 13-17 (Indonesia). Students may enroll for either half- or full-day sessions. Tuition is \$120-\$225.

Over the course of the one-week camps, kids can sign up for classes in everything from Indonesian shadow puppetry to Balinese dance, Indian stilt walking to an introduction to the world's only real-life dragon. To learn about the Komodo dragon, as well as the other animals indigenous to Indonesia, the children will take a field trip to the Minnesota Zoo.

"The kids can't go to Indonesia, but they'll make paintings of Indonesian animals like the gecko," Sirrine said.

The gecko will also be the focus of a session on theater. A professional actor will lead the children in learning the techniques of improvisation as they retell traditional Indonesian gecko tales.

Music is another facet of the summer sessions, and Sirrine is especially pleased to offer veena lessons this year. "The veena is an Indian stringed instrument somewhat like a koto or sitar," she said, "and (our instructor) is a preeminent Indian musician. She's the Yo-Yo Ma of the veena and she has a wonderful rapport with kids."

In her work with ArtStart, Sirrine draws

'An Affair of the Arts'

Cooperating across art disciplines seems to come naturally to the people at ArtStart. On Thursday, February 5, the organization will collaborate with the St. Paul Civic Symphony in a fundraiser called "An Affair of the Arts" from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. at Landmark Center.

There will be wine, cheese, chocolate, live music, and both live and silent auctions to benefit both groups. Carol Sirrine, founder of ArtStart, plays French horn with the Civic Symphony.

Tickets are priced at \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door. For more information, call 651-698-2787.

on her background as a former fine arts coordinator in the Hopkins Public Schools to recruit talented artists, dancers and musicians who also know how to teach young children. "Whenever possible, we try to use artists of the cultural background (of the arts they teach)," she said. "We try to be culturally authentic."

That doesn't mean that ArtStart is offering total immersion experiences. "We're not dressed in saris and serving Indian food," Sirrine said. "This is an arts camp."

Which is just fine with camp alumni like Kara Forde, 13, of Macalester-Groveland. An eighth-grader at Murray Junior High, Forde has attended ArtStart every summer since she was in first grade. After sixth grade, she became an arts education intern, helping younger children in the program. "I really like the opportunity to talk to the artists and the variety of the arts available," she said.

Kara's mother, Catherine Day, is also impressed by the interaction between staff and students. "The artists who are involved in ArtStart are overwhelmed by the kids' creativity," said Day, a painter and founder of the St. Paul Art Crawl. "(The program) is good at tapping into the potential of any child who attends."

Other opportunities for teenagers at ArtStart include studio classes in mosaic, batik, puppetry, jewelry making, pottery and other arts. Teens have the chance to be involved in the organization's art materials recycling program known as ArtScraps and to learn the business side of art by working in the ArtStart Gallery.

For more information about ArtStart, visit www.artstart.org or call 651-698-2787.

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Volunteers

The Minnesota Literacy Council is seeking volunteers willing to spend two or three hours a week tutoring an adult learner, assisting in an adult classroom or teaching a basic English or GED class. Locations are available throughout the Twin Cities and training is provided. Contact Allison at volunteer@themlc.org or 651-645-2277, ext. 219.

The Hennepin County Board of Commissioners is seeking applicants for two vacancies on the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board, due to the expiration on March 8 of terms of office for Jeffrey Casale and Lee Keeley. Both are seeking reappointment. Board members serve three-year terms. The application deadline is February 12. Contact Yolanda McCrary at 612-348-3257 or visit hennepin.us under advisory boards.

Volunteer theater-goers are needed to evaluate the productions of Twin Cities area professional theaters for consideration of Ivey Awards that will be presented in September. Evaluators must attend a training session at 6:00 p.m. February 11 or 18, and attend a minimum of five productions annually. For information, contact Mitch Kelly at mitchrkelly@gmail.com or call 651-271-3333.

Friends of the Parks and Trails is offering a chance to give a Valentine's gift that will last a lifetime. For \$75, the Friends will see that a tree is planted in a specified park in Ramsey or Dakota counties. A valentine will be sent to the person receiving the gift, along with a map later on showing the location of the tree. For information, visit www.friendsoftheparks.org or call 651-698-4543.

Guild Incorporated is seeking volunteers to be a friendship mentor to a person with mental illness. It only takes a few hours a month to make a huge difference for someone who

needs a buddy. Mentors are encouraged to do activities that they both enjoy, like having coffee, shopping, watching sports or attending events. Mileage and expense reimbursement is available. Other volunteer opportunities also are available. Call 651-925-8465 or visit www.guildincorporated.org.

The Ramsey Conservation District is seeking a candidate for appointment to its board of supervisors. Applicants must be eligible voters living in St. Paul south of I-94 and west of Robert Street. The application deadline is noon on Friday, February 13. For information, visit www.ramseyconservation.org or call 651-266-7271.

Girl Scout leaders in the Highlanders service unit are seeking adult volunteers to help out with its 16 troops that serve approximately 197 girls. Opportunities include co-service unit manager, event coordinator, membership recruiter and public relations representative. Training is provided, and job sharing is available for those who would like to volunteer with a friend. Visit www.girlscoutsrv.org.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities is seeking volunteer mentors to be matched with young people ages 7-13. Community-based mentors meet with their Little Brother or Sister two to four times per month at the locations of their choice. School-based mentors meet once per week at the young person's school. Call 651-789-2400 or visit www.bigstwincities.org.

Minnesota Reading Corps is looking to recruit more than 400 volunteers to help children from age 3 to third grade become better readers during the 2009-2010 school year. Applications are now being accepted. Training is provided. Visit MinnesotaReadingCorps.org or call 651-251-9075.

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School Notes

The College of Visual Arts, 344 Summit Ave., is offering three weeklong courses this summer for high school students who are interested in drawing (June 22-26), digital photography (July 6-10) and fashion (July 6-10). Tuition is \$355 per class and includes materials. Visit www.cva.edu or call 651-757-4022.

Linwood-Monroe Arts Plus Elementary School is sharing in a Whole School Improvement Grant from the John. F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for a year-long project called Dance to Learn. The project will enable Linwood-Monroe students and teachers to attend performances at the Ordway by Ballet Hispanico, Lula Washington Dance Theatre and the Birdhouse Factory. The money will also bring choreographers Carl Flint and Kaori Kenmotsu of the Twin Cities dance company Black Label Movement to the school. Teachers, administrators and artists have already participated in a day-long retreat to identify ways to integrate dance into other subjects.

Six Henry Sibley seniors have been named commended students in the 2009 National Merit Scholarship Program. They are Carolyn Soley of West St. Paul and Theresa Gerber, Rebecca Mandt, Laura McCreary, Erica Solomon and Michael Stoneburner of Mendota Heights.

The **Minnesota Department of Education** is offering a new online instructional program for Minnesotans who are preparing for their General Educational Development (GED) diploma. Called GED-i, the teacher-facilitated service is free to all Minnesota students. The GED test itself still must be taken in person at an examination center. For more information, visit <http://www.themlc.org/hotline.html> or call 1-800-222-1990.

Mark Chronister, a retired partner with PricewaterhouseCooper, and civic leader **Karen Rauenhorst** have been elected chair and vice chair, respectively, of the College of St. Catherine board of trustees.

Local host families are being sought for the 2009-10 school year for high school boys and girls from France, Germany, Thailand, Japan, China, South Korea, Russia, Denmark and Italy. Host families provide room, board and guidance for the teens. The students are fully insured and come with their own spending money and the expectation to share in household responsibilities. For information, call World Heritage Student Exchange at 1-800-888-9040 or visit www.world-heritage.org.

A **Little Hearts Festival** will be held by School District 197's Early Learning Advisory Council from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, February 7, at Moreland School, 217 W. Moreland Ave., West St. Paul. The event is for families with young children ages birth to kindergarten. The \$5.00 fee per family includes carnival games, prizes and music. Contact Dolly O'Rourke at 651-403-8353 or orourked@isd197.org.

Highland Park Senior High School will host an open house showcase for 8th-graders and their families at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, February 5. Opportunities to accompany a current student during the school day also are available. Call Nancy Kolb at 651-293-8940.

Cretin-Derham Hall students, in collaboration with Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theater, will perform *Watermark*, a drama on the ethical issues surrounding food and water, on Wednesday, February 11. The free show will begin at 7:00 p.m. in Lillian Theater at CDH.

Concordia Cafe, an informational session for adults who are interested in accelerated undergraduate or graduate degree programs, will be open from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Monday, March 16, in the Buenger Education Center at Concordia University-St. Paul. Participants will learn about program options, registration and financial aid. Admission is free. To register, visit www.csp.edu/concordiacafe.

Mounds Park Academy will hold an open house from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, February 8, for families with students ready for grades preK-12 this fall. Visit www.moundsparkacademy.org.

Avalon School, 1745 University Ave., will hold an open house at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 17. A charter school serving grades 7-12, Avalon was recently identified as one of the five top performing high schools in Minnesota by *Business Week* magazine and the nonprofit organization GreatSchools. The schools were ranked based on test scores and parent reviews. Avalon also received a Bronze Award from *US News and World Report's* "America's Best High Schools" edition for 2009. Visit www.avalonschool.org. Tours of the school also are available by calling 651-649-5495.

A **Kids Dance Party** to benefit Bright Prospects Co-operative Preschool will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, February 21, at the Longfellow Park Recreation Center, 3435

Sibley policy debate team wins state title

Robert Ciborowski and Daniel Bernick of Henry Sibley High School survived eight rounds to win the policy debate title at the 2009 State Debate Tournament on January 23-24 at the University of Minnesota. Now in its 108th year, the tournament is the longest-running event of the Minnesota State High School League.

Ciborowski and Bernick drew the affirmative argument for this year's policy debate issue, which asked whether or not the federal government should increase alternative energy incentives in the United States. They won by a 5-0 margin over Laura Johnson and Steven Quam of Central High School.

Michelle Keohane of Apple Valley defeated David McNeil of Edina 5-2 to win the Lincoln-Douglas Debate competition, which had students debating whether or not the United States should submit to an international court designed to prosecute crimes against humanity.

The debate tournament drew 64 competitors from 24 high school teams that qualified from four section tournaments. The policy debate portion of the state tournament has been conducted since 1902, while the Lincoln-Douglas portion was added in 1990. More than 1,000 students participate in debate throughout Minnesota.

36th Ave. S., Minneapolis. The second annual party is geared for kids up to age 11. Food and beverages will be sold. Tickets are \$8.00 in advance or \$10 at the door. Adults and infants up to age 1 can attend for free. Children must be accompanied by an adult. For tickets, call Sonji at 612-721-6581.

The **St. Paul Public Schools** has been awarded the state of Minnesota Finance Award for 2009 based on its sound financial operations during the previous fiscal year. St. Paul's is one of the few large school districts in the state to achieve the award since its inception in 2003.

St. Francis-St. James United School, 486 View St., is one of 15 inner-city Catholic Schools that were chosen to receive help in developing students' math skills thanks to two large grants and help from some of Minnesota's top mathematics educators. The grants, including \$151,284 from the 3M Foundation and \$202,000 from an anonymous donor, will underwrite the project, which is scheduled to begin this month as part of a joint effort that also includes the University of St. Thomas and FOCUS (Friends of Catholic Urban Schools). Researchers initially will concentrate on St. Francis-St. James and St. Agnes from St. Paul, Pope John Paul II and San Miguel Middle School from Minneapolis, St. Michael from West St. Paul, and Sacred Heart from Robbinsdale. Another \$250,000 will be sought to implement the project at the remaining nine schools, including Trinity, St. Matthew, St. Bernard and St. Peter Claver in St. Paul; Ascension, St. Elizabeth Seton and Risen Christ in Minneapolis; St. Raphael in Crystal; and Blessed Trinity in Richfield.

Concordia University-St. Paul will hold an open house for high school students and their parents from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday, February 16. Participants will take a campus tour, meet students and professors, see the residence halls, discuss financial aid options and more. Visit www.csp.edu/Admission/Undergraduate/concordiaopenhouse/ or call 651-641-8230.

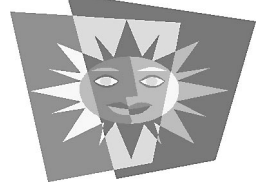
The **St. Thomas Academy rifle team** won the Sporter Team category at the Minnesota State Junior Olympic Championship on January 24-25 at the STA rifle range. The team consists of freshmen Will Sullivan and Blake Bowersox and sophomore David Zimmermann. Individually, Sullivan took first in the Sporter class, with Bowersox placing second and Zimmermann third. On February 11, the team will travel to Camp Perry, Ohio, to compete in the 2009 U.S. Army JROTC service championship. The winners will represent the U.S. Army at the national JROTC competition at Fort Benning, Georgia, on March 26-28.

Admission Possible is recruiting college graduates interested in joining its full-time group of AmeriCorps members who work to make college admission possible for low-income high school students. A year-long commitment is required from fall 2009 through summer 2010. The recruitment drive will run through March 11. Applications received by February 9 will receive early consideration. For more information, visit www.AdmissionPossible.org.



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8 - 9 Yrs June 15-19 1:00 - 3:30pm (\$95)
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6 - 7 Yrs June 22-26 10:15 - 12:15pm (\$75)
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Senior News

"Aging: A Lifelong Journey," a three-part series, will be presented by Episcopal Homes from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursdays, February 5-19, at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1895 Laurel Ave. Topics will include "Coming of Age with Grace," "The Basics of Alzheimer's" and "Aging and Spirituality." The series is intended for seniors and their children. Call 651-646-6175.

Memory Club, a new support group for people diagnosed with early stage Alzheimer's disease or related dementia and their care partners, will meet from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays, February 10-April 21, at Wilder Center, 451 N. Lexington Pkwy. Screening and pre-registration are required. Call Kathryn Ringham at 651-280-2538.

The Aging Splendidly lunch series will continue at noon Thursday, February 12, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave. Author Pat Samples will speak on "Finding Your Creative Art." She is the board chair and director of the Minnesota Creative Arts and Aging Network and was involved in the production of the PBS film *The Creative Power of Aging*. An optional health check will be offered at 11:30 a.m. The series will continue on the second Thursday of each month through May. The cost is \$7.00. Call 651-699-5560.

Free workshops on long-term care insurance will be offered by Deb Newman, founder of Newman Long Term Care, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, February 12, and Tuesday, April 7, at the Wellington, 2235 Rockwood Ave. The state of Minnesota recently announced a program that will allow people who purchase long-term care insurance to conserve more of their assets if they need to rely on Medicaid for long-term care services. Information also will be presented on powers of attorney and health care directives. To register, call 952-746-1668.

Alton Memory Care, 1306 Alton St., is offering the following programs: Brain Aerobics at 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 17 (call 651-699-2480 for reservations); and an Alzheimer's/dementia caregiver support group at 6:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month (call 651-695-2384).

UCare for Seniors will hold a free informational meeting about the Medicare Advantage plan at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, February 18, at the Paul & Sheila Wellstone Center, 179 E. Robie St. Call 1-877-523-1518 (toll free).

The therapeutic pool will be open for swimming from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays from now through February 19, at the West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St. The pool's water is 95 degrees and offers a gentle way to exercise joints and muscles. The cost is \$42. The following session begins on March 3. Call 651-298-5493.

"Young at Heart" exercise classes are being offered at 9:30 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at the West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St. The instructor is a certified Arthritis Foundation exercise leader. The class combines seated and standing exercises along with a short endurance routine. The cost is \$6.00 per month. Call 651-298-5493.

The Thompson Park Activity Center will offer the following programming for older adults sponsored by School District

Frogtown Homes leaps ahead with \$6.4M grant

Episcopal Homes has been awarded a \$6.4 million federal HUD grant for low-income senior housing at the northeast corner of University Avenue and Dale Street. The grant was key to proceeding with plans to build Frogtown Square, the centerpiece of neighborhood revitalization efforts on the blighted corner. Construction will begin in early fall.

When completed in late summer 2010, Frogtown Square will be a mixed-use complex with 50 units of housing for low-income seniors above shops and restaurants. Episcopal Homes will manage the senior housing portion of the project. NEDU LLC, a coalition of local community organizations, will manage the retail space. The city of St. Paul is providing approximately \$3 million in land and grants. Additional funds are anticipated from other agencies and foundations.

Frogtown Square will be Episcopal Homes' third HUD senior housing project. Its first, Seabury, opened in 2002 at University and Fairview avenues, and its second, Carty Heights, opened in November 2007 near University and Lexington Parkway. All three residences will be located at stops along the Central Corridor light-rail line.

197 in the coming weeks: midday yoga at 11:45 a.m. on Mondays, now through February 23; bridge from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. Wednesdays, now through March 25 (\$10 per session or \$80 for 10); and duplicate bridge from 9:00 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays (\$8.00 per session). Call 651-403-8300.

The Twin Cities Senior Housing Guide is now available for free at local libraries and senior centers. The guide offers information on resources and services that can help older adults remain in their homes or research future housing opportunities. It also helps caregivers assist seniors who are considering a move. Call 651-690-3141 or visit www.seniorhousingguide.us.

The Minneapolis VA Medical Center has been selected as a hub for a new medical foster home program called "Support at Home—Where Heroes Meet Angels." The program is designed to provide a lower-cost home setting for veterans who otherwise would need to move into a nursing home for safety and health reasons. The foster homes will be operated by private caregivers and homeowners. Caregivers must be at least 21 years of age, be financially stable, have experience with patient care and be able to plan and follow the veteran's treatment plan. For information, call 612-467-5202.

The Metro Paint-A-Thon is seeking seniors and disabled neighbors who need help in sprucing up their home exteriors. Volunteers will scrape, prime and paint more than 130 homes on August 1-2 at no cost to the owners. For information or an application, call 612-721-8687, ext. 321, or visit www.gmcc.org/paint-a-thon. The application deadline is May 8.

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Wednesday/February 4

THE SUMMIT HILL MOMS (Moms Offering Moms Support) Club will meet at 9:30 this morning. Mothers and children who live in the 55105, 55104 (south of I-94) and 55102 ZIP codes east of Snelling Avenue are welcome. Call 651-699-8522.

Thursday/February 5

A FREE SUPPORT GROUP for families who have a relative with a mental illness will be offered by the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Minnesota from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays at Regions Hospital, 640 Jackson St. Call Karin at 651-489-4160.

Friday/February 6

WITH ONE BREATH, a fundraiser to support the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, will begin at 6:00 this evening at O’Gara’s Bar & Grill, 164 N. Snelling Ave. The fourth annual fundraiser will include live music, silent auction, raffle and blackjack. Tickets are \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door and \$15 after 10:00 p.m. For information, visit www.withonebreath.org.

Saturday/February 7

A PANCAKE BREAKFAST will be served from 8:00 a.m. to noon today at Mendota Heights United Church of Christ, 680 Highway 110. The cost is \$5.00-\$7.00. Call 651-454-1311.

A HOPE FOR RECOVERY workshop will be held by the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Minnesota from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. today at Regions Hospital, 640 Jackson St. Call 651-645-2948.

“THE CHANGING FACE of Minnesota: Understanding Human Rights and the Refugee Story” will be sponsored by the Southeast Asian Ministry from 10:00 a.m. to noon Saturday, February 7, at Christ Lutheran Church on Capitol Hill, 105 University Ave. Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights will give a special presentation on refugees and asylum seekers who find their way to Minnesota and the human rights issues and cultural barriers they face. Free homemade cinnamon rolls and coffee will be served. Call 651-293-1261.

AN ICE FISHING CLINIC for parents and children will be offered at 10:00 this morning at Fort Snelling State Park. All equipment and bait will be provided. Attendees are urged to dress warmly and wear appropriate footwear. Participants will gather at the visitor center for instructions before heading to Lake Snelling. Call 612-725-2724

Sunday/February 8

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN: Lessons in Political Leadership for the Civil War Era and for Our Time” will be presented by James Brewer Stewart, professor emeritus at Macalester College, at 2:00 this afternoon at the Central Library, 90 W. 4th St. The free event is being held in celebration of the bicentennial of Lincoln’s birthday. Call 651-266-7000, Ext. 5, or visit www.sppl.org.

Monday/February 9

BEGINNING SQUARE DANCE classes are being offered from 6:15 to 8:00 p.m. on Mondays through June 8 at the West 7th



Senior Amy Browender, left, has drawn national attention for the screen-print she created of First Lady Michelle Obama for her International Baccalaureate art class at Highland Park Senior High School. Her print was featured last month on the Mrs. O website (www.mrs-o.org) that tracks the First Lady’s fashions and has been featured by national news organizations. Browender, shown with fellow students Misha Evertz and Chelsea Skone, said she was inspired by a photograph of Mrs. Obama taken by Annie Leibovitz. She is selling the print on T-shirts (\$20) and canvasses (\$30) on Etsy.com and so far has received orders from across the United States, Canada and Australia.

Community Center, 265 Oneida St. The cost is \$3.00 per session. Call 651-298-5493.

“TAKE BACK YOUR COUPLE TIME!” will be presented from 6:30 to 8:00 this evening at the Homecroft Early Learning Center, 1845 Sheridan Ave. National speakers Toni Schutta and Mark Brandenburg will offer simple ways for parents to focus on each other. Limited child care is available. Call 651-793-5410 to register.

Tuesday/February 10

“SAVING VISUAL MEMORIES in the Digital Age,” a class on how to preserve both print and digital photos, will be presented by historian and curator Bonnie Wilson from 6:00 to 7:30 this afternoon at the Minnesota Historical Society Library 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission is \$8.00-\$10. Call 651-259-3300.

A CONVERSATIONAL SALON will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening at the Mad Hatter’s Tea House, 943 W. 7th St. John Peterson will lead a discussion on “Reformism or Revolution.” The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

Wednesday/February 11

THE LONGFELLOW GARDEN CLUB will meet from 7:00 to 9:00 this evening at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Master gardener JoAnne Sabin will speak on “Honeybees and Pollination (What Gardeners Need to Know).” Admission is free.

“WHAT HELPS, WHAT WORKS?” is the title of a class on treatment options in children’s mental health that will be offered by the National Alliance on Mental Illness and the Minnesota Department of Human Services from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening at

the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 Kent St., and on Tuesday, February 24, at NAMI Minnesota, 800 Transfer Rd., Suite 31. Call Suzette at 1-888-NAMI-HELPS, ext. 102, or e-mail sscheele@nami.org.

Thursday/February 12

A WORLD WAR II HISTORY Round Table on “The OSS—Office of Strategic Services” will be held at 7:00 this evening at the Fort Snelling Visitor Center. Patrick O’Donnell, author of OSS and the upcoming *The Brenner Assignment*, will tell stories of the agency’s clandestine operations. Admission is \$5.00; free for students. Call 612-726-1171.

CAMP CHI, a Jewish overnight camp located near the Wisconsin Dells that serves boys and girls ages 9-16, will hold an information night for prospective families and campers at 7:30 this evening at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Call 1-847-763-3551 or e-mail info@campchi.com.

Saturday/February 14

“FINDING MINNESOTA: The Archaeology of the North Star State” will be presented by state archaeologist Scott Anfinson at 2:00 this afternoon at the Central Library, 90 W. 4th St. Admission is free. Call 651-266-7000, ext. 5.

STATE REP. MICHAEL PAYMAR (District 64B) will be holding a constituent meeting from 10:00 a.m. to noon today in the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-296-5999.

A CANDLELIGHT SKI, WALK and Ice Skate will be held from 4:00 to 8:00 this evening at Fort Snelling State Park. Ski or walk along an illuminated trail or bring your ice skates and twirl around an old-

fashioned skating pond. Hot chocolate, cider and an outdoor fire will be waiting. Call 612-725-2724.

A CARD PARTY will begin at 1:00 this afternoon in Carolyn Hall at St. Mark’s Parish, Dayton Avenue and Moore Street. Bridge, 500 and cribbage will be played, and awards, door prizes and refreshments will be available. Call 651-487-1585 to register.

Monday/February 16

JACK NELSON-PALLMEYER, a University of St. Thomas professor and former U.S. Senate candidate, will talk about environmental policy as part of February’s Campus Energy Challenge at 4:30 this afternoon in the campus center at Macalester College. Admission is free. Call 651-696-6000.

THE GARDEN CLUB of Ramsey County will meet at 7:25 this evening at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Ralph Thrane will speak on “Urban Backyard Food Gardening.” Admission is free. Visit www.ramseygardeners.org.

Tuesday/February 17

A CONVERSATIONAL SALON will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening at the Mad Hatter’s Tea House, 943 W. 7th St. Part 1 of a film made about the Republican National Convention, *Tyranny of Dissent*, will be shown. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

THE CASS GILBERT SOCIETY will present a lecture by Gail Fenske on “The Skyscraper and the City: The Woolworth Building and the Making of the Modern New York” at 7:00 this evening at the University Club, 420 Summit Ave. The cost is \$5.00 for nonmembers.

“THE BIG PITCH,” advertising in the 1950s and ’60s, will be explored this evening by Melissa Williams of the University of Minnesota and Lee Lynch, founder of the Minneapolis advertising agency Carmichael Lynch. The golden age of advertising and its legacy for consumers today will be covered in the program, which runs from 7:30 to 9:00 at the Turf Club 1601 University Ave. Admission (age 21 and older only) is \$6.00. Call 651-259-3015.

“WE CAN, WE HAVE, WE WILL: Celebrating the Legacy of Black History” will be offered from 5:00 to 8:30 this evening at the Jimmy Lee Recreation Center, 270 N. Lexington Pkwy. The family-friendly event will include an interactive resource fair with games, a jump castle, gym activities and more. At 6:00 there will be live entertainment and an award ceremony recognizing local individuals who have demonstrated positive leadership. A free soul food dinner will be served until the food runs out and the evening will be topped off with a Hotshot competition and activities for teens. Admission is free.

Wednesday/February 18

A FREE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY forum with explorer Will Steger, former U.S. Senator Mark Dayton and poet Allison Hedge Coke will be held at 4:00 this afternoon in the campus center at Macalester College. Call 651-696-6000.

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Staff member Tammy explains CEREC

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Dr. Fischbach and his staff are in the business of saving teeth, re-establishing function and perfecting glowing smiles. They are also in the business of educating their patients. Dr. Fischbach's office has movies of almost every dental treatment available. The short movies can be burned to a CD and given to you to take home and review with family members before any decision is made. The explanations of the various treatments are also available on Dr. Fischbach's website at

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- Care Suites offer a homelike setting with 24 hour staff coverage for those with needs for higher physical care
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On the Town

Politically drawn

Anderson takes readers back to 'Banana Republic'

BY BILL STIEGER

The shrinking print media landscape be damned, political cartoonist Kirk Anderson isn't hanging up his pen just yet. Despite the declining number of newspaper venues for cartoonists like him, the Macalester-Groveland resident is staying busy as a freelance artist and promoting his newly published book, *Banana Republic: Adventures in Amnesia*.

The book is a collection of Anderson's weekly "Banana Republic" cartoon strips that ran in the *Star Tribune* from 2005-2007. Anderson will sign copies of it at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 10, at Common Good Books, 165 N. Western Ave.

Anderson's work has appeared in hundreds of newspapers and magazines over the years, including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Newsweek*, along with numerous alternative weeklies in the U.S. and abroad.

"Banana Republic" is set in the fictional country of Amnesia, a third-world dictatorship run by Generalissimo Wally, who imprisons and tortures his political

enemies, spies on his citizenry, and spews lies to justify his assorted wars. In Amnesia, election results are questionable, the prisons are full, and the government is wallowing in debt.

Amnesia is a metaphor for the U.S. under the presidency of George W. Bush. However, some episodes of the cartoon also make reference to the

peculiarities of Minnesota politics. (The "Banana Republic" strips incurred the radio wrath of local radio talk show hosts Joe Southeray, Tom Barnard and Jesse Ventura.)

One might suppose that "Banana Republic" would have been jettisoned by the *Star Tribune* because of protests from conservatives. However, Anderson said

it was the paper's accountants who were ultimately responsible for its demise.

"I have only good things to say about my affiliation with the *Star Tribune*," he said. "Without the Minneapolis paper, I would've never developed the strip."

Star Tribune editor Eric Ringham served as the midwife for "Banana Republic," first by hiring Anderson, then by suggesting that he produce

a quarter-page political cartoon with a continuing narrative.

"Kirk came in with an impressive bunch of work," Ringham said. "There were, I believe, four other pilots. I chose 'Banana Republic' because the characters and format lent themselves to editorializing through allegory, which I thought was very original."

Anderson grew up in the small town of Deforest, Wisconsin, 10 miles from Madison. "It was the perfect place to grow up," he said. "I had the security of living in a small town with the progressive city of Madison just up the road. My parents were religious, socially conscious, but very square. We were so square that my sister never understood why people thought Garrison Keillor was funny. She still doesn't."

Anderson was drawing cartoons as early as grade school. But having heard the admonition, "You'll never make a living at drawing" he enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire as a journalism major.

"I liked creative writing," he said, "and journalism taught me a few things about politics. But I wanted to be, as they say, realistic and decided to specialize in advertising. That didn't work out. After graduation, I decided to become a cartoonist anyway."

Anderson began his career in Eau Claire, drawing single-panel cartoons for the college paper. After receiving his degree, he moved to Madison and began sending comics to various newspapers while working odd jobs to keep a roof over his head.

"I still hadn't considered becoming a political cartoonist yet," he said, "but I heard about an opening for a political strip at the *Daily Cardinal*, Madison's student newspaper. I was hired."

At the *Cardinal*, Anderson produced a strip called "American Roulette." It was a hit and was soon being syndicated in college papers and alternative weeklies across the country.

At a cartoonists' convention around that time, Anderson met political cartoonist Gary Huck,



Political cartoonist Kirk Anderson. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

who took an interest in the younger artist's work. A friendship developed that continues to this day.

"Gary taught me a lot about cartooning," Anderson said. "He's sharp and politically savvy. He was something of a mentor to me."

"Kirk Anderson is among the best cartoonists drawing today," Huck said. "I certainly don't feel like I've taught Kirk anything. If newspapers weren't in the trouble they're in, I know for a fact that Kirk would end up winning a Pulitzer."

The arc of Anderson's cartooning career took a turn when his wife accepted a teaching post in Ladysmith, Wisconsin. Living in Ladysmith, however, only fired Anderson's ambition to find a job in a larger city.

"I sent some comics on spec to the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* and they

published them," he said. "They tried me out as a freelancer. After about a year, they hired me."

Anderson worked for eight years at the *Pioneer Press* (1995-2003). "I was happy working for the *Pioneer Press*," he said. "I was given quite a bit of editorial freedom. I guess I've been lucky. I've heard some horror stories from cartoonists about other newspapers. That hasn't been the case with me."

Anderson is optimistic about his future as an artist. "I'm freelancing, selling reprints of my comics and maintaining my website (www.kirktoons.com)," he said. "I'm also writing a novel on nonviolence, which I hope to publish as an educational tool, and I'm getting into flash animation, which is the future of cartooning."

"I'm not quitting. There's too much humor in American politics to give up now."



A sample of Anderson's cartoonist wit, with self-caricature above.

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On the Town *Briefly*

Music

Acclaimed instrumentalist Laura MacKenzie will join the Dunquin Trio and Scottish storyteller Audrey McClellan in the seventh annual Scottish Island Concert on Friday, February 6. Like Brigadoon, Eilean Dubh will magically reappear at 7:30 p.m. at Olivet Congregational Church, 1850 Iglehart Ave. Tickets are \$12 at the door and include Scottish sweets and tea.

Macalester-Groveland lutenist Richard Griffith will perform romantic music from Renaissance Italy, Spain, England, Scotland and France and read Renaissance poetry on Friday, February 6, at the Mad Hatter Coffee Cafe and Tea House, 945 W. 7th St. Admission is by donation; \$10 is suggested.

A free Sacred Harp shape-note singing festival will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, February 7, at Park House, 2120 Park Ave S. in Minneapolis. Sacred Harp singing is an American folk tradition of singing hymns and gospel songs from books using shaped noteheads to indicate position in the scale. All are welcome. A potluck dinner will be served, and child care will be available. A free Sacred Harp singing workshop will be offered from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, February 5, at University Baptist Church, 1219 University Ave. SE. in Minneapolis. To register, call 651-457-7762.

Songs by some of the best contemporary Twin Cities composers will be performed by the Zeitgeist quartet at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, February 7, at Grace University Lutheran Church, 324 Harvard St. SE. in Minneapolis. Compositions by Jeffrey Brooks, Libby Larsen, Carei Thomas, Janika Vandervelde, David Wolff and the winners of Zeitgeist's 14th annual Eric Stokes Song Contest will be performed. The program will be repeated at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, February 13 and 14, in Studio Z, 275 E. 4th St. For ticket information, call 651-755-1600.

The Bach Society of Minnesota will present "Compassionate Hearts" at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, February 7, at House of Hope Presbyterian Church, 797 Summit Ave. The program includes a motet by Johann Christoph Bach and Johann Sebastian Bach's Cantata 185 (Compassionate Heart of Eternal Love), Cantata 164 (You, Who Take Your



South African singer-songwriter Vusi Mahlasela will open his U.S. tour with a concert at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, February 7, at the Ordway. Sung in six different languages, Mahlasela's music recalls the apartheid that scarred his homeland and rejoices in the promise of a better future. Tickets are \$20-\$25. Call 651-224-4222.

Name from Christ) and Toccata, Adagio and Fugue. House of Hope organist Aaron David Miller and vocal soloists Sally Messner, Brian Link, Aaron Peterson and Aaron Larson will join in the concert. Tickets at the door are \$20, \$16 for students and seniors.

"Let the Good Times Roll," a program that celebrates goodness, embraces joy and restores hope, will be presented on Saturday, February 7, by the Twin Cities Women's Choir and the Brass Messengers. The music begins at 7:30 p.m. at Central Presbyterian Church, 500 Cedar St. Tickets are \$20, \$17 for seniors and students. Call 612-333-8292.

Italian pianist Roberto Plano will perform works by Schumann, Mozart and Liszt on Sunday, February 8, in a recital sponsored by the Frederic Chopin Society. The music begins at 3:00 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center at Macalester College. Tickets are \$20, \$12 for students. Call 612-822-0123.

The Hill House Chamber Players will perform along with flutist Linda Chatterton and violinists Catherine Schubilske and Helen Chang at 7:30 p.m. Monday, February 9, in the art gallery of the James J. Hill House,

240 Summit Ave. The program includes works by Reinhold Gliere, Jeffrey Van, Joseph Kreutzer and Mozart. Tickets at \$16 include refreshments and tours of the mansion. For reservations, call 651-297-2555.

The Minnesota Sinfonia will present a free concert at 7:00 p.m. Friday, February 13, in the auditorium of Metropolitan State University, 700 E. 7th St. The program includes the premiere of Efflorescence by Joseph Adams, Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major and Schubert's Symphony No. 2 in B flat.

Celtic Woman will bring its "Isle of Hope" tour into Xcel Energy Center at 8:00 p.m. Friday, February 13. The 19-piece ensemble will perform Irish standards, classical favorites and contemporary hits. Tickets at \$47, \$64 and \$75 are available at the Xcel box office or by calling 651-989-5151.

Eight outstanding Minnesota cellists will join soprano Maria Jette in concert at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, February 15, in the Music Room on the third floor of the Hamm Building, 408 St. Peter St. Sponsored by the Bakken Trio, the program includes works by Francois Schubert, Mozart, Villa-Lobos,

de Falla, Piazzola, Bach, W. Fitzenhaugen and Werner Thomas-Mifune performed by Jette and cellists Anthony Ross, Tanya Remenikova, Marcia Peck, Sachiya Isomura, Arek Tesarczyk, Eugena Chang, Sally Dorer and Kirsten Whitson. Tickets are \$25, \$15 for students and seniors. Call 612-374-3175.

Jazz musician and composer Billy Taylor and his trio will join the VocalEssence Chorus and Ensemble Singers in concert at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, February 15, at the Ordway. The program marking the 80th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther King Jr. will feature works by Taylor, Stephen Michael Newby, Cary John Franklin, Wilson Simonal, Alice Parker, Moses Hogan, Uzee Brown and U2. Tickets are \$20-\$40 with discounts for students. Call 651-224-4222.

The Rose Ensemble, the Twin Cities' premier early music vocal group, will host a free medieval sing-along at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 17, at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave.

Theater

The Miracle Worker, William Gibson's drama about deaf, mute and blind Helen Keller of Tuscumbia, Alabama, and the teacher who rescues her from a dark and tortured existence, is playing Thursdays through Sundays through February 21 at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Tickets are \$25-\$30, \$22-\$28 for seniors, \$10 for students. Call 651-292-4323.

Anything Goes, the Cole Porter musical, will be performed February 5-8 by junior and senior high school students at the Temple of Aaron, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursday, 6:30 p.m. Saturday and 12:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$8.00, \$5.00 seniors, students and children. Call 651-698-8874.

Henry IV, Part 1 by William Shakespeare will be read by all comers on Friday, February 6, in a free program sponsored by Lex-Ham Community Theater. The event will open at 6:30 p.m. with a potluck supper at 1184 Portland Ave. The reading begins at 7:00. Call 651-644-3366.

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thespians, will be presented on Saturday, February 7, in a benefit for Theatre Unbound. A silent auction and complimentary hors d'oeuvres and cocktails will be part of the fun at Neighborhood House Theater, 179 E. Robie St. The doors open at 7:00 p.m. and the performance begins at 8:00. Tickets are \$35, \$50 per couple. Call 612-721-1186.

I Am a Camera, the dark drama by John van Druten that was the basis for the musical *Cabaret*, will be performed February 13 through March 8 at Theater in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. It tells of a young English novelist living in Berlin in the years before Hitler's rise to power and the vivacious, mercurial woman whom he befriends. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$20. Call 612-333-3010.

Dance

Lula Washington Dance Theatre will bring its athleticism, imaginative costumes and captivating theatrics to the Ordway for one performance at 7:30 p.m. Friday, February 6. The African-American troupe will perform works by Washington and others, including "Songs of the Disinherited," "We Wore the Mask," "Ode to the '60s" and excerpts from "The Little Rock Nine" and "The Movement" honoring civil rights activist Rosa Parks. Tickets are \$25-\$35. Call 651-224-4222.

"Sparkle: Gems from Jawaahir," an array of new works by Cassandra Shore's Jawaahir Middle Eastern dance company, will be presented on February 6-8. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 7:00 p.m. Sunday at Jawaahir's Studio Theater, 1940 Hennepin Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$14. Call 612-872-6050.

Beyond Ballroom Dance Company will turn the rules of ballroom competitions upside down in a special Valentine's Day show on February 6-15. Performances are at 8:00 p.m. Friday, 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday and 2:00 and 7:00 p.m. Sunday at the Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$29. Call 612-340-1725.

Beginning square dance lessons are being offered at 6:15 p.m. Mondays through June 8, at the West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St. Couples, families and singles are welcome to attend on any evening. No registration is necessary. Admission is \$3.00. For information, call 651-298-5493.

Exhibits

"Eastman Johnson: Paintings and Drawings of the Lake Superior Ojibwe," 40 oils, charcoals and pastel works from the mid-19th century, are being displayed through May 10 at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Originally from Maine, Johnson studied in Europe before journeying to Lake Superior in 1856 and creating numerous drawings and paintings of the area's native inhabitants. Admission is \$10, \$8.00 for seniors and students and \$5.00 for children ages 6-17. Free film clips and conversation on "American Indians/American Movies" with cultural historian Elise Marubbio will be offered at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 10. Call 651-259-3000.

AZ Gallery, 308 Prince St., will host an "Animal Lovers Art Show" from February 6-22. A benefit for the Minnesota Humane Society, the exhibit opens with a reception from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Friday, February 6. A related coloring contest with prizes for children ages 3-12 will run from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, February 7. The Humane Society will hold an adopt-a-pet event in the gallery from noon to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, February 14. A benefit gala and silent auction will be held from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Saturday, February 21. Call 651-224-3757.

"Expressions of Stability and Change," an exploration of ethnic dress and folk costume, will be displayed from February 7 through June 14 in the gallery of the Goldstein Museum of Design located in Room 241 of McNeal Hall, 1985 Buford Ave. An opening reception will be held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Friday, February 6. Call 612-624-7434.

Macalester-Groveland photographer and St. Paul Academy art teacher Linda Brooks will display her "Mexico Projects" from February 12 through March 14 in the Drake Gallery at SPA, 1712 Randolph Ave. An opening reception will be held from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Thursday, February 12. The gallery is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

"Art in a Box," the sixth annual exhibit featuring the collaborative works of a local arts collective, will open with public receptions from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Friday, February 13, and 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday, February 14, at Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 1935 St. Clair Ave. Color is the theme. Call Barb at 651-690-5024.

"Goose Bumps: The Science of Fear" will open an 11-week run on Friday, February 13, at the Science Museum of Minnesota. The exhibit explores the biology behind racing hearts, sweaty palms and shaky knees with hands-on activities involving real snakes, virtual leopards, loud noises and the sensation of falling. Admission is \$11, \$8.50 for seniors and children. Call 651-221-9444.

"Life: A Journey Through Time," featuring 62 images by award-winning Dutch photographer Frans Lanting, will be displayed from February 14 through April 12 at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. Admission is \$5.00, \$3.00 for seniors and children ages 3-16, or free for all on Sundays. A preview of the exhibit will be offered in conjunction with a celebration of Charles Darwin's 200th birthday from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Thursday, February 12. Preview admission is \$10. Call 612-624-7083.

Film

To See If I'm Smiling, an award-winning documentary about the Israeli practice of drafting 18-year-old women into the military, will be shown in a free program at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 11, at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. A discussion will follow with Beatriz Menanteau of the Advocates for Human Rights and Chante Wolf of Veterans for Peace. Call 651-222-3242.

The Pursuit of Happyness (PG-13), the 2006 film about a down-on-his-luck salesman struggling to build a life for himself and his 5-year-old son, will be shown at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, February 15, in the 4th floor Community Room of St. Paul's Central Library, 90 W. 4th St. Admission is free.

Clips and conversation about how American Indians have been portrayed in film will be presented by cultural historian Elise Marubbio at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 10, at the Minnesota History Center 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission is free. Call 651-259-3000.

Books

"Front, Back & Between," prints, artist's books, fine press works and other endeavors by the Minnesota Center for Book Arts artist cooperative, are on view through March 8 at the MCBA, 1011 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Writer John Coy will read from *The Last Year*, his collaboration with printmaker Richard Stephens, at 7:00 p.m. Friday, February 13. Participating artists will offer behind-the-scenes looks at their creative processes in a roundtable at 7:00



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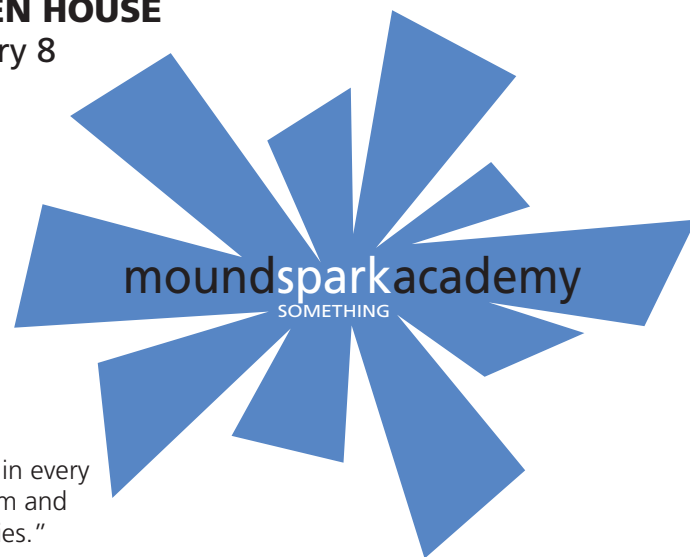
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The Fireside Literary Series continues with free readings by newly published Minnesota authors at 7:00 p.m. Thursdays at the Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. The schedule includes poet and memoirist David Mura from his debut novel, *Famous Suicides of the Japanese Empire*, February 5; Nora Murphy from *Knitting the Threads of Time*, February 12; and poets James Cihlar and William Reichard, February 19. Coffee and cookies are served. Call 651-222-3242.

A Victorian Poetry Slam, featuring 19th-century poems about romance, love, war, temperance and sports, will be presented on Saturday, February 14, in the drawing room of the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. The verse of Dickinson, Poe, Longfellow, Browning and others will be rendered by costumed actors. Admission is \$10, \$8.00 for seniors, \$6.00 for children ages 6-17. Light refreshments and tours of the home will follow. For reservations, call 651-297-2555.

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 *Henry and the Valentine Surprise* author-illustrator Nancy Carlson at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, February 7; scenes from the Children's Theatre's *The Gruffalo* at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, February 8; a valentine workshop with paper artist Mary Holland at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, February 14. Call 651-224-8320.

"Saturday Live!" free entertainment for children at 11:15 a.m. Saturdays at St. Paul's Central Library, 90 W. 4th St., will feature "Land of 10,000 Lakes: Minnesota's 150-year Connection to Water," a puppet show in Spanish and English by In the Heart of the Beast, February 7; and Dakota Wild Animals, February 14.

The Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave., will show family movies at 2:00 p.m. Saturdays, February 7 and 21. Bring a pillow to sit on. Refreshments

will be provided. Call 651-642-0385.

"All About Groundhogs," an interactive program for 2- and 3-year-olds and their families, will be offered from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Thursday, February 5, at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. The program is free with museum admission, which is \$5.00, \$3.00 for children. To register, call 612-624-9050.

"The Five Senses," a four-part series on sight, sound, touch, smell and taste and the animals that excel at each, will be offered to children ages 4 and 5 and their caregivers from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Fridays, February 6 through 27, at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. The cost is \$45 per family. To register, call 612-624-9050.

Ruby!, the story of the courageous African-American first-grader who complied with a U.S. Supreme Court order and integrated New Orleans' Franz Elementary School in 1960, returns to the SteppingStone Theatre. Featuring a new script by Deborah Torrairie and music by David Simmons, the play will run Tuesdays through Sundays, February 6 through March 1, on the stage at 55 N. Victoria St. Tickets are \$11, \$9.00 for seniors and children. Call 651-225-9265.

A free storytime for toddlers and their families involving music, songs, chants and movement will be offered at 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays, February 10 and 17, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-695-3700.

"Woolly Bears," storytelling, music, puppetry and live animal demonstrations for preschoolers and their parents, is offered from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at the Dodge Nature Center, 365 W. Marie Ave. in West St Paul. "Let It Snow!" will be the topic on February 11, 12 and 14. The cost is \$14. Preregistration is required. Call 651-455-4531.

Nothing's cooler than kilts in winter, and Landmark Center will be filled with scads of them during the Scottish Ramble on February 14 and 15. The event will feature the mesmerizing sounds of the Minnesota Police Pipe Band and Macalester College Pipe Band, the pageantry of Highland

dancing, Scottish history lessons and authentic Scottish cuisine. The event will run from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5:00 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$5.00, \$3.00 for children and seniors. Call 651-292-3063.

"Animal Sweethearts," an introduction to the mating rituals of animals, will be offered between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. Saturday, February 14, at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. Admission is \$5.00, \$3.00 for seniors and children ages 3-16.

"Minnesota Aha," an interactive puppet show that tells the stories behind such great Minnesota inventions as Spam, Scotch tape, Rollerblades, kitty litter and water skis, will be presented by Professor Historificus of Circus Minimus on Sunday, February 15. Show times are 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. at the Minnesota History Center 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission to the History Center is \$10, \$8.00 for seniors and students, and \$5.00 children ages 6-17. Call 651-259-3000.

Et cetera

The music, dance, food, art, language and folklore of the Hmong people will be celebrated from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Sunday, February 8, at Landmark Center. Admission is free, although people are invited to bring a donation of non-perishable food for the needy. Call 651-292-3276.

"Valentine Vim," a celebration of love's variations and complications, will be offered at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, February 14, at Dreamland Arts, 677 N. Hamline Ave. Performing cabaret-style will be poet Wanda Brown, performance artists Joan Calof and Laura Littleford, musician Phyllis Goldin and puppeteer Margo McCreary. Tickets are \$10. Call 651-645-5506.

"Breakin' Hearts and Takin' Names," humorous songs and stories about love and life, will be presented on Saturday, February 14, by Kevin Kling and musical guests Claudia Schmidt, Simone Perrin, Dan Chouinard, Bradley Greenwald and Prudence Johnson. The show begins at 8:00 p.m. in the O'Shaughnessy at the College of St. Catherine. Tickets are \$26. Call 651-690-6700.

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Sports



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

New birth of hockey

When Nancy Katzmarek arrived as the new principal at Highland Park Senior High School in 2007, she made a startling discovery: The school hadn't had a boys' hockey team of its own since 1987. Boys' hockey had fallen on hard times in the St. Paul City Conference generally, and what few boys played the sport at Highland Park were members of a cooperative team from four city high schools known as the Como Park Cougars.

"I live in the Highland neighborhood," Katzmarek said. "One day I saw a kid down the street shooting pucks. I asked him where he went to school. He told me he went to Richfield so he could play hockey. I thought to myself, 'This is Minnesota. That's not right.'"

One of Katzmarek's first visits as principal was to the office of John Heller, the Scots' longtime athletic director and a former hockey coach. She inquired about the possibility of Highland Park fielding a hockey team by itself. Heller listened politely and then replied, "I don't think we can do it. We'd need to find 20 ninth-graders. We'd need to get uniforms. We'd need to find ice time."

Recalling that conversation last week, Heller said, "I knew there were still a lot of players coming out of the Highland-Central youth hockey system, but most of them were playing for other schools."

Enter Pat Auran, Highland Park's assistant principal and a former hockey player there. (He played three seasons for the Scots prior to graduating in 1982.) Auran was enthused at the prospect of bringing hockey back to Highland Park, and said he would do whatever was necessary to make it happen.

There were a slew of skeptics, however. "Every A.D. I talked to said the same thing: 'Are you crazy? You're going to fall on your face,'" Heller said. Katzmarek ran into the same sentiment everywhere she went—with one notable exception: Highland Park. People in the neighborhood seemed to love the idea.

So Heller went to work. He talked to Pat Anderson, president of the Highland-Central Hockey Association, who quickly signed on as a supporter. Then Heller looked about for a place to play. For years, Cretin-Derham Hall had bought up most of the available after-school ice time at the Charles M. Schulz Arena down the street. However, CDH agreed to move some of its practice time slots so that the Highland Park kids could walk to practice after school.

"That was a big key in making it work," Heller said. "If we'd have had to bus kids to practice somewhere else, I don't know that we could have done it. (CDH hockey coach) Jim O'Neill and (CDH athletic director) Jody Loeblein-Lecker were very helpful. We couldn't have done it without their assistance."

Heller found the money for uniforms. Highland Park physical education teacher Brandon Ferraro, a former hockey coach at CDH, agreed to coach the new team. And the St. Paul Public Schools came through with money for ice time. Now all the Scots needed were players. Heller put up signs all over the high school promoting the new team, and Ferraro began talking to nearly every Highland kid he met.

"We weren't looking to hurt anybody else's program," Ferraro said. "There are probably only two or three kids here at school who could've played somewhere else. In fact, I think we only have eight players who'd even played organized hockey before this year. The idea was to get a foundation and build from there. We started the season with 19 players. My goal is to end the season with 19."

Heller insisted that the players all come from Highland Park. Typical of the new squad is Derek Krautkremer, a junior at Highland who had played pickup hockey at the Groveland Recreation Center but was new to the organized game. "I had some buddies who were playing," Krautkremer said. "It's different from what I was used to, but it's been a positive experience. It's about having fun."

The Scots are playing strictly a junior-varsity schedule



The Cadets' Matt Kroska scores in the first period of a decisive win over Simley on January 29. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Lock and load

Defending champ Cadets have hockey talent aplenty

BY BILL WAGNER

A highly successful high school football coach once said about his repeatedly victorious teams years ago, "We don't rebuild—we reload."

The same might be said about the defending Class A state champion St. Thomas Academy hockey team.

Normally, a high school team might have trouble replacing 10 graduating seniors plus two others who left to play junior hockey. That certainly seemed it could be the case for the Cadets, who started this season with a loss to Duluth Marshall, a team they had beaten handily to win last year's state title. But as the season has progressed, the Cadets have shown they are far from being in a rebuilding mode and are very much in a reloading one.

Through January 24, STA was right where it has been accustomed to being—atop the Classic Suburban Conference with an 8-0-1 record (13-3-1 overall). The lone league hiccup was a 1-1 tie against South St. Paul.

After losing its opener, STA co-coach Greg Vannelli saw his team roll off six straight wins before running into a bit of a snag at the Schwan Cup during the holiday break. There the Cadets finished 1-2, beating Moorhead but losing to Centennial and Holy Angels.

"Even though we didn't win, we learned that our defense can survive in big games," Vannelli said.

Defense was the question mark at the outset of the season. In past years, STA has played five and often six defenders. This season, it has employed four regular defensemen, more out of necessity than anything else.

"None of our starting defensemen played any varsity at all last year, and two had played in Bantams," Vannelli said. "But they've learned pretty quickly.

The defense has played well enough so that we don't have a crisis."

One defending tandem includes freshman Eric Schurhamer and senior Matt Baer. Baer was an unknown commodity going into the season, having missed all of last year with a bad knee suffered during football. But he has been steady, and Schurhamer has quickly earned the trust of his coaching staff, even logging heavy minutes manning the point on power plays.

"I've never had a freshman play with the first power play," Vannelli said.

The other defensive pairing of sophomore Taylor Fleming and junior J.P. Graveline has also been coming along nicely.

The Cadets knew they were well fortified in goal with junior Kurt Altrichter and sophomore Matt McNeely. Altrichter was thrown into the mix a year ago when he was asked to replace Aaron Crandall between the pipes. He posted a 2.18 goals-against average last year and had a 1.7 GAA in 10 games so far this season. McNeely has also made his case for playing time, starting six games this season despite his youth.

"Goal is a solid strength for us," Vannelli said.

STA also returned some offensive firepower from a squad that led the state with 199 goals last season. Its first line of junior center Christian Isackson and junior wings Noah Gavin and Justin Crandall is one of the best around. Isackson, who leads the team with 31 points (nine goals and 22 assists), is equally adept at setting up plays as he is finishing them off. Crandall, who has 15 goals and 11 assists, knows how to get open for scoring opportunities. Gavin is a physical player with a dangerous shot.

The second line consists of sophomore center Zach Schroeder, senior wing Kevin Sienko and sophomore wing A.J. Reid. Schroeder plays a lot like Isackson.

Reid already has 17 goals this year (to go with nine assists) after getting only six last season. And Sienko, at 6-foot-3, 200 pounds, is an invaluable grinder.

STA's third line includes a rotation of seniors Patrick Daly and Drew Ayotte, freshman Peter Krieger and sophomore Matt Kroska.

STA also has an impressive power play unit. Vannelli's first choice is to have Isackson, Schroeder, Reid and Crandall out there with one defender. Earlier in the year, he thought that he'd have to put Crandall back on defense during the power play because of the team's inexperience there. But the development of the backline crew has made that unnecessary.

Following the tie against South St. Paul, the Cadets got right back on track in the next two league games. They beat Mahtomedi 8-5 on January 22 on hat tricks by Crandall and Reid and a two-goal performance by Isackson. Two days later they ousted a rugged Tartan squad in a 2-0 thriller that had the feel of a playoff game. A goal by Crandall and an empty-netter by Reid were enough to support Altrichter, who had 30 saves in the shutout.

STA also has a 5-2 win over league rival Hill-Murray to its credit. "Against Hill-Murray, we got the kind of start we wanted," Vannelli said. "We got a two-goal lead on them right away."

The Cadets still had tough conference rematches coming up against Hill-Murray, South St. Paul and Mahtomedi. And they were scheduled on February 3 to face Totino-Grace, which is expected to be a favorite in section play.

Vannelli said there are about 10 teams capable of winning the Class A title when the state tournament gets under way on March 11 at the Xcel Energy Center. And, yes, his team is one of them.

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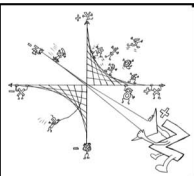
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Redhawk boys have been nearly perfect

BY BILL WAGNER

You could probably learn more about Minnehaha Academy's boys' basketball team by its only loss than by its 13 wins to date. Minnehaha was 13-1 overall (5-0 in the Tri-Metro Conference) through January 24, the lone loss coming at the hands of Henry Sibley, one of the top Class AAAA teams in the state. The Redhawks, who compete in the smaller-school Class AA, led the Warriors by nine points at halftime when the two teams met over the holiday break, but lost after Sibley revved up its game in the second half.

Other than that, Minnehaha has run the table, including a 20-point win over Mounds View, one of the state's habitually solid Class AAAA teams, in the same holiday tournament. "Based on that performance alone, I thought we could have a good year," said Redhawk coach Lance Johnson.

Minnehaha also bested DeLaSalle 48-42 on January 20 to take over first place in the Tri-Metro West. As last month drew to a close, the Redhawks had also posted back-to-back routs over St. Paul Academy and Winona Cotter. In fact, Minnehaha has toppled several teams by 30 or more points this season.

Despite the strong showing, Johnson said his team has not even realized its full potential. The Redhawks have good size, strength and athleticism. They can pound the ball inside or score from the perimeter. And they play defense like demons.

However, Johnson said there is still room for improvement, especially in rebounding. But aside from that, he believes the team is a bona fide contender to make it to state for the first time in 13 years. The Redhawks will still have to get past St. Bernard's, though, in the Section 4AA playoffs that begin next month.

Minnehaha has been impressive even though it has not been at full strength for much of this season. Six-foot-7 senior forward Taylor Sparkman, who has been averaging 20 points per contest and is coming on as a rebounder, was out for four games earlier this season with a strained Achilles tendon. And senior guard Greg Meyer, who averaged more than 13 points a contest last year and is a steady defender, missed the first 10 days of January with a sprained ankle.

The starting rotation also includes junior forward Taylor Hanson, who averages nine rebounds a game, has an accurate shot and makes good use of his 6-foot-5 frame. Senior forward David Burnham adds another big body to the front line at 6-foot-5. He has a nice touch from three-point range and averages more than 13 points a game.

"David is very unselfish, almost to a fault," Johnson said. "We have to keep reminding him to shoot more."

Johnson said senior guard Lucas Taddonio is probably the team's best defender and takes good care of the ball on offense. Junior point guard Parker Hines is a good passer and perimeter player, and junior guard Austin Brown contributes quality minutes as a backup at point.

The impressive thing about the Redhawks' offensive is that they play so well so far from the basket. "We spread out the floor a lot, even though we have good size," Johnson said. "We



Minnehaha's Taylor Hanson, right, battles St. Paul Academy's David McVeety during the Redhawks' 69-37 win over the Spartans on January 23. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

tend to not attack the basket enough, though, to take advantage of that size. We need to get to the free-throw line more often because we're a good free-throw-shooting team."

Johnson was particularly pleased with the way the Redhawks came out in the first half against SPA on January 23, outscoring the Spartans by 34-7. "We just played phenomenal basketball in that game," he said.

Meyer led the way against SPA with 12 points, Sparkman and Hines each added 11 and Hanson seven. Eleven different Minnehaha players scored in that contest.

The Redhawks also put on a good show against Winona Cotter and led 45-23 at intermission. Sparkman lit it up for 21 points in the game, followed by Burnham's 13 and Meyer's 11. Ten different Redhawks made the scoring sheet in that one.

Asked about a team MVP so far this season, Johnson said it would be hard to name one. "On a team as unselfish as this one, I'd have to name five guys," he said. "Offensively, I'd probably have to say Sparkman and maybe Burnham. On defense, I'd name everybody."

Minnehaha still has some tough games ahead of it as the regular season winds down, including a showdown on February 5 with St. Bernard's, which leads the Tri-Metro East.

Still, Johnson said before the season began that the Redhawks had the ability to go far and he isn't backing off that assessment. "We've been playing well," he said. "This is an enjoyable team to coach."

Sports Shorts

The Highland Park Little League (ages 8-12), softball (8-15) and Hightower Babe Ruth (13-15) programs will hold in-person player registration from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 18, at Horace Mann School, 2001 Eleanor Ave. Parents should bring along the player's birth certificate. Visit www.highlandball.org.

The Highland Groveland Recreation Association will hold its annual meeting from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 10, at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-699-9898 or visit www.hgra.org.

The St. Paul Youth Lacrosse Association is now accepting registration from girls and boys interested in playing lacrosse this year. The 2009 season will kick off on Saturday, April 18, with an indoor clinic and an opportunity to be on the field with members of the Minnesota SWARM during their home game. Equipment loan programs are available for players in their first season. For information, visit www.stpaulx.com.

The Timberwolves FastBreak Foundation has launched its fourth annual "Who Inspires You?" creative contest in celebra-

tion of inspirational black leaders in American history. The contest invites the state's middle and high school students to submit a creative work illustrating who inspires them to be a better leader today. Submissions may be in the form of an essay, poem or piece of artistic expression, with one winner selected from each category. Entries must be sent by Friday, February 13, to: Timberwolves FastBreak Foundation, 600 First Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN 55403 or via e-mail at fastbreakfoundation@timberwolves.com. The winners will receive an all-expense paid trip to Atlanta on March 22-24 to visit historical sites and to see the Wolves play the Atlanta Hawks.

Spring sports registration for volleyball, indoor soccer and floor hockey will start at all St. Paul recreation centers the week of February 2-6. Nonresident youths who attend school in St. Paul must show proof of enrollment at time of registration. Late registration may be accepted if space is available. Proof of age is required at time of registration. A copy of your child's birth certificate will be kept on file at the recreation center. Stop by a local recreation center or visit www.stpaul.gov/parks.

33◀ WRIGHT CALL

this year, and finding opponents wasn't as difficult as Heller and Ferraro had feared. The Scots ended up with 19 games. Their home games are being played at Schulz and Biff Adams arenas. Road games have been played as far away as Princeton. "I don't care too much about winning or losing games this season," Ferraro said. "It's about learning and improving. We have no seniors, so there's only one way for us to go."

Still, winning can be fun and it can be infectious. The Highland Park pucksters found that out a few weeks ago when they rallied from a four-goal deficit to beat St. Paul Academy. Since then, they've defeated the public school Minneapolis West cooperative and the private school St. Paul Saints cooperative.

Katzmarek sounds like a proud parent these days. "I'm thrilled by what the kids have done," she said. "It probably needed to be pushed by a principal to get it off the ground, but I knew it was the right thing to do." What Katzmarek probably didn't realize was that the history she was battling went back a lot farther than 22 years.

Sandwiched as it is between such local hockey powers as Cretin-Derham Hall, St. Paul Academy and St. Thomas Academy, Highland Park has struggled to be competitive in the sport ever since the school opened in 1964. Though the Scots won the first varsity hockey game the school's team ever played—a 3-1 nonconference victory over Minneapolis Vocational—they won only one conference game in their first two seasons.

Highland Park has produced some terrific hockey players over the years—Rich Robins, Jeff Keys, Rick Benepe and Greg Sands come quickly to mind—but Highland rarely contended for a conference title. The only truly glorious moment in the school's hockey history came in 1975-76 when the Scots captured their one and only City Conference hockey crown with an 11-1 record and came within a whiff of the state tournament, losing in the section final to Henry Sibley, 4-1.

Heller remembers that team well. "I was coaching St. Agnes at the time," he said. "We won our first section game and then played Highland. They had beaten us by a goal a couple of weeks earlier. This time we played them tough, but we lost 3-2. One of our guys hit the crossbar with a shot late in the game. Every time I've seen him since, he tells me he still sees that shot in his mind. But Highland had a very good team that year."

By the mid-1980s, Highland Park's hockey program was hurting badly for players. After going 9-12 in 1986-87, the team merged with nearby Central High School. In 1995-96 Humboldt joined the combine, and two years later Arlington became part of the mix. The additional high schools were good for additional bodies, but the team still struggled to win games.

Boys' hockey was already dying a slow death in St. Paul when CDH left the City Conference following the 2002-03 season. By 2007-08, there were just two teams left among St. Paul's seven public high schools—Johnson and Como. Both of those teams now play in the seven-team Tri-Metro Conference, and as of press time Johnson was in fourth place and Como was tied for sixth.

The Scots' current contingent harbors no illusions of grandeur. The team's goal for next season is simply to play a full JV schedule and have enough players to contemplate a varsity schedule in 2010-11, possibly as a member of the Tri-Metro Conference. If that happens, Highland Park would become the first already established school in many years to take up the sport of hockey, according to the Minnesota State High School League, and probably the first school ever to restart the sport after having dropped it altogether.

To make that happen, Ferraro and his assistant coach, Auran, know they'll need more players like Krautkremer. But for now, they're keeping it simple and not worrying too much about any offseason work for their players.

Krautkremer, who also plays baseball for Highland Park, was asked if he'd be working at polishing his hockey skills this summer. "Hopefully, during the offseason, we players can work together," he said. "We're learning as we go here as a team."

Tommies are No. 1 in Division III

The University of St. Thomas men's basketball team has become the first MIAC school to be rated No. 1 in the country. Coach Steve Fritz's team, which was 19-0 as of January 31, garnered 17 of the 25 first-place votes in the d3hoops.com poll. UST ranks as the only unbeaten Division III team in the nation. The Tommies are off to their best start since 1994-95 when they won their first 27 games en route to a 27-1 record.

Dave Wright can be reached at dwright53@msn.com.



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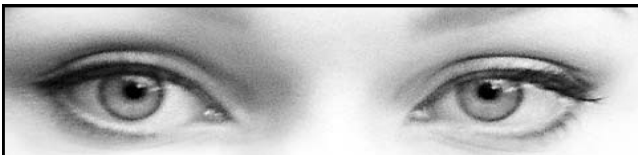
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